

Wednesday, December 29, 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** - *The Second Song of Isaiah*

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found;
call upon him when he draws near.
Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the evil ones their thoughts;

And let them turn to the Lord,
and he will have compassion,
and to our God, for he will richly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as rain and snow fall from the heavens
and return not again, but water the earth,

Bringing forth life and giving growth,
seed for sowing and bread for eating,

So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;
it will not return to me empty;

But it will accomplish that which I have purposed,
and prosper in that for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:6-11

* **MORNING PRAYER**

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

Let us pray:

Almighty and everlasting God, in whom we live and move and have our being, you created us for yourself, so that our hearts are restless until they find rest in you. Grant to us such piety of heart and strength of purpose that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will, and no weakness from doing it. In your light may we see life clearly and, in your service, find perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

St. Augustine

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* [Psalm 26](#) NRSV

***Prove me, O LORD, and try me;
test my heart and mind.***

Vindicate me, O LORD,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

² Prove me, O LORD, and try me;
test my heart and mind.

³ For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to you.

⁴ I do not sit with the worthless,
nor do I consort with hypocrites;

⁵ I hate the company of evildoers,
and will not sit with the wicked.

⁶ I wash my hands in innocence,
and go around your altar, O LORD,

⁷ singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,
and telling all your wondrous deeds.

⁸ O LORD, I love the house in which you dwell,
and the place where your glory abides.

⁹ Do not sweep me away with sinners,
nor my life with the bloodthirsty,

¹⁰ those in whose hands are evil devices,
and whose right hands are full of bribes.

¹¹ But as for me, I walk in my integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious to me.

¹² My foot stands on level ground;
in the great congregation I will bless the LORD.

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

***Prove me, O LORD, and try me;
test my heart and mind.***

Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God!

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* **1st READING: Revelation 21:1-7** CEB

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "Look! God's dwelling is here with humankind. He will dwell with them, and they will be his peoples. God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. There will be no mourning, crying, or pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ Then the one seated on the throne said, "Look! I'm making all things new." He also said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶ Then he said to me, "All is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will freely give water from the life-giving spring. ⁷ Those who emerge victorious will inherit these things. I will be their God, and they will be my sons and daughters.

* SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

* **GOSPEL: Matthew 18:1-14** NRSV

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

² Then he called a little child over to sit among the disciples, ³ and said, "I assure you that if you don't turn your lives around and become like this little child, you will definitely not enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Those who humble themselves like this little child will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

⁶ "As for whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin, it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their necks and be drowned in the bottom of the lake. ⁷ How terrible it is for the world because of the things that cause people to trip and fall into sin! Such things have to happen, but how

terrible it is for the person who causes those things to happen! ⁸ If your hand or your foot causes you to fall into sin, chop it off and throw it away. It's better to enter into life crippled or lame than to be thrown into the eternal fire with two hands or two feet. ⁹ If your eye causes you to fall into sin, tear it out and throw it away. It's better to enter into life with one eye than to be cast into a burning hell with two eyes.

¹⁰ "Be careful that you don't look down on one of these little ones. I say to you that their angels in heaven are always looking into the face of my Father who is in heaven.^[a] ¹² What do you think? If someone had one hundred sheep and one of them wandered off, wouldn't he leave the ninety-nine on the hillsides and go in search for the one that wandered off? ¹³ If he finds it, I assure you that he is happier about having that one sheep than about the ninety-nine who didn't wander off. ¹⁴ In the same way, my Father who is in heaven doesn't want to lose one of these little ones.

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: The Holy Innocents**

We read in Matthew 2 that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, King Herod, fearing for his throne, ordered that all the male infants of Bethlehem be killed. These children are regarded as martyrs for the Gospel -- "martyrs in fact though not in will." Augustine called them "buds, killed by the frost of persecution the moment they showed themselves."

[*by James Kiefer*](#)

* **PRAYERS**

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

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

* **COLLECT: The Holy Innocents**

We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

* PRAYER FOR RECOVERY OF SICKNESS

O God of heavenly powers, by the might of your command you drive away from our bodies all sickness and all infirmity: Be present in your goodness with those we lift today, that their weaknesses may be banished and their strength restored; and that with health being renewed, all may bless your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

* FOR MONASTIC ORDERS AND VOCATIONS

O Lord Jesus Christ, you became poor for our sake, that we might be made rich through your poverty: Guide and sanctify, we pray, those whom you call to follow you under the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, that by their prayer and service they may enrich your Church, and by their life and worship may glorify your Name; for you reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

* FOR AGRICULTURE

Almighty God, we thank you for making the earth fruitful, so that it might produce what is needed for life: Bless those who work in the fields; give us seasonable weather; and grant that we may all share the fruits of the earth, rejoicing in your goodness; 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**

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his
face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD
turn his face toward you and give you peace. ***Amen.***”

12/29/21

Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at
Elwood United Methodist Church

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