***Introit (Psalm 119)***

P: Make me understand Your laws.

**C: Then I will think about all Your wonderful works.**

P: My soul dissolves because of my sadness.

**C: Make me strong with Your word.**

P: Throw-away my wrong actions.

**C: In Your mercy, teach me Your law.**

P: I decided to live faithfully.

**C: Your right law leads me.**

P: Lord, I hold-on to Your word and promises.

**C: Don’t let me become ashamed.**

P: I will run to follow Your commandments,

**C: When You free my heart.**

**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: Merciful Lord, You didn’t keep Your only Son. You sent Jesus to die for all people. Give us courage and strength. Then we can pick-up our cross and follow Jesus. 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 Deuteronomy chapter 30.

 Look, today I put in-front-of-you life and success, and death and trouble. I command you today to love the Lord your God, to follow His ways, and obey His commandments and laws and judgments. Then you will live and your people will increase. The Lord your God will bless you in the promised land you are entering.

 But if you will not obey God, and you leave Him and worship and serve other gods, then I tell you today that you will die. You will not live a long time in the promised land across the JORDAN RIVER.

 I name heaven and earth as witnesses against you. I put in-front-of-you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life. Then you will live. You and your children will love the Lord your God, obey His voice, and trust Him. He is your long life, then you will live in the land the Lord promised to your fathers, to ABRAHAM, ISAAC and JACOB.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The New Testament lesson is from Philemon.

 A letter from PAUL, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and TIMOTHY our brother. To PHILEMON, our dear brother and fellow worker, and to APPHIA our sister, and to ARCHIPPUS our fellow worker, and to the church meeting in your house.

 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you. I pray for you, because I hear about your love and faith in the Lord Jesus and how you help God’s holy people. I pray that you sharing your faith gives you full knowledge of the good things Christ gives us. Brother, your love gives me much joy and comfort, because you encourage the hearts of God’s people.

 I am brave enough in Christ to command you to do the right thing. But because of love I will beg you. I am only PAUL, an old man, and now a prisoner for Christ Jesus. I beg you to take-care-of my son, ONESIMUS. I became his father while I am here in prison. In the past, he was worthless to you, but now he is worth much to you and me.

 I send ONESIMUS to you. I am sending him the same-as my heart. I wanted to keep him with me. Then he can serve me for you while I am in prison for the Gospel. But I didn’t want to decide without your approval. I didn’t want to force you to do anything. I want you to decide for yourself.

 Maybe that is why he left you for a while. Now you can have him again forever. You don’t get him again as a slave. He is more than a slave. He is a dear brother, especially to me. But now much more a brother to you, both as a man and a Christian.

 If you think of me as a partner, then accept him the same as you accept me. If ONESIMUS did wrong against you in any way, or if he owes you anything, then I will pay. I, PAUL, write this myself. I will pay it, and I will not remind you that you owe me your life.

 Yes, brother, help me in the Lord. Encourage my heart in Christ. I know you will obey. That is why I write you, because I know you will do even more than I say.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The Gospel lesson is from Luke chapter 14.

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

 Large groups of people followed Jesus. Jesus looked at them and said, “If you come follow Me, and you don’t hate your father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and hate your life, then you can’t be My disciple. If you don’t take-up the cross and follow Me, you can’t be My disciple.”

 “If anyone wants to build a tower, first you sit-down and figure how-much that costs, to see if you have enough money to finish paying for it. Or you begin building the foundation, but you can’t finish the building. Then everyone watching you will laugh at you. They will say, ‘This man started to build, but he can’t finish it.’”

 “Or maybe a king goes to war against another king. First, the king must decide if his ten thousand soldiers can defeat the other king and twenty thousand soldiers. If he can’t win, then while the other king is still far-away, he sends his friends to go make peace with the enemy. The same, if you can’t give-up everything in your life, then you can’t be My disciple.”

 “Salt is good. But if salt loses its taste, how can you make it salty again? That is useless and no good for soil or FERTILIZER. You throw it out. If you can pay attention, then pay attention.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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