

Friday, December 18, 2020

+ OPENING CALL TO PRAISE AND PRAYER

O God, open our lips,
and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.
From the rising of the sun to its setting,
we praise your name, O God.

+ REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

By Word and water God renews us this day
in the living fountain of God's grace,
and raises us with Christ Jesus
to live a new life in the Spirit.

OSL

Satisfy us in the morning
with your steadfast love, O God,
that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

+ MORNING HYMN

O come, thou Day-spring, come and cheer,
Our spirits by thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to earth; let love dispel all fear.

* OSL

+ MORNING PRAYER

The Holy One* be with you;
And also with you.

Let us pray:

Oh God, The Holy Spirit,
come to us, and among us;
come as the wind, and cleanse us;
come as the fire, and burn;
come as the dew, and refresh;
convict, convert, and consecrate many hearts and lives to
our great good and to your greater glory;
and this we ask for Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen**

UM Book of Worship

+ Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 NRSV

You have set the crown on one who is mighty,
You have exalted one chosen from the people.

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all
generations.

12/18/20

² I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

³ You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:

⁴ 'I will establish your descendants forever,
and build your throne for all generations.'" *Selah*

¹⁹ Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and
said:

"I have set the crown on one who is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

²⁰ I have found my servant David;
with my holy oil I have anointed him;

²¹ my hand shall always remain with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

²² The enemy shall not outwit him,
the wicked shall not humble him.

²³ I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

²⁴ My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;
and in my name his horn shall be exalted.

²⁵ I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶ He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!'

Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and *blessed*,
one God, now and for-ever, *A-men*.

***You have set the crown on one who is mighty,
You have exalted one chosen from the people.***

+ SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ **WORD: Hebrews 1:5-14** CEV

⁵ God has never said
to any of the angels,
"You are my Son, because today
I have become your Father!"

Neither has God said
to any of them,
"I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son!"

⁶ When God brings his first-born Son into the world, he
commands all of his angels to worship him.

12/18/20

⁷ And when God speaks about the angels, he says,

“I change my angels into wind
and my servants
into flaming fire.”

⁸ But God says about his Son,

“You are God,
and you will rule
as King forever!
Your royal power
brings about justice.

⁹ You loved justice
and hated evil,
and so I, your God,
have chosen you.

I appointed you
and made you happier
than any of your friends.”

¹⁰ The Scriptures also say,

“In the beginning, Lord,
you were the one

who laid the foundation
of the earth
and created the heavens.

¹¹ They will all disappear
and wear out like clothes,
but you will last forever.

¹² You will roll them up
like a robe
and change them
like a garment.

But you are always the same,
and you will live forever.”

¹³ God never said to any
of the angels,
“Sit at my right side
until I make your enemies
into a footstool for you!”

¹⁴ Angels are merely spirits sent to serve people who are
going to be saved.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God!

+ SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ **CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH**

We bless you, Adonai, God of *Israel*,
for you come to visit us and ransom us from *bondage*.
You have brought forth a strong *De-liverer*
in the house of your child *David*.

**This is what your holy prophets an-nounced:
deliverance from enemies and from the hand
of all who hate *us*;
mercy a-mong our *ancestors*,
and remembrance of your ho-ly *covenant*.**

This is the promise you swore to our an-cestor, *Abraham*,
to make us un-a-fraid,
to rescue us from our *enemies*,
to serve before you, holy and just,
all the days of our *lives*.

**And this, my little child,
shall be called prophet of the Most *High*,
going before you, Adonai, to pre-pare your *paths*,
making your people know *de-liverance*
by the forgiveness of their *sins*.**

Through your merciful compassions, God our *God*,

**the dawn from on high shall *visit us*,
to shine on those kept in dungeons
and the shadows of *death*
and to guide our feet onto the path of *peace*.**

LUKE 1:68-79

Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and *blessed*,
one God, now and for-ever, *A-men*.

+ **COMMEMORATION: THELMA STEVENS**

“Let’s call this meeting to order,” Thelma Stevens would say. Long after a stroke deprived her of clear thinking, Stevens carried on habits developed during a lifetime devoted to serving God. Stevens (b. 1902) worked to overcome barriers that divide and separate people.

Propelled by the memory of witnessing a Mississippi lynching, Stevens made a commitment to spend her life working to eradicate racism. She studied New Testament and sociology at Scarritt College. She learned that Jesus rejected the external authority of Jewish tradition in favor of an inner moral consciousness guided by “his sense of the presence and spirit of God.” [xlili] Stevens rejected teachings of church and culture about the sanctity of segregation, replacing them with a

12/18/20

belief, confirmed by her experiences in black communities of Nashville and Augusta, that all persons are children of God who deserve to be treated with equality, dignity, and respect.

For 28 years from 1940 to 1968, Stevens headed the Department of Christian Social Relations of the Women's Division of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church. Because the gospel of Jesus taught racial inclusiveness, Stevens called Methodist women to work to end discrimination in the military, schools, government, business, and in The Methodist Church.

Guided by multiracial consultations, Stevens outlined for Methodist women appropriate next steps for dismantling racism. Women of the Woman's Society of Christian Service and the Wesleyan Service Guild laced their meetings with Bible study and prayer. They adopted a Charter on Racial Policies. Community surveys and local discussions uncovered problems and pain. International, interracial teams of women toured the U.S., leading workshops on racism. In times of racial crisis, Stevens initiated seminars on race that brought community leaders to deal with heated passions, anger, inequity, and rumor. Quietly and often surreptitiously, Methodist

women carried on interracial work in local communities all over the nation."

* For All the Saints

+ SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ **COLLECT: THELMA STEVENS**

God our hope, in troubled days you send your Spirit upon daughters and sons, the young and the old, and fill them with visions, dreams, and reforming zeal: Make your will known to us again, as you did through your prophet Thelma Stevens, that all your people may call upon you and be saved, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, from generation to generation. Amen.

* For All the Saints

+ **PRAYERS**

The Holy One be with you,
and also with you.

Let us pray: *(pray for those on your heart today)*

+ PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

Gracious God, as your son wept with Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, look with compassion this day on those who grieve. Grant them the assurance of your presence now and faith in your eternal goodness, that in them may be fulfilled the promise that those who mourn shall be comforted; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

United Methodist Hymnal - *adapted*

+ PRAYER FOR HEROIC SERVICE

O Judge of the nations, we remember before you with grateful hearts the men and women of our country who in the day of decision ventured much for the liberties we now enjoy. Grant that we may not rest until all the people of this land share the benefits of true freedom and gladly accept its disciplines. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

+ PRAYERS FOR TRAVELLERS

O God, our heavenly Father, whose glory fills the whole creation, and whose presence we find wherever

we go: Preserve those who must travel in this time of pandemic; surround them with your loving care; protect them from every danger; and bring them in safety to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ COLLECT OF THE WEEK

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

+ COLLECT FOR FRIDAY – Of the Holy Cross

Almighty God, whose beloved Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage, we plead, to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

12/18/20

+ THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.*

+ CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father,
You have brought us in safety to this new day:
preserve us with your mighty power,
that we may not fall into sin,
nor be overcome by adversity;
and in all we do
direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

+ BLESSING

I pray that God, the source of all hope, will infuse your lives with an abundance of joy and peace in the midst of your faith so that your hope will overflow through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** Romans 15:13 *THE VOICE*

Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at
Elwood United Methodist Church

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