

Monday, December 28, 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.

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

+ **MORNING CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING**

It is good to give thanks to the *LORD*,
to sing praises to your name, O Most *High*;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithful-ness by *night*,
to the music of the lute and the *harp*,
to the melody of the lyre.

For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your *work*;
at the works of your hands I sing for *joy*.

How great are your works, O LORD!

Your thoughts are ver-y *deep!*

Psalm 92:1-5

+ **MORNING PRAYER**

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

Let us pray:

Let us pray:

Dawn from on high,

Your light illumines all our days.

Awaken us to your visitations throughout this day.

Be merciful in us for the sake of others.

Make us fearless when confronting injustice and need,
that we may give you glory in the power of the Spirit. Amen.

* For All the Saints

+ **Psalm 148** NRSV

**Joy to the world,
The Lord is come!**

¹ Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

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praise him in the heights!

² Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!

³ Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for he commanded and they were created.

⁶ He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.^[a]

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,

⁸ fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!

⁹ Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰ Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!

¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

¹² Young men and women alike,
old and young together!

¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴ He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the LORD!

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

***Joy to the world,
The Lord is come!***

Silence

+ **WORD:** Matthew 2:13-18

¹³ Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

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¹⁴Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

¹⁶When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.^[c] ¹⁷Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸“A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

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: HOLY INNOCENTS

“The Holy Innocents or Innocent Infants are those children of Bethlehem slain by Herod as he tried to remove Jesus as a contender for king of Israel. Their feast comes as a hard slap to the face, reversing any excess of sentimentality created by Christmas. The Innocent Infants remind us that from the beginning of God’s work in Christ, forces of evil were already at work in opposition to him. The shadow of the cross loomed over the manger of Bethlehem.

The feast of the Innocent Infants was celebrated in the early church not as an extension of the Nativity story but as a commemoration of martyrs. Indeed, in some churches, the Innocent Infants were grouped together in the calendar with other biblical martyrs, e.g., Stephen, John the Baptist, James, Peter, and Paul.

Almost every patristic treatment of the Infants recognized them as martyrs. These early sources balance the remembrance of Herod’s cruelty with an understanding that God through Christ stands victorious over all evil and rewards those who have suffered unjustly for Christ. Early authors portrayed the Innocent Infants as playing with palms and crowns before the heavenly altar or as having joined the blessed choir of martyrs. On this basis the Innocent Infants were not to be pitied.

In our own time the Innocent Infants can offer a broadened vision of martyrdom. Perhaps it is not sufficient to shake our heads in sadness as we see innocent children today victimized in war, in physical and sexual abuse, in drive-by shootings, and in an avalanche of other violent evils. The Infants call the church to name these children, too, as martyrs, denouncing the evil forced on them as against Christ and proclaiming the hope that God is victorious over such injustice. The Innocent Infants remind us that the shadow, and the victory, of the cross looms over the mangers of today.”

* For All the Saints

Silent reflection

+ **COLLECT: HOLY INNOCENTS**

Refuge and Redeemer, when the rage and darkness of the world comes with senseless wasting of lives, you make victims your dearest prize and enable us to see their feet standing before the throne and before the Lamb. 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)*

+ **PRAYER FOR RECOVERY OF SICKNESS**

O God, the strength of the weak and the comfort of sufferers: Mercifully accept our prayers, and grant to those we pray for this day, the help of your power, that their sickness may be turned into health, and our sorrow into joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ **PRAYERS FOR JOY IN GOD'S CREATION**

O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

+ **PRAYERS FOR OUR COUNTRY**

Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech you that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in you to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ **COLLECT OF THE WEEK**

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our

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hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of 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, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

+ **BLESSING**

⁹ I pray that your love will keep on growing and that you will fully know and understand ¹⁰ how to make the right choices. Then you will still be pure and innocent when Christ returns. And until that day, ¹¹ Jesus Christ will keep you busy doing good deeds that bring glory and praise to God. **Amen.**

Philippians 1:9-11 CEV

Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at
Elwood United Methodist Church

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