

Monday, December 27, 2021

* **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 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:

**New every morning is your love, great God of light,
and all day long you are working for good in the world.
Stir up in us desire to serve you, to live peacefully with
our neighbors, and to devote each day to your Son, our
Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.**

* **Psalm 30** NRSV

**Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.**

I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up,
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

² O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.

³ O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the
Pit.

⁴ Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.

⁵ For his anger is but for a moment;
his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

⁶ As for me, I said in my prosperity,
“I shall never be moved.”

⁷ By your favor, O LORD,
you had established me as a strong mountain;
you hid your face;
I was dismayed.

⁸ To you, O LORD, I cried,
and to the LORD I made supplication:

⁹ “What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?

Will the dust praise you?

Will it tell of your faithfulness?

¹⁰ Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!
O LORD, be my helper!”

¹¹ You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,

¹² so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

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

***Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.***

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* **1ST READING: Acts 6:1-7** CEB

About that time, while the number of disciples continued to increase, a complaint arose. Greek-speaking disciples accused the Aramaic-speaking disciples because their widows were being overlooked in the daily food service. ²The Twelve called a meeting of all the disciples and said, “It isn’t right for us to set aside proclamation of God’s word in order to serve tables. ³Brothers and sisters, carefully choose seven well-respected men from among you. They must be well-respected and endowed by the Spirit with exceptional wisdom. We will put them in charge of this concern.

⁴ As for us, we will devote ourselves to prayer and the service of

proclaiming the word.”⁵ This proposal pleased the entire community. They selected Stephen, a man endowed by the Holy Spirit with exceptional faith, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.⁶ The community presented these seven to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.⁷ God’s word continued to grow. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased significantly. Even a large group of priests embraced the faith.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God!

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* **GOSPEL READING: Matthew 23:34-39** CEB

³⁴ Therefore, look, I’m sending you prophets, wise people, and legal experts. Some of them you will kill and crucify. And some you will beat in your synagogues and chase from city to city.³⁵ Therefore, upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been poured out on the earth, from the blood of that righteous man Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you killed between the temple and the altar.³⁶ I assure you that all these things will come upon this generation.

³⁷ “Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You who kill the prophets and stone those who were sent to you. How often I wanted to gather your people together, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you didn’t want that.³⁸ Look, your house is left to you deserted.³⁹ I tell you, you won’t see me until you say, *Blessings on the one who comes in the Lord’s name.*”

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*.

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

*** 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: Stephen**

Very probably a Hellenistic Jew, Stephen was one of the “seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3), who were chosen by the apostles to relieve them of the administrative burden of “serving tables and caring for the widows.” By this appointment to assist the apostles, Stephen, the first named of those the New Testament calls “The Seven,” became the first to do what the Church traditionally considers to be the work and ministry of a deacon.

* **PRAYERS**

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

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

* **COLLECT: Stephen**

Lord Jesus, when the teeth of rage and resistance threaten us, fix our vision on you at the right hand of God. With Stephen, make us free to yield ourselves to you and to ask for mercy upon those who would destroy us.

* For All the Saints

* PRAYERS FOR STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE

Heavenly Father, giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve your sick servants, and give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that those for whom our prayers are offered may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

* PRAYERS FOR THE GREATER NJ CONFERENCE

O God, by your grace you have called us in this Greater New Jersey Conference to a sizable fellowship of faith. Bless Bishop Schol, our District Superintendents, other clergy, and all our people. Grant that your Word may be truly preached and truly heard, your Sacraments faithfully administered and faithfully received. By your Spirit, fashion our lives according to the example of your Son, and grant that we may show the power of your love to all among whom we live; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. BCP – adapted

* PRAYERS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may So move every human heart, and especially the hearts

of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; 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**

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

* **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**

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always. **Amen**

Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at
Elwood United Methodist Church

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