

We worship today according to the appointed order for Morning Prayer, Rite Two,
beginning on page 75 of the Book of Common Prayer and occasionally from *Enriching Our Worship*.
Congregational responses are in **boldface type**.

We will observe silence together to prepare for worship, which begins with the ringing of the bell. We stand.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of Almighty God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship him, let us stand or kneel in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

We stand or kneel. (BCP 79)

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter (*we stand*)

Lord, open our lips.
And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen. Alleluia.**

Venite Psalm 95:1-7 (*BCP 82*)

**Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

**For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the caverns of the earth,
and the heights of the hills are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands have molded the dry land.**

**Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee,
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.**

**For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of
his hand.**

Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b (*we remain standing*)

**Give thanks to the LORD and call upon his Name;
make known his deeds among the peoples.**

**Sing to him, sing praises to him,
and speak of all his marvelous works.**

**Glory in his holy Name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
Search for the Lord and his strength;
continually seek his face.**

**Remember the marvels he has done,
his wonders and the judgments of his mouth,**

**O offspring of Abraham his servant,
O children of Jacob his chosen.**

**He is the LORD our God;
his judgments prevail in all the world.**

**He has always been mindful of his covenant,
the promise he made for a thousand generations:**

**The covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath that he swore to Isaac,
Which he established as a statute for Jacob,
an everlasting covenant for Israel,**

**Saying, "To you will I give the land of Canaan
to be your allotted inheritance."**

Hallelujah!

The Lessons

Unless noted otherwise, we sit for each lesson and stand for each canticle

The Old Testament Lesson – Genesis 29:15-28

Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?” Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah’s eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Canticle 16 – The Song of Zechariah (*BCP 92*)

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
he has come to his people and set them free.
**He has raised up for us a mighty savior,
born of the house of his servant David.**

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.
**He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.**

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham,
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
**Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.**

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
**To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
**To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow
of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will
be for ever. Amen.**

The Epistle Lesson – Romans 8:26-39

The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn – *’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus (we sit)*

’Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take Him at His word.
Just to rest upon His promise, just to know “Thus saith the Lord.” (Chorus:) Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him! How I’ve proved Him o’er and o’er! Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust him more!

I’m so glad I learned to trust thee, precious Jesus, Savior,
Friend. And I know that thou art with me, wilt be with me
’til the end. (Chorus)

The Gospel Lesson – Matthew 13:31-33,44-52

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

The Rev. Lee Lowery

The Apostles' Creed (*we stand*)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**
**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**
He will 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.**

The Prayers (*we stand or kneel*)

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**
Give us this day our daily bread.
**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.**
**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**
**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Suffrages (*BCP 98*)

Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;
Govern and uphold them, now and always.
Day by day we bless you;
We praise your Name for ever.
Lord, keep us from all sin today;
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.
Lord, show us your love and mercy;
For we put our trust in you.
In you, Lord, is our hope;
And we shall never hope in vain.

The Collect of the Day

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A Collect for Sundays (*BCP 98*)

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Collect for the Renewal of Life (*BCP 99*)

O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we

may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Mission (*BCP 100*)

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Hymn: *God of Peace and God of Glory* (*we sit*)

God of grace, and God of glory, on thy people pour thy power; crown thine ancient Church's story; bring her bed to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore; let the gift of thy salvation be our glory evermore. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving thee whom we adore, serving thee whom we adore.

Intercessions and Thanksgiving (*we stand*)

We pray for the souls of all those who have died from Covid-19, and all who have departed this life, including those we now name silently or aloud.

Silence

In our parish we pray for those who are sick or recovering from illness, including **Micah Hart, Dennis Harper, Larry and Pat Sharpton, Dezel Oliver, Tom Haynie, Beth Hall, Maurice McCord, Sharon Browning, Julie Williams, Mike Dickey, Harrison Smith, Ellen Solomon, the Freeman family**, and the others we now name.

Silence

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for our bishops, Kee and Glenda. We pray for our Companion Diocese of the Virgin Islands and its bishop, Ambrose. For the Department of Ministry for Higher Education. For Diocesan Campus Ministries in Huntsville, Jacksonville, Florence, Montgomery and Tuskegee; For Canterbury, Montevallo; Canterbury, Tuscaloosa; St. Dunstan's, Auburn; and Trinity Commons, Birmingham.

The General Thanksgiving (*BCP 101*)

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you - in holiness and righteousness all our days.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation (*we sit*)

If the forecast is iffy for rain on any Sunday morning, we'll send out an email message by 7:30 am Sunday stating either that (a) we're proceeding with outdoor worship on schedule (bring an umbrella or raincoat); or (b) we will worship together on Facebook Live instead of outdoors. If we're on Facebook Live, please do not come to the church unless you have an active role in worship (e.g., Lay Reader). Stay home and join us on Facebook Live.

Here's how to reach our priest, the Rev. Lee Lowery:

Email: hleelowery@gmail.com

Phone: (229) 395-4507

Lee invites us to reach out to him whenever we need him. Friday is his sabbath, so we will refrain from contacting him then unless it's an emergency.

Serving at Epiphany this week:

Lay reader: Lavonne Hart

Grounds: Jimmy and Betty Weldon

And next:

Lay reader: Amanda Borden

Grounds: Mike Rallo and Jimmy Weldon