

**PARISH OF THE ASCENSION
CHRISTMAS 2022**

COLLECT

O God our Father,
whose Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem,
may the light of faith
illumine our hearts
and shine in our words and deeds;
through him who is Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have laboured; but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken." **ISAIAH 62:6-12**

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

***REFRAIN** All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

The Lord is king; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad. Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne. **R**

A fire goes before him and burns up his enemies on every side. His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees it and is afraid. **R**

The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory. **R**

Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods! Bow down before him, all you gods. Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, because of your judgements, O Lord. **R**

For you are the Lord, most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods. The Lord loves those who hate evil; he preserves the lives of his saints and delivers them from the hand of the wicked. **R**

Light has sprung up for the righteous, and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted. Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name. **R PSALM 97**

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO TITUS

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. **TITUS 3:4-7**

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Reader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

**THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO LUKE**

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. **LUKE 2:8-20**

Reader: The Gospel of Christ

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Generous Creator,
in faith and joy
we celebrate the birth of your Son.
Increase our understanding and our love
of the riches you have revealed in him,
who is Lord now and for ever. **AMEN.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Source of truth and joy,
may we who have received the gift of divine life
always follow the way of your Son.
This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **AMEN.**