



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN VERMONT

*Together in Christ...growing locally, serving globally*

Welcome to Morning Prayer  
with the Green Mountain Online Abbey  
of the  
Episcopal Diocese of Vermont.

A few notes about today's service.

***Please leave your microphone on mute*** during the responsory portions of the service. You are welcome to unmute yourself when you are invited to offer your prayers, then remember to mute it again when you have completed your prayer.

We will always read the Gospel appointed for the day so that we can read and meditate on Jesus' words and teaching.

MORNING PRAYER

***Monday, January 25, 2021***  
***The Season of Epiphany***  
***Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle***

## **Opening Sentence**

*The Officiant says the following*

From the rising of the sun to its setting my Name shall be great among the nations, and in every place incense shall be offered to my Name, and a pure offering; for my Name shall be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts. *Malachi 1:11*

## **Invitatory and Psalter**

*Officiant* O God, open our lips.

*People* And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

*Officiant* You laid the foundation of the earth

*People* and the heavens are the work of your hands.

*All* Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

*Officiant* Alleluia, Christ is shown forth in glory:

*People* O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

*Said in unison* **Jubilate** *Psalm 100*

May all lands be joyful before you, O God, \*  
serve with gladness

and come before your presence with a song.

For we know that you are God; \*

you yourself have made us, and we are yours;

we are your people and the sheep of your pasture.

We shall enter your gates with thanksgiving,

go into your courts with praise, \*  
give thanks to you and call upon your Name.

For you are good; your mercy is everlasting; \*  
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

*Officiant* Alleluia, Christ is shown forth in glory:  
*People* O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

### **Psalm Appointed**

*read in unison* **Psalm 67** *Deus misereatur*

1 Be merciful to us, O God, and bless us, \*  
show us the light of your countenance and come to us.

2 Let your ways be known upon earth, \*  
your saving health among all nations.

3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*  
let all the peoples praise you.

4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, \*  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide all the nations upon earth.

5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*  
let all the peoples praise you.

6 The earth has brought forth its increase; \*  
may you, our own God, give us your blessing.

7 May you give us your blessing, \*  
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of you.

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be  
for ever. Amen.

## **The Lessons**

### **First Reading**

*Reader* A reading from **Acts 26:9-21**

Paul said to King Agrippa, "Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to blaspheme; and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.

"With this in mind, I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, when at midday along the road, your Excellency, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.' I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord answered, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in

which I will appear to you. I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles-- to whom I am sending you to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

"After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me."

Here ends the reading.

*read in unison* **Canticle 26**

**A Song of God's Chosen One** *Isaiah 11:1-9*

*Refrain:*

*All* The earth shall be full of the knowledge of our God..

1 Then a shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse;  
from Jesse's roots, a branch will blossom:

2 The Spirit of YHWH Will rest on you--  
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
a spirit of counsel and strength,  
a spirit of knowledge and reverence for YHWH.

3 You will delight in obeying YHWH,  
and you won't judge by appearances,  
or make decisions by hearsay.

4 You will treat poor people with fairness

and will uphold the rights of the land's  
downtrodden.

With a single word you will stike down tyrants;  
with your decrees you will execute evil people.

5 Justice will be the belt around this your waist-  
faithfulness will gird you up.

6 Then the wolf will dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat;  
the calf and the lion cub will graze together,  
and a little child will lead them.

7 The cow will feed with the bear;  
their young will lie down together.

The lion will eat hay like the ox.

8 The baby will play next to the den of the cobra,  
and the toddler will dance over the viper's nest.

9 There will be no harm, no destruction  
anywhere in my holy mountain;  
for as water fills the sea,  
so the land will be filled with knowledge of YHWH.

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

*Refrain:*

*All* The earth shall be full of the knowledge of our God..

## **The Gospel**

*Reader:* A reading from the **Gospel of Matthew 10:16-22**  
Jesus said to the twelve, "See, I am sending you out like sheep  
into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as  
doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils  
and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before

governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved."

Here ends the reading.

*A moment of silence is observed so that we may reflect on the teachings and ministry of Jesus.*

### **The Apostle's 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* Believing the promises of God, as our Savior taught us, we pray

### *Officiant and People* **An alternative Lord's Prayer**

Our loving God in heaven,  
holy is your Name,  
may your reign 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 all creation, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

### **Suffrages**

V. Help us, O God our Savior;  
R. Deliver us and forgive us our sins.  
V. Look upon your congregation;  
R. Give to your people the blessing of peace.  
V. Declare your glory among the nations;  
R. And your wonders among all peoples.  
V. Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away;

R. Never forget the lives of your poor.  
V. Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;  
R. And your favor to those who are true of heart.  
V. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;  
R. So shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

## **The Collects**

### **The Collect of the Day**

Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O God, by the preaching of your apostle Paul you have caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we pray, that we, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show ourselves thankful to you by following his holy teaching; 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.*

*Together*

### **A Collect for Guidance**

O God, our Creator and Sustainer, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

*Together*

### **For People Facing Uncertainty**

God of the present moment, God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart; bring hope and courage to us all as we wait in uncertainty. Bring hope that you will make us the equal of whatever lies ahead. Bring us courage to endure what cannot be avoided, for your will is health and wholeness; you are God, and we need you.  
Amen.

*The Officiant says*

I invite your prayers of thanksgiving and intercession at this time.

*(During the silence people may add their own prayers. Please unmute yourself to share your prayer aloud. When you have completed your prayer, return the microphone to mute.)*

*The Officiant concludes with the Collect for Mission*

### **A Collect for Mission**

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 Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

### **The General Thanksgiving**

*The Officiant and People say together*

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.

*Together* **A Collect of Dedication**

Beloved God: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, once again  
we offer ourselves to you. May the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever. Amen.

**Dismissal**

*Deacon* Let us bless God.

*People* To God be thanks forever.

*The Officiant ends with a Concluding Sentences*

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

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation in the church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Commemoration**

Paul, or Saul as he was known until he became a Christian, was a Roman citizen, born at Tarsus, in present-day Turkey. He was brought up as an observant Jew, studying in Jerusalem for a time under Gamaliel, the most famous rabbi of the day. Describing himself, he said, "I am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin" (Romans 11:1). A few years after the death of Jesus, Saul came in contact with the new Christian movement, and became one of the most fanatical of those who were determined to stamp out this "dangerous heresy." Saul witnessed the stoning of Stephen and approved of it. He was on the way to Damascus to lead in further persecution of the Christians when his dramatic conversion took place. From that day, Paul devoted his life totally to Christ, and especially to the conversion of Gentiles. The Acts of the Apostles describes the courage and determination with which he planted Christian congregations over a large area of the land bordering the eastern Mediterranean. His letters, which are the earliest Christian writings, established him as one of the early founders of Christian theology. He writes, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Paul

describes himself as small and insignificant in appearance: “His letters are weighty and strong,” it was said of him, “but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account” (2 Corinthians 10:10). He writes of having a disability or affliction which he had prayed God to remove from him, and quotes the Lord’s reply, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, Paul went on to say, “I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” 90 (2 Corinthians 12:9). Paul is believed to have been martyred at Rome in the year 64 under Nero. The feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul marks the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

—Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018 Church Publishing

*Liturgy created with the following resources  
Book of Common Prayer, Enriching Our Worship, Saint Helena  
Breviary and A New Zealand Prayer Book, Common Worship  
Times and Seasons*