

A reading from the Book of Isaiah

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

The Word of the Lord

Today, we will read Psalm 126. We will read it responsively, breaking at the asterisk. It can be found on the screens behind me, or on page 782 in the Book of Common Prayer.

1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *

then were we like those who dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *

and our tongue with shouts of joy.

3 Then they said among the nations, *

"The Lord has done great things for them."

4 The Lord has done great things for us, *

and we are glad indeed.

5 Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *

like the watercourses of the Negev.

6 Those who sowed with tears *

will reap with songs of joy.

7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *

will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord