

Readings for 22nd August 2021

(from New International Version bible)

PLEASE NOTE: All readers are encouraged to read off right hand screen ie the one in front of the Lectern.

A reading from Joshua 24:1,2 14-18

¹ Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem. He called the elders, the leaders, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they came into the presence of God. ² Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, has to say: 'Long ago your ancestors lived on the other side of the Euphrates River and worshiped other gods. One of those ancestors was Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor.

¹⁴ "Now then," Joshua continued, "honor the Lord and serve him sincerely and faithfully. Get rid of the gods which your ancestors used to worship in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, and serve only the Lord. ¹⁵ If you are not willing to serve him, decide today whom you will serve, the gods your ancestors worshiped in Mesopotamia or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are now living. As for my family and me, we will serve the Lord." ¹⁶ The people replied, "We would never leave the Lord to serve other gods! ¹⁷ The Lord our God brought our fathers and us out of slavery in Egypt, and we saw the miracles that he performed. He kept us safe wherever we went among all the nations through which we passed. ¹⁸ As we advanced into this land, the Lord drove out all the Amorites who lived here. So we also will serve the Lord; he is our God."

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord

Cong: *Thanks be to God*

A reading from Ephesians 6:10-20

¹⁰ Finally, build up your strength in union with the Lord and by means of his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on all the armor that God gives you, so that you will be able to stand up against the Devil's evil tricks. ¹² For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age. ¹³ So put on God's armor now! Then when the evil day comes, you will be able to resist the enemy's attacks; and after fighting to the end, you will still hold your ground. ¹⁴ So stand ready, with truth as a belt tight around your waist, with righteousness as your breastplate, ¹⁵ and as your shoes the readiness to announce the Good News of peace. ¹⁶ At all times carry faith as a shield; for with it you will be able to put out all the burning arrows shot by the Evil One. ¹⁷ And accept salvation as a helmet, and the word of God as the sword which the Spirit gives you. ¹⁸ Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion, as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray always for all God's people.

¹⁹ And pray also for me, that God will give me a message when I am ready to speak, so that I may speak boldly and make known the gospel's secret. ²⁰ For the sake of this gospel I am an ambassador, though now I am in prison. Pray that I may be bold in speaking about the gospel as I should.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord

Cong: *Thanks be to God*

A reading from the Gospel of John 6:56-69

(Please invite the congregation to stand to hear the Gospel reading)

⁵⁶ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them. ⁵⁷ The living Father sent me, and because of him I live also. In the same way whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This, then, is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the bread that your ancestors ate, but then later died. Those who eat this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹ Jesus said this as he taught in the synagogue in Capernaum. ⁶⁰ Many of his followers heard this and said, "This teaching is too hard. Who can listen to it?" ⁶¹ Without being told, Jesus knew that they were grumbling about this, so he said to them, "Does this make you want to give up? ⁶² Suppose, then, that you should see the Son of Man go back up to the place where he was before? ⁶³ What gives life is God's Spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit. ⁶⁴ Yet some of you do not believe." (Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones that would not believe and which one would betray him.) ⁶⁵ And he added, "This is the very reason I told you that no people can come to me unless the Father makes it possible for them to do so." ⁶⁶ Because of this, many of Jesus' followers turned back and would not go with him any more. ⁶⁷ So he asked the twelve disciples, "And you—would you also like to leave?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. ⁶⁹ And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God."

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

Cong: *Praise be to you O Christ*