



*A ministry and community of prayer of
The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont*

A few notes about tonight'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.

MORNING PRAYER

December 2, 2021

Thursday, the First Week of Advent

Nicholas Ferrar, Deacon, 1637

Opening Sentence

The Officiant says the following

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. *Isaiah 40:5*

Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant O God, open our lips.

People And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Officiant Reveal among us the light of your presence

People that we may behold your power and glory.

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, our God and Savior now draws near:

People O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

read in unison **Venite** *Psalms 95:1-7*

Come, let us sing to the Holy One; *

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving, *
and raise a loud shout with psalms.

For you, O God, are a great God; *

you are great above all gods.
In your hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are yours also.
The sea is yours, for you made it, *
and your hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down and bend the knee, *
and kneel before God, our Maker,
For you are our God, and we are the people of your pasture and
the sheep of your hand. *
Oh, that today we would hearken to your voice!

Officiant Alleluia, our God and Savior now draws near:
People O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

Psalm Appointed

read in unison Psalm 18:1-20 Part I Diligam te, Domine.

1 I love you, O God, my strength, *
my stronghold, my crag, and my haven,

2 My God, my rock in whom I put my trust, *
my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my refuge;
you are worthy of praise.

3 I will call upon you, O God, *
and so shall I be saved from my enemies.

4 The breakers of death rolled over me, *
and the torrents of oblivion made me afraid.

5 The cords of hell entangled me, *

and the snares of death were set for me.

6 I called upon you, O God, in my distress; *
I cried out to you for help.

7 You heard my voice from your heavenly dwelling; *
my cry of anguish came to your ears.

8 The earth reeled and rocked; *
the roots of the mountains shook;
they reeled because of your anger.

9 Smoke rose from your nostrils
and a consuming fire out of your mouth; *
hot burning coals blazed forth from you.

10 You parted the heavens and came down *
with a storm cloud under your feet.

11 You mounted on cherubim and flew; *
you swooped on the wings of the wind.

12 You wrapped darkness about you; *
you made dark waters and thick clouds your pavilion.

13 From the brightness of your presence, through the
clouds, *
burst hailstones and coals of fire.

14 O God, you thundered out of heaven; *

O Most High, you uttered your voice.

15 You loosed your arrows and scattered them; *
you hurled thunderbolts and routed them.

16 The beds of the seas were uncovered,
and the foundations of the world laid bare, *
at your battle cry, O God,
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

17 You reached down from on high and grasped me; *
you drew me out of great waters.

18 You delivered me from my strong enemies
and from those who hated me; *
for they were too mighty for me.

19 They confronted me in the day of my disaster; *
but you were my support.

20 You brought me out into an open place; *
you rescued me because you delighted in me.

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 **The Prophet Amos 4:6-13**

I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
and lack of bread in all your places,
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

And I also withheld the rain from you
when there were still three months to the harvest;
I would send rain on one city,
and send no rain on another city;
one field would be rained upon,
and the field on which it did not rain withered;
so two or three towns wandered to one town
to drink water, and were not satisfied;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

I struck you with blight and mildew;
I laid waste your gardens and your vineyards;
the locust devoured your fig trees and your olive trees;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt;
I killed your young men with the sword;
I carried away your horses;
and I made the stench of your camp go up into your
nostrils;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

I overthrew some of you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,
and you were like a brand snatched from the fire;
yet you did not return to me,
says the Lord.

Therefore, thus I will do to you, O Israel;
because I will do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, O Israel!

For lo, the one who forms the mountains, creates the wind,
reveals his thoughts to mortals,
makes the morning darkness,
and treads on the heights of the earth—
the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!

Here ends the reading.

read in unison **Canticle D**
A Song of the Wilderness *Isaiah 35:1-7,10*

Refrain Lift up your voice with strength,
O herald of good tidings.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, *
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
It shall blossom abundantly, *

and rejoice with joy and singing.
They shall see the glory of the Savior, *
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weary hands, *
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to the anxious, "Be strong, do not fear! *
Here is your God, coming with judgment to save you."
Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, *
and the ears of the deaf be unstopped.
Then shall the lame leap like a deer, *
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness *
and streams in the desert;
The burning sand shall become a pool *
and the thirsty ground, springs of water.
The ransomed of God shall return with singing, *
with everlasting joy upon their heads.
Joy and gladness shall be theirs, *
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

Refrain Lift up your voice with strength,
O herald of good tidings.

The Gospel

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of **Matthew 21:33-46**

‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’

Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes”?’

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Here ends the reading.

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

An Affirmation of Faith

Officiant We say together in faith

Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.
We believe in God, who created all things:
for by God's will they were created
and have their being.

We believe in God the Son,
who was slain:
for with his blood,
he purchased us for God,
from every tribe and language,
from every people and nation.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:
the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!'
Even so come, Lord Jesus!
Amen.

The Prayers

Officiant Awaiting his coming in glory,
as our Savior taught us, so we pray

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.

The Suffrages

V. Save your people, O God, and bless your inheritance;
R. govern and uphold us now and always.
V. Day by day we bless you
R. we praise your name forever.
V. O God, keep us without sin today;
R. have mercy on us, O God, have mercy.
V. Show us your love and mercy;
R. for we put our trust in you.
V. In you, O God, is our hope;
R. and we shall never hope in vain.

The Collects

The Collect of the Day

Advent 1

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

O God, make us worthy of your perfect love; that, with your deacon Nicholas Ferrar and his household, we may rule ourselves according to your Word, and serve you with our whole heart; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and 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.

Together

For discernment for the future of the Diocese of Vermont

Gracious and loving God, of transformation and discovery, we give thanks that you call us to be your people in this time, and in this place. As you call us into deeper and uncertain waters, “to step out of the boat and go closer to Jesus,” we give thanks for the experience, gifts and skills of our diocesan household, represented by the Task Force for Hope, Revitalization, Innovation, Vision, and Efficiency (THRIVE). Bless their efforts as they rally and shepherd us in our common work. We pray for open hearts and minds and for clear vision, and never-ending reliance on your abundant and creative goodness. We pray for inspiration and guidance from your Holy Spirit, knowing that your power working in us can accomplish far more than we can ask or imagine. All this, we pray, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Together

For dismantling racism

Creator of the Universe, source of all goodness and love, we ask wisdom, help, and guidance as we work to counter the many instances of injustice and racism in our world. Help us to value differences in culture, religious beliefs, and physical appearance, and celebrate the God-made wonder of every human being. Help us to be vigilant, working against racial and social injustice in our own hearts and in the world around us, that we may live into our baptismal covenant to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” 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 Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

The General Thanksgiving

The Officiant and People say together
Almighty God, of boundless mercy,
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 Savior 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 best vision,
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.

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

Nicholas Ferrar was the founder of a religious community at Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire, England, which existed from 1626 to 1646. His family had been prominent in the affairs of the Virginia Company, but when that company was dissolved, he took deacon's orders and retired to the country. At Little Gidding, his immediate family and a few friends and servants gave themselves wholly to religious observance. They restored the derelict church near the manor house, became responsible for services there, taught many of the local children, and looked after the health and well-being of the people of the neighborhood. A regular round of prayer according to the Book of Common Prayer was observed, along with the daily recital of the whole of

the psalter. The members of the community became widely known for fasting, private prayer and meditation, and for writing stories and books illustrating themes of Christian faith and morality. One of the most interesting of the activities of the Little Gidding community was the preparation of “harmonies” of the gospels, one of which was presented to King Charles I by the Ferrar family. The community did not long survive the death of Nicholas Ferrar. However, the memory of the religious life at Little Gidding was kept alive, principally through Izaak Walton’s description in his *Life of George Herbert*: “He (Ferrar) and his family...did most of them keep Lent and all Ember-weeks strictly, both in fasting and using all those mortifications and prayers that the church hath appointed...and he and they did the like constantly on Fridays, and on the vigils or eves appointed to be fasted before the Saints’ days; and this frugality and abstinence turned to the relief of the poor...” The community became an important symbol for many Anglicans when religious orders began to be revived. Its life inspired T.S. Eliot, and he gave the title, “Little Gidding,” to the last of his *Four Quartets*, one of the great religious poems of the twentieth century.

—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