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

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 and 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 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 Book of Exodus, we find the Israelites *grumbling*… giving voice to their doubts in God’s desire and ability to lead them through the barren wilderness and into the New Life as He had promised. Despite their clear lack of faith, God provides for them all in miraculous ways, with the hope that this experience will teach them to trust Him from then on.
* In our Second Reading from Philippians, St. Paul gives voice to his trust that *whatever* happens… whether he lives or dies, because of Jesus the Risen Lord, there is reason to rejoice: if he dies now, St. Paul knows he will be safe in the arms of Christ. But if he goes on living, he will continue to share in Christ’s ongoing work and New Life here on earth. His hope is that his fellow believers in Philippi (and even here in Gondola Point) will come to see their own lives in this way: if we die, we will be with the Lord, and until then our whole lives are to share in Christ’s New Life and work, which gives us cause to rejoice *even* when it’s hard.
* In our Gospel Reading, Jesus tells a parable about a landowner who hires workers at various times throughout the day, but generously pays them all the same for their labours. Some then grumble, believing they deserve more because they worked more. Jesus uses this story to expose the hard hearts of his listeners who think they deserve God’s blessings more than others, instead of simply trusting God to be *gracious* and to provide *all* that is needed.
* **All three of our readings invite us to place our trust in the Living God’s generosity and ability to lead us into His blessed New Life. Will we grumble when it seems we won’t have enough, or when we face hardship for Jesus’ sake? Will we look around with envy at what others seem to receive, or will we *trust* in God’s saving love, and *rejoice* in the New Life He is leading *us* to?**
* **Take some time to remember how God has *already* provided for you. Perhaps you found a need met in a surprising way? Perhaps you found peace and assurance of God’s love in the midst of really challenging times? Perhaps you found yourselves generously blessed in ways you didn’t deserve? Thank God for these gifts, and invite Him to strengthen your faith through them.**
* **What else is God’s Spirit saying to you today?**