

Morning Prayer December 20, 2024

Good Morning from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.
Let us join together in Morning Prayer on this 20th day of Advent, Friday, December 20th.

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight
in the desert a highway for our God.

Isaiah 40:3

Confession Of Sins

Officiant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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.

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

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Lord, open our lips.
People 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 for ever. Amen.

Alleluia.

Our King and Savior now draws near: Come, let us adore him.

Jubilate

Psalm 100

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.

Know this: The Lord himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.

For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

The Psalms Appointed

Psalm 40

Expectans, expectavi

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I waited patiently upon the Lord; *
he stooped to me and heard my cry.

He lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the mire and clay; *
he set my feet upon a high cliff and made my footing sure.

He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God; *
many shall see, and stand in awe,
and put their trust in the Lord.

Happy are they who trust in the Lord! *
they do not resort to evil spirits or turn to false gods.

Great things are they that you have done, O Lord my God!
how great your wonders and your plans for us! *
there is none who can be compared with you.

Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! *
but they are more than I can count.

In sacrifice and offering you take no pleasure *
(you have given me ears to hear you);

Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required, *
and so I said, "Behold, I come.

In the roll of the book it is written concerning me: *
'I love to do your will, O my God;
your law is deep in my heart.'"

I proclaimed righteousness in the great congregation; *
behold, I did not restrain my lips;
and that, O Lord, you know.

Your righteousness have I not hidden in my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your deliverance; *
I have not concealed your love and faithfulness from the great congregation.

You are the Lord;
do not withhold your compassion from me; *
let your love and your faithfulness keep me safe for ever,

For innumerable troubles have crowded upon me;
my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see; *
they are more in number than the hairs of my head,
and my heart fails me.

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; *
O Lord, make haste to help me.

Let them be ashamed and altogether dismayed
who seek after my life to destroy it; *
let them draw back and be disgraced
who take pleasure in my misfortune.

Let those who say "Aha!" and gloat over me be confounded, *
because they are ashamed.

Let all who seek you rejoice in you and be glad; *
let those who love your salvation continually say,
"Great is the Lord!"

Though I am poor and afflicted, *
the Lord will have regard for me.

You are my helper and my deliverer; *
do not tarry, O my God.

Psalm 54

Deus, in nomine

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Save me, O God, by your Name; *
in your might, defend my cause.

Hear my prayer, O God; *
give ear to the words of my mouth.

For the arrogant have risen up against me,
and the ruthless have sought my life, *
those who have no regard for God.

Behold, God is my helper; *
it is the Lord who sustains my life.

Render evil to those who spy on me; *
in your faithfulness, destroy them.

I will offer you a freewill sacrifice *
and praise your Name, O Lord, for it is good.

For you have rescued me from every trouble, *
and my eye has seen the ruin of my foes.

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 Lessons

A reading from Isaiah 10:5-19

Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger—the club in their hands is my fury! Against a godless nation I send him, and against the people of my wrath I command him, to take spoil and seize plunder, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. But this is not what he intends, nor does he have this in mind; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few. For he says: “Are not my commanders all kings? Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus? As my hand

has reached to the kingdoms of the idols whose images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria, shall I not do to Jerusalem and her idols what I have done to Samaria and her images?" When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride. For he says: "By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding; I have removed the boundaries of peoples, and have plundered their treasures; like a bull I have brought down those who sat on thrones. My hand has found, like a nest, the wealth of the peoples; and as one gathers eggs that have been forsaken, so I have gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved a wing, or opened its mouth, or chirped." Shall the ax vaunt itself over the one who wields it, or the saw magnify itself against the one who handles it? As if a rod should raise the one who lifts it up, or as if a staff should lift the one who is not wood! Therefore the Sovereign, the Lord of hosts, will send wasting sickness among his stout warriors, and under his glory a burning will be kindled, like the burning of fire. The light of Israel will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame; and it will burn and devour his thorns and briars in one day. The glory of his forest and his fruitful land the Lord will destroy, both soul and body, and it will be as when an invalid wastes away. The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down.

Officiant The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

10 The Second Song of Isaiah

Quaerite Dominum

Isaiah 55:6-11

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.

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.

A reading from 2 Peter 2:17-22

These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm; for them the deepest darkness has been reserved. For they speak bombastic nonsense, and with licentious desires of the flesh they entice people who have just escaped from those who live in error. They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for people are slaves to whatever masters them. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "The dog turns back to its own vomit," and, "The sow is washed only to wallow in the mud."

Officiant The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

18 A Song to the Lamb

Dignus es

Revelation 4:11, 5:9-10, 13

Splendor and honor and kingly power *
are yours by right, O Lord our God,
For you created everything that is, *
and by your will they were created and have their being;
And yours by right, O Lamb that was slain, *
for with your blood you have redeemed for God,
From every family, language, people, and nation, *
a kingdom of priests to serve our God.

And so, to him who sits upon the throne, *
and to Christ the Lamb,
Be worship and praise, dominion and splendor, *
for ever and for evermore.

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew 11:2-15

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are

raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John came; and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. Let anyone with ears listen!

Officiant The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

The Apostles' Creed

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

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

The Lord's Prayer

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 A

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;
R. And grant us your salvation.
V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;
R. Let your people sing with joy.
V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
R. For only in you can we live in safety.
V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;
R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
V. Let your way be known upon earth;
R. Your saving health among all nations.
V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;
R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

The Collect of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

A Collect for Fridays

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for Mission

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

At this time I invite your prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings

The General Thanksgiving

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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.

A Prayer of St. 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.*

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*