

# CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
AUGUST 7, 2022

**A community praising God, growing in Christ,  
and joyfully serving others.**



*Welcome. We are so happy to have you with us! Please sanitize your hands prior to entering the Nave. You Will find the left side of the church reserved for those who are more comfortable with social distancing and masks. Masks are required for that side. Masks are not required for the right side but are still recommended. Pews not available for seating are marked with signs.*

*We continue to ask that you consider the safety and concerns of those around you. Thank you for your graciousness.*

# The Word of God

## Processional Hymn      Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor      H 596

*Please stand as you are able.*

**Celebrant**    Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**People**      *And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.*

### *Priest and People*

***Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

### Glory to God



1. Glo - ry to God in the high-est, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



2. Lord God, hea-ven-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we wor-ship you,



we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus Christ,



on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,

4. you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us;

5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.

6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,

7. you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit,

in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

## The Collect

O God, who on the holy mount revealed to chosen witnesses your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistening: Mercifully grant that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may by faith behold the King in his beauty; who with you, O Father, and you, O Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**Celebrant**    **The Lord be with you.**

*People*        *And also with you.*

Celebrant    Let us pray.

## The Lessons

### THE OLD TESTAMENT

Exodus 34:29-35

#### A reading from the Book of Exodus

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People Thanks be to God.*

### Psalm 99 or 99:5-9

#### *In unison*

- 1 [The LORD is King;  
let the people tremble; \*  
he is enthroned upon the cherubim;  
let the earth shake.
- 2 The LORD is great in Zion; \*  
he is high above all peoples.

3 Let them confess his Name, which is great and awesome; \*  
he is the Holy One.

4 "O mighty King, lover of justice,  
you have established equity; \*  
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob."]

5 Proclaim the greatness of the LORD our God  
and fall down before his footstool; \*  
he is the Holy One.

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests,  
and Samuel among those who call upon his Name, \*  
they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

7 He spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud; \*  
they kept his testimonies and the decree that he gave them.

8 O LORD our God, you answered them indeed; \*  
you were a God who forgave them,  
yet punished them for their evil deeds.

9 Proclaim the greatness of the LORD our God  
and worship him upon his holy hill; \*  
for the LORD our God is the Holy One.

## **The Epistle**

## **2 Peter 1:13-21**

### **A reading from the Second Letter of Peter**

I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

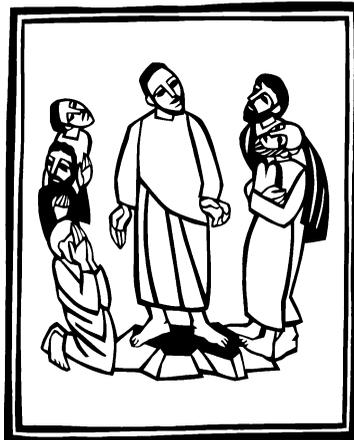
*People            Thanks be to God.*



## The Gospel

### Luke 9:28-36

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah” —not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.



## **The Nicene Creed**

*We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.*

## **Prayers of the People**

Let us go to the mountain of God's generosity, offering our prayers as we respond, "Hear us, God of Glory."

That we may offer ourselves to the refashioning hands of the Divine Potter, who centers, molds, and changes us into vessels of grace; let us pray.

*Hear us, God of Glory.*

That we may admit our faults, our desire to keep things as they are and to return to things that never were, so that when Christ invites us into a transformed life, we may readily answer his call; let us pray.

***Hear us, God of Glory.***

For a vigorous spirit of mutual cooperation and unity, that we may treasure the common ground which we share with the whole Anglican Communion, and work together to share in the fruits of God's kingdom across our nations, cultures, tribes, and peoples; let us pray.

***Hear us, God of Glory.***

For the cessation of war, that armaments of destruction may be made into tools for development, and that resources spent on the fields of battle may instead support the basic necessities of life. We pray for those in the military and first responders, especially Alex, Anthony, Frank, Edilio, Sam, Michael, Travis, Alexander, Jacob, Will and their families. Are there others?

***Hear us, God of Glory.***

For a commitment to a life of simplicity, that we may preserve for generations to come the beauty of land and seas and sky, and the complexity of every living creature; let us pray.

***Hear us, God of Glory.***

That those who have died, especially Mark may experience the blessed rest of everlasting peace; let us pray.

***Hear us, God of Glory.***

Continue to mold us into your perfect wholeness as we add to these prayers.

We pray for all those who are sick, in need of comfort and support, especially Bishop-elect Paula, Georgianna, Suzi, Marilyn, Robby, Gail, Chuck, Norma, Pam, Bill, Ed, Steven, Michael, Patrick, Annette, Daniel, Christopher, Lorna, Cathy Pura, Logan, Florence and Susan. Are there others?

***Hear us, God of Glory***

We give thanks for the gifts of life and love as we remember those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week, especially Cathi Ratay, Joanna Wagner, and Jane Blew-Healy) Are there others?

***Hear us, God of Glory***

Celebrant

Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

***Amen.***

### **Confession of Sin**

*Deacon*            *Let us confess our sins to God.*

*Minister and People*

***God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves and in the world you have created.***

*We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we  
we have done, and the evil done on our behalf.*

*Forgive,*

*restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in  
your love and serve only your will. Amen.*

*Celebrant*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of  
Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit  
keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

**The Peace**

Celebrant            The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*            *And also with you.*

**Announcements**

**Birthdays and Anniversaries**

**Birthday Prayer**

*Watch over your children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them  
wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when  
discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may your  
peace which passes understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus  
Christ our Lord. Amen*

**Anniversary Prayer**

*O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is  
represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore  
your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish  
each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their  
home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who  
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

## The Offertory

Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and make good your vows to the most high.

*Offertory Hymn*

*O, Christ the Word Incarnate*

*H 632*

## The Holy Communion

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

*People And also with you.*

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

*People We lift them to the Lord*

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

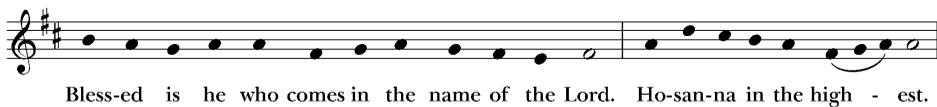
*People It is right to give our thanks and praise.*

Celebrant It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing,

## *Celebrant and People*



## *The Celebrant continues*

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.*

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Celebrant and People*

***Christ has died.***

***Christ is risen.***

***Christ will come again.***

*The Celebrant continues*

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *AMEN.*

And now, as our Savior  
Christ has taught us,  
we are bold to say,

*People and Celebrant*

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen*

### **The Breaking for the Bread**

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us.

*People Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.*

Je - sus, Lamb of God: have mer - cy on us.

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The melody is written in a simple, hymn-like style. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are placed below the treble staff.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: have mer - cy on us.

The second system of musical notation is identical in structure to the first, with treble and bass staves and lyrics below. The melody and accompaniment continue the same style as the first system.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world:  
 give us your peace, give us your peace.

## THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

This is the table, not of the Church but of Jesus Christ. It is made ready for those who love God and who want to love God more.

So come, you who have much faith and you who have little.

You who have been here often, and you who have not been for a long time or ever before.

You who have tried to follow and you who have failed.

Come, not because the Church invites you. It is Christ who invites you to be known and fed here.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*Communion Hymn*

*If Though But Trust in God*

*H 635*

**Post-Communion Prayer**

*Celebrant Let us pray.*

*Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen*

### **The Blessing and Dismissal**

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you forever.

*Closing Hymn*

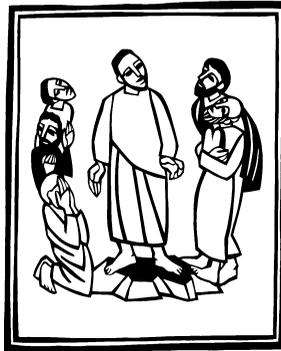
*What a Friend We Have in Jesus*

*H 189*

### **Dismissal**

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*



189

# What A Friend We Have In Jesus

Joseph Medlicott Scriven

Charles Crozat Converse

Capo 1 (D) (C) (G) (D) (A)  
 Eb Db Ab Eb Bb



1. What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
 2. Have we trials\_ and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou-ble an - y - where?  
 3. Are we weak and hea - vy la - den, cum-bered with a load of care?

5 (D) (C) (G) (D/A) (A7) (D)  
 Eb Db Ab Eb/Bb Bb7 Eb



What a pri - vi - lege to car - ry ev' - ry-thing to God in prayer!  
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged, take it to the Lord in prayer:  
 Pre - cious Sa - vior, still our re - fuge; take it to the Lord in prayer:

9 (A) (A7) (D) (G) (D) (A)  
 Bb Bb7 Eb Ab Eb Bb



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit, oh, what need-less pain we bear.  
 can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor-rows share?  
 do thy friends des - pise, for - sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer:

13 (D) (C) (G) (D/A) (A7) (D)  
 Eb Db Ab Eb/Bb Bb7 Eb



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev' - ry-thing to God in prayer!  
 Je - sus knows our ev' - ry weak - ness, take it to the Lord in prayer.  
 in His arms He'll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a so-lace there.

Public Domain

**This week at Transfiguration:**

<b>8/7</b>	<b>Feast of the Transfiguration</b>		
	<b>Lectionary Study</b>	<b>Leach Hall</b>	<b>9:00am</b>
	<b>Holy Eucharist</b>	<b>Church/FB</b>	<b>10:00am</b>
	<b>Coffee Hour by Gayle Fish &amp; Sheila Rossi</b>	<b>Leach Hall</b>	<b>11:15am</b>
<b>8/13</b>	<b>Mark Soder Memorial Service</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>3:00pm</b>
<b>8/14</b>	<b>Lectionary Study</b>	<b>Leach Hall</b>	<b>9:00am</b>
	<b>Holy Eucharist</b>	<b>Church/FB</b>	<b>10:00am</b>
	<b>Coffee Hour</b>	<b>Leach Hall</b>	<b>11:15am</b>
<b>8/14</b>	<b>Blessing of Backpacks</b>		
<b>8/15</b>	<b>Feast of the Assumption</b>		
	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>Church/FB</b>	<b>9:00am</b>
<b>8/21</b>	<b>Blessing of Backpacks</b>		

Note: You may continue to submit your pledges and offerings by mail or use the credit card payment option [Transfigpalos.breezechms.com](https://Transfigpalos.breezechms.com), or use the text giving option by texting your \$amount plus the word "pledge" to 708-394-7474

**NEW: You can submit a donation using Zelle to  
[admin@transfigpalos.org](mailto:admin@transfigpalos.org).**

**SPECIAL INTENTIONS**

***THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE REMAIN ON OUR PERMANENT PRAYER LIST AS THEIR NEED FOR PRAYER IS LONG-TERM RATHER THAN ACUTE:*** Joe, Don, Roberta, Marilyn, Jim, Mary, Emily, Meghan, Jan, Chelsea, Bob, Mark, Michael, John, Bob, Billy, Natasha, Laura, Cindy, Susie, Pam, Katy, Lou, Nick, Brendan, Bob, Jayden, Debra, Janet, Jacelyn, Sharon, Gabe, Chuck, Nancy, Mike, Tom, Betty, Carol, David, James, Kathy, Bill, John, Rosemary, Roberta, Earl, Patricia, Anita.

**\*\* PLEASE KEEP THESE INDIVIDUALS IN YOUR PRAYERS, AND NOTIFY THE OFFICE IF THEIR CONDITION OR SITUATION CHANGES.**

**\*\*\* Ushers, Readers and Eucharistic ministers** are needed for Sunday 10:00am services. Please sign-up on RSVP.church. <https://rsvp.church/r/qPGqaHff>.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Our Beds Plus outreach program volunteers continue to pack lunch bags for the homeless shelters every other weekend. If you would like to make a contribution toward purchasing food items for this ministry plus make your check out to the church and write “Beds Plus” in the memo line. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Zack Ottinger at [zottinger@gmail.com](mailto:zottinger@gmail.com) Please remember the other ministries we support; including the area Food Pantries and Shower the Shelter
- **New Dates for Small Group Dinners!** Would you like to spend an enjoyable dinner or brunch getting to know your fellow parishioners better? We have chosen two new dates; August 14,(Sunday brunch) at 12:30PM for those who would prefer a daytime event, and September 17 (Saturday), 6PM dinner. We are reserving spaces at local restaurants that have a private dining area or back corner where we can relax and spend time conversing. Please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the foyer. You may choose one or all of the dates. We will randomly assign people to groups of six to eight people. Restaurant locations to be announced. Questions? Please call Dee Wagner at 630-9156-3935 or Bea Hiznay at 708-370-0399.
- On August 14<sup>th</sup> and August 21 there will be a blessing of backpacks for students of all ages and for teachers. Please bring your backpacks to church with you, and we’ll bless them, and you, as you begin another school year.

Watch for upcoming announcements about new adult formation beginning in September. We have some very interesting programs planned, and hopefully you’ll find a class that catches your attention. We’ll be doing week-night classes on Zoom so that everyone can attend, and a regular Sunday class at 9:00 am. More will be revealed soon.

## CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION/12219 S. 86<sup>TH</sup> AVE. PALOS PARK

The Rev. Canon Paula Clark, Bishop-elect, [bishop@episcopalchicago.org](mailto:bishop@episcopalchicago.org)

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The Reverend Jason Elliott, Deacon [jasonagelliott@gmail.com](mailto:jasonagelliott@gmail.com)

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Debbie Trapp, Director of Children & Youth Ministries [trappsrus@sbcglobal.net](mailto:trappsrus@sbcglobal.net)

Jodi Powers, Day Care and Learning Center, Director [ppedconnect@outlook.com](mailto:ppedconnect@outlook.com)

Cathi Ratay, Board President, Palos Park Episcopal Day Care & Learning Ctr.

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Members of the Vestry: Mark Brticevich, Sue Burke, Maria Finatri, Bryan Fish, Beth Gallivan

Marian Higgins, Zach Ottinger, Joe Rossi, Judy Stark, John Carroll-Treasurer



### **Pentecost 9**

### **Proper 14 (C)**

**August 7, 2022**

**[RCL] Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50:1-8, 23-24; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40**

### **Isaiah 1:1, 10-20**

The part of Isaiah that this reading comes from was written before the Babylonian Exile and is part of a series of oracles against Judah and Jerusalem. Judah was the southern part of what was once the united kingdom of Israel.

God's words to the people of Judah are hard to hear. The oracle Isaiah preaches compares Judah and the temple worship in Jerusalem to Sodom and Gomorrah, and God refuses to hear their prayers. Though God does not abide the sins of Israel - their offerings are worthless in the shadow of their injustices - there is an opening for them to restore their relationship, to come back into covenant.

First, God opens the way for the Israelites to learn to do what pleases God: "Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow" (1:17). Then, God invites the people into a conversation: "Let us argue it out" (1:18) refers to reasoned argumentation, not aggressive confrontation. God wants to reach toward the people with open hands of forgiveness and will accompany them as they work toward it.

- In this passage, Isaiah points out a disconnect between the worship of the people in the temple and what they do outside of the temple. Do you observe the same disconnect in Christians? What are some examples of this?
- What could Christians do that would close gaps between the ideals expressed in worship and the lives we live?

### **Psalm 50:1-8, 23-24**

This psalm continues the theme of God's judgment, evident in the reading from Isaiah. God calls all of creation as witnesses to what seems like a heavenly court proceeding, at which the rightness of God's people is assessed. There is reference to sacrifice and offerings - alluding to the worship practices of the people of Israel - concluding with the promise of salvation for those who offer "the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (50:24).

For Christians, the Eucharist is closely associated with Thanksgiving. Referred to as "The Great Thanksgiving," it is considered by the Book of Common Prayer to be our "principal act of Christian worship on the Lord's Day and other major Feasts" (BCP, p. 13). The language of our Eucharistic prayers uses the words "sacrifice," "offering," and "thanksgiving" quite liberally. We are encouraged to bring our hearts and bodies to God during the Eucharist. Many congregations celebrate the Eucharist weekly, though, during the lockdowns imposed as a result of COVID-19, most congregations refrained.

- This Psalm shows judgment being made on worship and sacrifice. If we were to imagine God coming in judgment, how might God assess our "sacrifice of thanksgiving"?
- How might we offer our worship in a more thanksgiving-forward way?

## **Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16**

In this passage from Hebrews, we hear the story of Abraham and Sarah cast as a story of faith in God's promises. Abraham and Sarah, argues the writer, trusted that God's promises would be fulfilled in God's own time. These words were likely written within 50 years of Jesus' resurrection and were meant as an assurance to those following the nascent Christian faith that, if Abraham and Sarah can act in faith, trusting that God would prepare a city for them, Christians can draw inspiration from them, and trust that God's will shall unfold in God's own time.

It's been a long time since these words were written to reassure first-century Christians. We are still waiting for the full revelation of God's kingdom on earth. Just like the descendants of Abraham, many generations of Christians "died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them" (v. 13).

- Sometimes, the idea that the promises of God will be revealed in God's own time can breed complacency. But the author of Hebrews argues that Abraham's, Sarah's, and their offspring's faith in God's future promises kept them moving. Is there a promise you hope for that inspires your faith? How does that promise inspire you?

## **Luke 12:32-40**

This Gospel reading brings together the themes of trusting the future to God and God's judgment, evident in today's other readings. The verse "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (12:34) is one of the most well-known verses in the Bible - maybe you've heard it used in a stewardship campaign. But this comes after verses about selling possessions, giving alms, and making purses that do not wear out, to store the treasure in heaven. It may be about trading your certainty for uncertainty, trust in what kingdoms of earth can give for what the kingdom of God can bring.

Verses 35-39 have a sense of urgency: be ready for the master to return! Jesus says to "have your lamps lit" (35), to "be ready" (40). Today we might say "keep your ringtone on!" Why? Because we don't know when the Son of Man will arrive (v. 40). What are we to be ready for? "The kingdom" that is the "Father's good pleasure to give to you" (32).

- This Gospel reading tells us to be ready for the kingdom of God's arrival at an unexpected hour. What images does "the kingdom of God" bring to mind for you?
- How would you describe life in the kingdom of God? How does the phrase "good pleasure" fit with those images, that description?