***Introit (Psalm 121)***

P: The Lord takes care of you.

**C: The Lord is your comfort near you.**

P: I look at the hills.

C: My help comes from where?

P: My help comes from the Lord.

**C: He made heaven and earth.**

P: The Lord will not let you fall.

**C: He protects you. He will not fail.**

P: He takes care of Israel,

**C: And He will not sleep.**

P: The Lord will protect you from all evil.

**C: He will take-care-of your life.**

P: The Lord will protect you going out and coming in

C: Now and forever.

**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: God, You protect all people trusting You. Show mercy to us. You reign and guide us, then things on earth will not hurt us and we will keep eternal life. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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 Isaiah chapter 45.

 The Lord chose CYRUS to become king and to defeat nations and kings. The Lord will open doors for CYRUS and no one will stop him.

 The Lord says to CYRUS, “I will prepare your way. I, God, make the mountains flat. I will destroy strong doors and metal gates. I will give you riches from dark, secret places. You will know that I, the Lord, do this. I am the God of ISRAEL and I call your name. I chose you to help My servant people ISRAEL. CYRUS, you don’t know Me, but still I call you and name you.

 I am the only Lord. There is no other god. CYRUS, you don’t know Me, but I give to you the strength you need. Then every person from east to west can know that I am the Lord. There is no other god. I, God, make light and darkness. I make health and destruction. I am the Lord, and I do all these things.”

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The New Testament lesson is from 1 Thessalonians chapter 1.

 This letter is from PAUL, SILAS, and TIMOTHY, written for the church in the city named THESSALONICA. You belong-to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. God give you grace and peace.

 We always thank God for you and pray for you. When we pray to God our Father, we remember your faith and love working, and you continue to have hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. Christian friends, we know God loves you and chose you. We preached the Good News to you, and God’s word came to you in power with the Holy Spirit and strong faith.

 You know how we lived. You learned to live the same as us and the Lord. You suffered much, but you still believed God’s word with much joy in the Holy Spirit. That way, you became examples for all the believers in MACEDONIA and ACHAIA.

 God’s word spread from you to MACEDONIA and ACHAIA. News about your faith spread everywhere. We don’t need to tell anyone. People everywhere tell us how you welcomed us and how you stopped worshiping idols and began worshiping the true and living God. You wait for His Son from heaven. God raised Jesus from the dead, and Jesus saves us from the future judgment.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The Gospel lesson is from Matthew chapter 22.

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

 Then the PHARISEES went and discussed how to trap Jesus with His words. They sent their followers with HEROD’S followers to ask Jesus, “Teacher, we know You are an honest man. You teach God’s way perfectly. People’s opinions and power can’t influence You. Now answer us, what do You think? We should pay tax money to the ROMAN king, or not?”

 But Jesus knew their bad thoughts and said, “You two-faced people, why test Me? Show Me the TAX money.” They gave Jesus one coin. Jesus said to them, “This coin has a picture and a name, whose?”

 They answered, “The ROMAN king.”

 Jesus said, “Then give the ROMAN king the things belonging to him and give God the things belonging to Him.”

 When they heard Jesus’ answer, they were amazed and they left.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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