

EVENING PRAISE & PRAYER

Proclamation of the Light

You are encouraged to light an unadorned candle as the following words are spoken. If you are so inclined, you may also burn incense during this service. Since the fourth century of the early church, the burning of incense has served as a devotional sign of prayer (based on Psalm 141).

Light and peace in Jesus.

Thanks be to God.

We call upon you, O Lord;
come quickly to us;
give ear to our voice when we call to you.

Let our prayer be counted
as incense before you,
and the lifting up of our hands
as an evening sacrifice.

adapted from Psalm 141:1-2

The Doxology

adapted from No. 95, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, you heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

Common English Bible

I love the LORD because he hears
my requests for mercy.

² I'll call out to him as long as I live,
because he listens closely to me.

¹² What can I give back to the LORD
for all the good things he has done for me?

¹³ I'll lift up the cup of salvation.
I'll call on the LORD's name.

¹⁴ I'll keep the promises I made to the LORD
in the presence of all God's people.

¹⁵ The death of the LORD's faithful
is a costly loss in his eyes.

¹⁶ Oh yes, LORD, I am definitely your servant!
I am your servant and the son of your female
servant—

you've freed me from my chains.

¹⁷ So I'll offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to you,
and I'll call on the LORD's name.

¹⁸ I'll keep the promises I made to the LORD
in the presence of all God's people,

¹⁹ in the courtyards of the LORD's house,
which is in the center of Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

Giving Thanks

Prayers of the People

You are encouraged to offer your voice to this time of prayer. After each petition, you may add your specific prayers of thanks and intercession. After each prayer, the pray-er should end with "Amen."

Together let us...

pray for our world.

pray for our community and
neighborhoods.

pray for our friends and family.

pray for ourselves.

The Lord's Prayer

No. 895, *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989)

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, forever. Amen.

Conclusion

Abide with us, O Christ,
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.
As the night watch looks for the morning,
so do we look for you.

May God bless us,
that in us may be found love and humility,
obedience and thanksgiving,
discipline, gentleness and peace.
Amen.

DEVOTIONAL

By Beth Ferguson, Lay Leader & Member to the Annual Conference

The Psalmist begins with an expression of love for God. God has heard his prayers, “he inclined his ear to me”- he listened carefully. Sometimes we can’t express our prayers well because we are too emotional. God listens carefully and hears our needs even when we can’t explain them.

In response, the Psalmist then wants to give something back to God in an expression of thanks.

He says, “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the Lord’s name.” This Psalm was part of the Passover celebration and likely used during Christ’s last meal with his disciples. It brings us to our celebration of Holy Communion and the cup representing the blood of Christ. As we meet together in community and celebrate Holy Communion, we are entering into a closer relationship with God through Christ.

He also says he will keep the promises he has made to the Lord. When we were baptized, our parents made vows to nurture us in the Christian faith and the congregation promises to nurture one another including the person being baptized. When we joined the church, we made our own vows to be part of the community and to faithfully participate in its’ ministries by our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness.

He says, “I will be your servant”. Servanthood is an important part of being Christian. Jesus was a servant leader and as he washed the disciples’ feet, he spoke to them about servant leadership. We speak of being the hands and feet of Jesus. We join in the work that God has appointed to us, whether it is our job or volunteer work; in the church or in the community. We want to work for the kingdom of God.

In this time, we are celebrating the work of healthcare workers- medical and nursing staff, therapists, and first responders as they care for patients and put their own health at risk. We celebrate the grocery store workers and employees of companies that are still at work, to help us with our essential needs. For some of us, the most important thing we are doing is staying home, calling others who are alone, sending messages of love and care to others.

We are separated physically, but we are still a community of faith, held together by our love for God and one another. We join in the worship of Christ tonight, through his last meal with the disciples, through his prayers in the garden and his arrest by the Roman soldiers. We will remember his trial and crucifixion tomorrow and wait on Saturday in a time of mourning.

In thanks to God, we will offer our thanksgiving and keep the promises that we have made to God. Praise the Lord!

PRAYER FROM THE EXTENDED CABINET

By Rev. Dr. Andrew L. Foster, III, Rhode Island/Southeastern Mass. District Superintendent. (based on John 13:1-17 and Psalm 116:15)

*Today is Holy Thursday or Maundy
(Commandment) Thursday. Jesus commands us to
love one another as He has loved us (John 13:34).*

Abba Father, Daddy God, it’s me, it’s me, it’s me
O Lord, standing in the need of prayer. As this
new day unfolds, a day filled with new mercies, I
bring your people to your throne of grace, those
whose heads are bent down with pain and despair.
Those whose lives seem isolated and unbearable. I
bring those who miss and even crave the physical
fellowship of the sanctuary.

As the song writers, John Thompson and Randy
Scruggs, wrote, “Lord, prepare me to be a sanctu-
ary, pure and holy, tried and true, with thanksgiv-
ing, I’ll be a living sanctuary for you.” Give them
the strength to see beyond the natural, temporary
world we live in and increase their faith to sing to
the rafters, that You are Lord.

On the night before you were led to a cruel death
on a cross for our sins, you not only shared your
body and your blood, but you modeled true servant
leadership. Just as you washed the dirty smelly and
tired feet of all your disciples including Judas, the
one who betrayed you with a kiss and 30 pieces of
silver. I ask that you provide a healing touch to the
souls of all of your creation who are worshipping
you virtually.

As we fast approach Good Friday and Resurrection
Sunday, I also ask that you grant those who have
lost loved ones (first responders, family members,
colleagues) during this pandemic season your
overwhelming peace and presence as you remind
them that “precious in the sight of the Lord is the
death of his Saints” (Psalm 116:15). Give them
solace to know that nothing will separate them
from your great love in Christ Jesus our Lord
(Romans 8:38-39).

Please don’t let their faith be weakened during the
season of waiting rather increase their ability and
desire to seek you even more. Give them strength
to run on and see what the end will be.

I seal this prayer in the name of my Lord and Sav-
ior, Jesus Christ, amen (So Be It).