

*Readings for February 25, 2024*  
*United Church of Strafford, Vermont*

**Responsive Reading** *from Psalm 22*

Leader: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me,  
from the words of my groaning?

**People: O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;  
and by night, but find no rest.**

Leader: Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of the saints.  
In you our ancestors trusted;  
they trusted, and you delivered them.  
To you they cried, and were saved.

**People: Do not be far from me, for trouble is near  
and there is no one to help.**

Leader: From the horns of the wild oxen you rescued me.  
In the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

**People: For you did not despise or abhor  
the affliction of the afflicted;  
you did not hide your face from me,  
but heard when I cried to you.**

Leader: The poor shall eat and be satisfied.  
Those who seek God shall praise God.  
May their hearts live forever!

**People: All the ends of the earth shall remember  
and turn to you, O God,  
And we shall live for you.**

*Mark 8:31-9:1*

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake...will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life...?" And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the realm of God has come on earth."