

Friday, December 4, 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 85:1-2, 8-13 NRSV

**Steadfast love and faithful-ness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

¹ LORD, you were favorable to your *land*;
you restored the for-tunes of *Jacob*.

² You forgave the iniquity of your *people*;
you pardoned all their *sin*.

⁸ Let me hear what God the LORD will *speak*,
for he will speak peace to his people,

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to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their *hearts*.

⁹ Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear *him*,
that his glory may dwell in our *land*.

¹⁰ Steadfast love and faithful-ness will *meet*,
righteousness and peace will kiss each *other*.

¹¹ Faithfulness will spring up from the *ground*,
and righteousness will look down from the *sky*.

¹² The LORD will give what is *good*,
and our land will yield its in-crease.

¹³ Righteousness will go be-fore *him*,
and will make a path for his *steps*.

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

***Steadfast love and faithful-ness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.***

Silence

+ WORD: Acts 11:19-26 CEB

¹⁹ Now those who were scattered as a result of the trouble that occurred because of Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. They proclaimed the word only to Jews. ²⁰ Among them were some people from Cyprus and Cyrene. They entered Antioch and began to proclaim the good news about the Lord Jesus also to Gentiles. ²¹ The Lord's power was with them, and a large number came to believe and turned to the Lord.

²² When the church in Jerusalem heard about this, they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³ When he arrived and saw evidence of God's grace, he was overjoyed and encouraged everyone to remain fully committed to the Lord. ²⁴ Barnabas responded in this way because he was a good man, whom the Holy Spirit had endowed with exceptional faith. A considerable number of people were added to the Lord. ²⁵ Barnabas went to Tarsus in search of Saul. ²⁶ When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. They were there for a whole year, meeting with the church and teaching large numbers of people. It was in Antioch where the disciples were first labeled "Christians."

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: JOHN OF DAMASCUS**

John was the son of a Christian tax collector for the Caliph of Damascus. Because of his position, John's father was able to obtain the services of a learned Christian monk to tutor his son. John proved to be an able student and impressed the Caliph with his knowledge and abilities. The faith of the monk, and of his parents, became a vital part of John's life also.

As a young man, John followed in his father's footsteps and served in the high office of the Caliph's government. While serving in that position he wrote the first of three discussions of the veneration of icons, favoring their use. This work involved him in the iconoclast controversy raging throughout Christianity. During the course of these early writings, around 730, John was ordained a priest.

Shortly after these publications John entered a monastery at Mar Saba, near Jerusalem. He devoted himself to study,

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preaching, and writing for the rest of his life. His greatest work, *The Fountain Of Knowledge*, had a great impact on the theology of both the Eastern and Western Churches.

John was also a poet and hymn writer. Two of his hymns that are still sung today are “The Day of Resurrection, Earth Tell It Out Abroad” and “Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain.”

Many more are used in the eastern Orthodox Church.

* For All the Saints

+ **COLLECT: JOHN OF DAMASCUS**

God our Teacher, from whom comes all true knowledge: so bind your words to our lives and write them on the tablets of our hearts, that we may not be swayed by false winds; and grant us faithful guides like your servant John of Damascus, that our path to you be made straight and sure through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

SILENT REFLECTION

+ **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*

+ **FOR THOSE WHO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION**

Almighty God, you proclaim your truth in every age by many voices: Direct, in our time, we pray, those who speak where many listen and write what many read; that they may do their part in making the heart of this people wise, its mind sound, and its will righteous; to the honor of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

+ PRAYERS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Almighty God our heavenly Father, send down upon those who hold office in this State of New Jersey, the spirit of wisdom, charity, and justice; that with steadfast purpose they may faithfully serve in their offices to promote the well-being of all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ COLLECT OF THE WEEK

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, 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.

+ 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,

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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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