The reading of Holy Scripture together as a community has been a central part of Christian worship throughout the Church’s long history, and it has deep roots within the practices of God’s people, Israel.

We read Scripture together not simply to learn new information about God’s dealings with humanity in the past, but to listen in faith to what the Living God is saying to us His people today. We listen to His Word to draw closer to Him, and to one another.

After every Scripture Reading this morning, we’re all invited to take a few moments in silence to reflect upon the passage, and how God’s Spirit might be addressing us through it, as individuals or as a community.

In those moments, pay attention to any words, ideas, or images that stand out to you. In the silence afterwards, ask God to help you hear His heart for you today.

After the Gospel is read, and we’ve taken a moment to in silence to reflect upon it, I’ll share a few reflection questions that Pastor Rob has prepared to help us dig in a bit deeper.

Reflection Questions

* In our First Reading from the Prophet Hosea, the Lord God speaks of His tender compassion and love for Israel, even though they have rejected Him and chased after other gods and sought to be like other neighbouring nations, Egypt and Assyria. Even though Israel will suffer deep consequences by choosing to reject their Lord, God promises to mercifully spare them the worst, and to rescue them.
* In our Second Reading from Colossians, St. Paul calls Christians to set our minds on heavenly things (like the Risen Christ and His Kingdom), which means taking on a completely new way of life, here and now, that is in line with God’s good ways.
* In our Gospel Reading, Jesus warns people of the dangers of greed, and of centering our lives on the temporary and material concerns of life.
* **In what ways are we tempted to reject or ignore God’s Kingdom, and choose to live as if something else (like our desires, our money, or comfort) matters more?**
* **How might a deeper appreciation of God’s compassion and love make a difference in our day to day lives?**