

Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions

January 1 – 6, 2024

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

-Psalm 119:105

Mon Hebrews 13:8 When we remember how Jesus Christ sustained His people of old and how He has cared for us today, the fact that He is eternal gives us confidence to face every new year.

Tues Lamentations 3:22-32 Because God sent His Son to be our Savior, we can be sure that He will also show compassion in every event of 2024 that might threaten to consume us.

Wed Luke 2:22-32 Even as a helpless infant, Jesus was presented to God in accordance with the Law, fulfilling all righteousness for us. Simeon finds his comfort for life and death in this Child, the Lord's Christ!

Thur 2 Timothy 4:3-8 Paul, like Simeon (Lk2) is ready to depart this life whenever the Lord calls him (vv6-8). He warns Timothy of opposition in this world and urges him to carry on the ministry of the gospel (vv3-5).

Fri John 1:1-14 John, the fore-runner of the Light, prepared the way for Jesus, the true Light. Rescued by forgiveness, we behold the Savior's glory, full of grace and truth.

Sat Matthew 3:13-17 Epiphany! Fulfilling all righteousness for us includes Jesus being baptized by John. The Spirit descends, and the Father manifests Jesus' glory, declaring Him to be the very Son of God.

December 31, 2023
New Year's Eve



ANOTHER YEAR OF
grace



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✠ Opening Prayer ✠

Hymn: TLH #123:1-4, 8 "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

P Pastor

G Congregation

Confession of Our Sins

We come before God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P "Turn to me and be saved," says the Lord. "For I am God and there is no other." (Isaiah 45:22)

G **When we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(cf. 1 John 1:9)

P We ask for forgiveness in the name of Jesus Christ.

G **O most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have lived for ourselves, neglected Your Word and our relationship with You, and have sinned against you in our thoughts, with our words, and by our actions. We have not loved You with all our heart, soul, and mind. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.**

Forgive us, renew us, and refresh us so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Absolution from Our God

P Children of God, having confessed your sins now hear the good news!

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness." (Isaiah 61:10)

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but shall have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

End of the Church Year

**Revelation 1:7-8;
22:20-21**

Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth

will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. ⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." . . . ²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! ²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.



P Lord God, heavenly Father, our times are in Your hands. This is a comforting truth as we remember our brothers and sisters in Christ whom You have abundantly blessed by taking them from this world of sin and sorrow to be with You for eternity. As we consider our lives and the blessings You have bestowed upon us, help us to focus our lives on the goal, the gift of eternal life. Teach us to live not for the things of this world but rather to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust can destroy. Lord Jesus, You have promised to return, so help us to look forward to that day with hope and expectation, trusting Your promise to take us to that heavenly home which You have personally prepared. Amen.

End Times Hymn: TLH #609:1-2 "Wake, Awake, for Night..."

The Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

The blessing given by God for His people.

P The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.

G Amen!

Hymn: WS #800

"Go, My Children, with My Blessing"

Missions Season

Romans 10:13-17

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." ¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

P Hear our prayers, O Lord, for all those who are suffering in the world. Send forth Your message of love, grace, and mercy and call those who are sitting in the darkness of sin and unbelief into the marvelous light of our Savior Jesus. Use us, Lord, make us bold and courageous ambassadors of our Lord and Savior. Teach and train us not to cling to the temporal things of this world, but rather to use the gifts that You have given to us in this world to do the work which You have given us to do while it is day, for as Your Son has warned, the night comes when no man can work. Hear our prayers, O Lord, for Your mercy's sake. Amen.

Missions Hymn: WS #771

"Listen, God is Calling"



Jesus Sends Out His Disciples

The Gloria Patri

WS #775:5-6

Latin for "Glory be to the Father."

G ♪ Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us,
Mouths to speak Thy holy name.
**Alleluia, alleluia! May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias, Alleluias without end!**

**God the Father, light-creator,
To Thee laud and honor be.
To Thee, Light of Light begotten,
Praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to Thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the holy Trinity!**

Confession of Faith

The Nicene Creed

G I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.



Through the Church Year In Word, Song, and Prayer



✠ Opening Prayer ✠

P Lord God, we are glad and thankful to be here this New Year's Eve to honor You and to receive blessing from Your Holy Word. Be with us in our worship and bless our fellowship together for Your mercy's sake. Teach us, encourage us, strengthen us, and enable us throughout the New Year so that we flee temptation and honor You in all that we think, say, and do. Hear and receive our prayers this evening and accept the praise we bring as we lift our voices in song and prayer. All this we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Advent

Isaiah 40:9-11

Go on up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with
strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"¹⁰ Behold, the
Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him;
behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before
him.¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the
lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently
lead those that are with young.

P Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks to You, and as we focus our thoughts on that season of the church year when You prepare our hearts for the celebration of our Savior's birth, we pray that in this season when we are reminded so much of the precious gift of salvation which your divine love has given to the world through the prophecies of hope and comfort, that you would stir up in our hearts a willingness to be a blessing to those You bring into our lives. Amen.

Advent Hymn: TLH #66

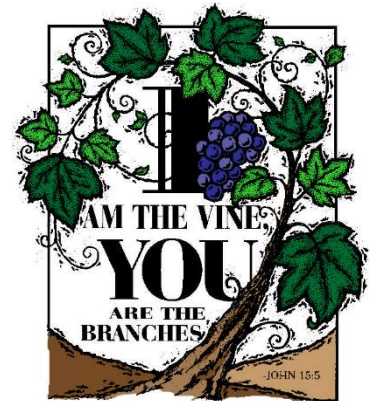
"Hark the Glad Sound"



Trinity Season

John 15:1-8

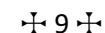
"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.



P Holy, Holy, Holy is Your name, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our hearts sing the praises of Your holy name as we cry out "Abba, Father" in our heartfelt prayers. And as we turn to Your Son Jesus Christ in repentance and faith—trusting in Him alone for salvation—and to the Holy Spirit who works in us to will and to do the good pleasure of our God, lead us and guide us to give honor to the Trinity in all that we do and say. Teach us to put our trust and hope not in the things of this world, but rather in the sure and certain love that You have so lavishly demonstrated time and time again throughout history and in our day-to-day lives. Amen.

Trinity Hymn: TLH #376:1, 3

"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"



P Lord God, heavenly Father, Easter is such a glorious and splendid celebration of Your grace and mercy. As we look forward to this celebration, focus our thoughts and the intentions of our hearts on spreading this most important news of the resurrection. Our hope and courage is found in this truth, that we shall not die, but we shall all be changed, in the twinkling of an eye when our Savior raises us from the dead to live eternally. Keep this thought forever before us: "I know that my Redeemer lives, what comfort this sweet sentence gives, He lives, He lives, who once was dead, He lives my ever-living head!" Amen.

Easter Hymn: TLH #200:1, 2, 8 *"I Know that My Redeemer Lives"*

Pentecost

John 20:19-22

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." ²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

P O Holy Spirit, Divine Counselor and Comforter, on Pentecost You established the Holy Christian Church, and we benefit from Your coming even today. Continue to bless the Word of Truth, by which You bring sinners to repentance and faith. Divine Helper, having brought us to faith and called us to righteousness, You have commissioned our bodies as living temples for You to dwell. Continue to remind us that we are God's beloved children by faith in Christ and fill us with grace and zeal to be bold witnesses of our Lord. Amen.

Pentecost Hymn: TLH #234:1-2 *"Holy Ghost, with Light Divine"*

Christmas

Luke 2:1-11

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."



P Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks unto You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus, the Light of the world. The message of Salvation in Christ's name is meant to gladden every heart. And so, we pray this Christmas season—send out the light of your name into the hearts of those who do not yet have the sure and certain hope of salvation through Your life, death, and resurrection. Amen.

Christmas Hymn: TLH #92:1-2 *"Now Sing We, Now Rejoice"*

Epiphany

Luke 4:16-21

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

P Lord God, Jesus Christ, You came bringing life and light and hope to a world that lies in spiritual darkness and under the shadow of darkness. As the wise men from the East came to worship You, this began Your epiphany, the revelation of God's grace to all mankind. For this we praise and thank your holy name. Amen.

Epiphany Hymn: TLH #129 *"Hail, Thou Source of Every Blessing"*

Lent

Isaiah 53:3-7

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon

him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned-- every one-- to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

P Lord God, heavenly Father, we give thanks unto You that You sent Your only Son to die for our sins on the cross. Your love is made so evident during the Lenten season of the church year, for there is no greater demonstration of true love than the willing sacrifice that our Savior made on our behalf. Humble us at Your throne of grace as we repent of our sins during this season and throughout the year, that we may truly appreciate the forgiveness we have in Christ. Amen.

Lenten Hymn: TLH #154

"Alas and Did My Savior Bleed"

Easter

1 Corinthians 15:1ff

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you-- unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures . . . ¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

