

Wednesday, December 9, 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, O come, thou Lord of might,  
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height;  
***In ancient times did give the law,***

In cloud, and majesty, and awe.

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:

Give us, O Lord, steadfast hearts, which no unworthy  
thought can drag downward, unconquered hearts, which  
no tribulation can wear out, upright hearts, which no  
unworthy purpose may tempt aside. Bestow upon us  
also, O Lord our God, understanding to know you,  
diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you, and a  
faithfulness that may finally embrace you; through Jesus  
Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

(SAINT THOMAS, ITALY, 13TH CENT., ALT.)

+ Psalm 27 NRSV

***Hear, O Lord, when I cry a-loud,  
be gracious to me and an-swer me!***

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<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my light and my salva-*tion*;  
whom shall I *fear*?

The LORD is the stronghold of my *life*;  
of whom shall I be a-*fraid*?

<sup>2</sup> When evildoers assail me  
to de-your my *flesh*—  
my adversaries and foes—  
they shall stum-ble and *fall*.

<sup>3</sup> Though an army en-camp against *me*,  
my heart shall not *fear*,  
though war rise up a-gainst *me*,  
yet I will be con-fi-*dent*.

<sup>4</sup> One thing I asked of the *LORD*,  
that will I seek after:  
to live in the house of the *LORD*  
all the days of my *life*,  
to behold the beauty of the *LORD*,  
and to inquire in his *temple*.

<sup>5</sup> For he will hide me in his shelter  
in the day of *trouble*;

he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;  
he will set me high on a *rock*.

<sup>6</sup> Now my head is lift-ed *up*  
above my enemies all a-round *me*,  
and I will offer in his tent  
sacrifices with shouts of *joy*;  
I will sing and make melody to the *LORD*.

<sup>7</sup> Hear, O LORD, when I cry a-*loud*,  
be gracious to me and an-swer *me*!

<sup>8</sup> “Come,” my heart says, “seek his *face*!”  
Your face, LORD, do I seek.

<sup>9</sup> Do not hide your face from *me*.

Do not turn your servant away in anger,  
you who have been my *help*.

Do not cast me off, do not for-sake *me*,  
O God of my sal-*vation*!

<sup>10</sup> If my father and mother for-sake *me*,  
the LORD will take me *up*.

<sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, O *LORD*,  
and lead me on a level path  
because of my en-e-*mies*.

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<sup>12</sup> Do not give me up to the will of my ad-ver-saries,  
for false witnesses have risen against me,  
and they are breathing out vi-o-lence.

<sup>13</sup> I believe that I shall see the goodness of the *LORD*  
in the land of the *living*.

<sup>14</sup> Wait for the *LORD*;  
be strong, and let your heart take *courage*;  
wait for the *LORD*!

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

***Hear, O Lord, when I cry a-loud,  
be gracious to me and an-swer me!***

Silence

+ **WORD**: **Luke 1:5-17** NRSV

<sup>5</sup> In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest  
named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of  
Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her  
name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> Both of them were righteous before

God, living blamelessly according to all the  
commandments and regulations of the Lord. <sup>7</sup> But they  
had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both  
were getting on in years.

<sup>8</sup> Once when he was serving as priest before God and his  
section was on duty, <sup>9</sup> he was chosen by lot, according to  
the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the  
Lord and offer incense. <sup>10</sup> Now at the time of the incense  
offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying  
outside. <sup>11</sup> Then there appeared to him an angel of the  
Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

<sup>12</sup> When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear  
overwhelmed him. <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, "Do not be  
afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your  
wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him  
John. <sup>14</sup> You will have joy and gladness, and many will  
rejoice at his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great in the sight of the  
Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even  
before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>16</sup> He  
will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.  
<sup>17</sup> With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him,  
to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the

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disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

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: WESLEY BRANCH RICKEY**

Not all saints serve Christ as monastics or clergy. Wesley Branch Rickey reminds us of the power all Christians share to change the world if they live out the gospel in their own situations. He was born in Ohio on December 20, 1881 to parents who named him after the founder of their Methodist faith. From the beginning, Rickey's life combined a deeply religious nature, a searching intellect,

and a passionate love of baseball.

To support himself during his legal studies at Ohio Wesleyan, Rickey coached the school's baseball team.

Once while traveling, the team stopped in a hotel for the evening where the hotel staff would not let Rickey's star player, an African American catcher named Charlie Thomas, register for a room. Rickey invited Thomas to share his room. The effect of the country's pervasive racism haunted Rickey until he made his contribution to civil rights.

That contribution came years later when Rickey was general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. There, he began to search for an African-American athlete with whom he could begin integration of the white baseball world.

By 1945 Rickey had chosen Jack Robinson, a talented Negro League player whose baseball skills were matched by his desire for justice and immense inner strength. Together, Rickey and Robinson partnered to bring equality to baseball players regardless of their skin color. Although Robinson bore the brunt of the ugly attacks on integrated baseball, the two men and their families supported one another during their struggle for equal rights.

\* For All the Saints

+ Silent reflection

+ **COLLECT:** WESLEY BRANCH RICKEY

Purify us with your holy fire, O God, and send us prophets in our day like Wesley Branch Rickey whose voice called for cleansing and honesty. Turn our hearts toward others in repentance. Refine our devotion and service to be pleasing to you as when we first loved you. For your mercy, we revere you, through Jesus, our Redeemer. 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)*

+ SILENT PRAYER

+ FOR A SICK PERSON

***O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need: We humbly beseech you to behold, visit, and relieve your sick servants for whom our prayers are desired. Look upon them with the eyes of your mercy; comfort them with a sense of your goodness; preserve them from the temptations of the enemy; and give them patience under their affliction. In your good time, restore them to health, and enable them to live the remainder of their lives in your awe, and to your glory; and grant that finally they may dwell with you in life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

+ PRAYER FOR IN TIMES OF CONFLICT

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

+ PRAYER FOR SOCIAL SERVICE

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

+ COLLECT OF THE WEEK

***Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.***

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+ 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

God be in your head, and in your understanding.  
God be in your eyes, and in your looking.  
God be in your mouth, and in your speaking.  
God be in your heart, and in your thinking.  
God be at your end, and at your departing.

(SARUM LITURGY, ENGLAND, 13TH CENT., ALT.)

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## Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at  
Elwood United Methodist Church

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