***Introit (Psalm 143)***

P: Because of Your name, Lord, protect my life!

C: Because You are righteous, save my soul from trouble!

P: Lord, attend my prayer and my cries for mercy.

**C: Because You are faithful and righteous, answer me.**

P: Don’t judge Your servant.

**C: Compared to You, no living person is righteous.**

P: In the morning, let me see Your continuing love.

**C: Because I trust You.**

**All: Glory give to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, the same as it was in the beginning, is now, and will continue forever. Amen.**

***Prayer for God’s Word***

P: Lord, You made Your prophets strong to resist the devil’s temptations. You made them brave to preach repentance. Give us clean hearts and minds. Then we will follow Your Son always, no-matter we suffer and die. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Jesus lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (copy) Amen.

The Old Testament lesson is from Amos chapter 7.

 The Lord showed me (AMOS) this. The Lord stood near a straight wall. He had a string for measuring and knowing something is straight. The Lord asked me, “AMOS, what do you see?”

 I answered, “I see a string for measuring straight.”

 The Lord said, “Look, I will use a string to measure My people Israel. I will never again visit them. ISAAC’s worship places on the mountains will become empty. The holy places in Israel will get destroyed. I will use a sword to attack JEROBOAM’s family.”

 AMAZIAH was the priest in the town named BETHEL. He sent a message to the king of Israel, named JEROBOAM. AMAZIAH said, “AMOS is here in Israel, and he is planning bad things against you. The people hate hearing his words. AMOS is saying, ‘A sword will kill King JEROBOAM. Another country will capture the people of Israel and take them far from home.’”

 AMAZIAH told AMOS, “Prophet, go away! Run-away back to JUDAH. Earn your money there. Prophesy in JUDAH, not here. BETHEL is the king’s holy city, and Israel’s temple is here.”

 AMOS answered, “I was not a prophet. My father was not a prophet. I was a shepherd, and I also took care of FIG trees. While I was taking care of the sheep, the Lord called me and said, ‘Go and prophesy to My people Israel.’”

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The New Testament lesson is from Ephesians chapter 1.

 Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! God blessed us through Jesus with every spiritual blessing in heaven. Before God made the world, He already chose us to become holy and perfect with Him. Long ago, He decided to adopt us as His sons through Jesus Christ. That was His plan and He was happy to do that. We praise His glorious grace. God freely gives us His grace through His dear Son. We have salvation in Jesus through His blood, that is the forgiveness of sins. God pours His grace on us with all wisdom and understanding. He told us about His secret plan. His good plan is to bring all things together in Christ. At the right time, God brought all things in heaven and on earth together in Christ.

 God also gives us an inheritance through Christ. He works and plans all things the way He wants, and long ago He chose us agreeing with His plans. We were the first people to trust Christ. God planned for us to praise His glory. When you heard the truth, the good news of salvation, and you believed the good news, God sealed you with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God's promise that He will give us our inheritance. All this praises His glory!

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The Gospel lesson is from Mark chapter 6.

C: (copy) Glory to You, O Lord.

King HEROD heard about Jesus preaching and doing wonderful works. Many people knew Jesus’ name. Some people said, “God raised JOHN the Baptizer alive from the dead! That is why Jesus can do wonderful works.” Other people said, “Jesus is ELIJAH.” Other people said, “Jesus is a prophet. He is the same-as one of the prophets from long ago.”

King HEROD heard about Jesus. He said, “I cut-off JOHN’s head. Now he is alive again!”

This is what happened. King HEROD sent soldiers to arrest JOHN and put him in prison. He did that for his wife HERODIAS. HEROD had a brother named PHILIP. Before, PHILIP and HERODIAS were married. But HEROD took-away HERODIAS and married her. JOHN told King HEROD, “You took your brother’s wife. That is against God’s law.” HERODIAS hated JOHN and she wanted to kill him, but she couldn’t. HEROD feared JOHN. HEROD protected JOHN, because he knew JOHN was a righteous and holy man. HEROD liked to listen to JOHN preach, but JOHN’s preaching made him confused.

Then the right time happened. HEROD had a big dinner for his birthday. He invited his leaders and army commanders and important men from GALILEE. HERODIAS’ daughter came in and danced. She made HEROD and his visitors happy. King HEROD promised her, “Ask me for anything you want, and I will give it to you. You can ask up to half of my kingdom.”

She went and asked her mother, “What should I ask for?”

HERODIAS told her, “Ask for JOHN the Baptizer’s head.”

The girl quickly went to the king and said, “I want right now the head of JOHN the Baptizer on a plate.”

The king was very sorry. But he made promises in front of his visitors, and he didn’t want to break his promise. He sent a soldier to cut-off JOHN’s head and bring it. The soldier went to the prison, cut-off JOHN’s head, and brought the head on a plate and gave it to the girl. She gave it to her mother. JOHN’s disciples heard what happened. Then they came, got JOHN’s body, and laid his body in a tomb.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: (copy) Praise to You, O Christ.