

Saturday, May 1, 2021

You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 1:8

* **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.***

* **CANTICLE OF ACCLAMATION**

You, Christ, reign in glory,
the eternal Chosen One of God.
When you came in the flesh to set us free,
you took our nature on you,
human child of human mother.

***To give us life, you died and broke death's power
making us worthy by your boundless goodness.
You broke the chains that held us captive
and opened wide the gates of eternal life with you.***

O creator God, of majesty unbounded,
your Chosen One, worthy of all worship:
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide,
save your people, bless your inheritance.

***Complete the work of our salvation;
with grace and judgment,
come and save your people.
And bring us with your Saints
to live with you in God's eternal presence.***

* **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.)

* **WORD:** Wisdom 7:1-14 CEB

I'm just a human like everyone else. I'm a descendant of the first person who was created out of earth. My flesh was molded into shape during the time that I was in my mother's womb. ² Over the course of ten months, I took shape from her blood, built up out of a man's seed and a night of pleasure. ³ When I was born, I gulped in the same air as everyone else. I dropped out onto the same earth that all people share. I let out my first cry that was just like the sound anyone else makes. ⁴ I was nurtured by snug clothes and good care. ⁵ No king has ever begun life any

differently. ⁶ There's only one way into life for everyone, and only one way out as well.

⁷ Because of this, I prayed, and the ability to reason wisely was given to me. I called out, and Wisdom's spirit came to me. ⁸ I chose wisdom above all the symbols of royalty and over any throne. In comparison to her, I counted riches as nothing. ⁹ She was more precious to me than even a priceless jewel, since all the gold in the world would be nothing more than a little sand before her. All the silver would be just like clay in her presence. ¹⁰ I loved her more than health or beauty. I chose her above sunlight itself, for her brightness never sets.

¹¹ Yet then I found that every other good thing also came with her, for in her hands were countless riches. ¹² I rejoiced in all this because Wisdom brings them all in tow. I didn't know that she had given birth to them. ¹³ I learned in innocence, and I don't begrudge sharing it with you. I won't conceal her riches. ¹⁴ She's a never-ending treasure for humans. Those who possess her are ready to be God's friends, commended for the gifts that come from instruction.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God!

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* **PSALM 55** NRSV

¹ Give ear to my prayer, O God;
do not hide yourself from my supplication.
² Attend to me, and answer me;
I am troubled in my complaint.
I am distraught ³ by the noise of the enemy,
because of the clamor of the wicked.
For they bring trouble upon me,
and in anger they cherish enmity against me.
⁴ My heart is in anguish within me,
the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
⁵ Fear and trembling come upon me,
and horror overwhelms me.
⁶ And I say, "O that I had wings like a dove!
I would fly away and be at rest;
⁷ truly, I would flee far away;
I would lodge in the wilderness; *Selah*
⁸ I would hurry to find a shelter for myself
from the raging wind and tempest."

⁹ Confuse, O Lord, confound their speech;
for I see violence and strife in the city.
¹⁰ Day and night they go around it
on its walls,
and iniquity and trouble are within it;
¹¹ ruin is in its midst;
oppression and fraud
do not depart from its marketplace.
¹² It is not enemies who taunt me—
I could bear that;
it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—
I could hide from them.
¹³ But it is you, my equal,
my companion, my familiar friend,
¹⁴ with whom I kept pleasant company;
we walked in the house of God with the throng.
¹⁵ Let death come upon them;
let them go down alive to Sheol;
for evil is in their homes and in their hearts.
¹⁶ But I call upon God,
and the LORD will save me.
¹⁷ Evening and morning and at noon
I utter my complaint and moan,

and he will hear my voice.

¹⁸ He will redeem me unharmed
from the battle that I wage,
for many are arrayed against me.

¹⁹ God, who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*
will hear, and will humble them—
because they do not change,
and do not fear God.

²⁰ My companion laid hands on a friend
and violated a covenant with me

²¹ with speech smoother than butter,
but with a heart set on war;
with words that were softer than oil,
but in fact were drawn swords.

²² Cast your burden on the LORD,
and he will sustain you;
he will never permit
the righteous to be moved.

²³ But you, O God, will cast them down
into the lowest pit;
the bloodthirsty and treacherous
shall not live out half their days.

But I will trust in you.

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* **WORD:** **Luke 7:18-35** CEB

¹⁸ John's disciples informed him about all these things. John called two of his disciples ¹⁹ and sent them to the Lord. They were to ask him, "Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for someone else?"

²⁰ When they reached Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you. He asks, 'Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for someone else?'"

²¹ Right then, Jesus healed many of their diseases, illnesses, and evil spirits, and he gave sight to a number of blind people. ²² Then he replied to John's disciples, "Go, report to John what you have seen and heard. Those who were blind are able to see. Those who were crippled now walk. People with skin diseases are cleansed. Those who were deaf now hear. Those who were dead are raised up. And good news is preached to the poor.

²³ Happy is anyone who doesn't stumble along the way because of me."

²⁴ After John's messengers were gone, Jesus spoke to the crowds about John. "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A stalk blowing in the wind? ²⁵ What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in refined clothes? Look, those who dress in fashionable clothes and live in luxury are in royal palaces. ²⁶ What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ He is the one of whom it's written: Look, I'm sending my messenger before you, who will prepare your way before you. ²⁸ I tell you that no greater human being has ever been born than John. Yet whoever is least in God's kingdom is greater than he." ²⁹ Everyone who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged God's justice because they had been baptized by John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and legal experts rejected God's will for themselves because they hadn't been baptized by John. ³¹ "To what will I compare the people of this generation?" Jesus asked. "What are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace calling out to each other, 'We played the flute for you and you didn't dance. We sang a funeral song and you didn't cry.' ³³ John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴ Yet the Human One came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunk, a

friend of tax collectors and sinners.' ³⁵ But wisdom is proved to be right by all her descendants."

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*.**

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

*** THE APOSTLE'S CREED**

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;***

***he ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty.
From there he shall come again to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.***

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

*** COMMEMORATION: PHILIP AND JAMES THE LESS**

Today's apostles are not major actors on the biblical stage. The synoptic gospels only mention them in the list of the Twelve (Mt 10: 3; Mk 3: 18; Lk 6: 14,15).

The Gospel of John mentions Philip on four occasions. He is called by Jesus and brings Nathaniel to Jesus (1: 43-51); it is Philip whom Jesus asks where to buy bread for the multitude (6: 5-7); it is to Philip that some Greeks apply to see Jesus (12: 20-22); and it is

Philip who makes the request at the Last Supper for Jesus to "show us the Father" (14: 8). In all these incidents Philip functions in some way to introduce us to Jesus. First, it is as "him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Philip reminds us that the witness of the Hebrew scriptures leads us to a particular person, that the Christian revelation is one set in history. There can be no gospel abstracted from human thought or aspiration; it has to do with the son of a person with a proper name from a town we can find on the map. Second, Philip, by pointing out the impossibility of providing sufficient bread for the multitude, sets the stage for our introduction to Jesus as the bread of life. Third, through Philip the point is made that the good news reaches beyond racial divisions and that to serve Christ is to live in his presence. Finally, Philip's request to see the Father provides the most profound introduction to Jesus of all: "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

Of James the son of Alphaeus we know nothing beyond the record of his membership among the Twelve. He has been confused with that James who headed the Jerusalem church. The appellation "the Less" refers either to his height or age in comparison to James the brother of

John and is not intended as a comment on his relative contribution to the apostolic college! For Christians who live when "high profiles" are important and candidates for the episcopal college must keep their resumes updated, it is salutary to spend a day with a saint who has to share it with somebody else and whose deeds and faith are known in heaven alone.

* For All the Saints

* **PRAYERS**

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

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

* **COLLECT: PHILIP AND JAMES THE LESS**

Self-revealing God, you have made yourself known to us and so given us life: Help us like Philip and James to introduce others to your gospel that all your people may know and have life in you through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen.***

* For All the Saints

* FOR A SICK PERSON

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need: We humbly ask you to recognize, 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.

* EASTER SEASON INTERCESSION

O God, our Shepherd, our gate, our lamb: in the resurrection of your Son you have brought us into your pasture. Guide us to your clear streams and tame the wolf at our gate; through Christ our Lord. ***Amen. Alleluia.***

* PRAYERS for the CONSERVATION of NATURAL RESOURCES

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***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.***

* COLLECT OF THE WEEK

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people; Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

* PRAYER OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. 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**

Brothers and sisters, let me leave you with a blessing:
May peace and love with faith be yours from God the Father and the Lord Jesus the Anointed. May His grace surround all who love our Lord Jesus the Anointed with a never-ending love. **Amen!**

Ephesians 6:23-24 The VOICE

Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at
Elwood United Methodist Church

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