



*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 4, 2021

Saturday, the First Week of Advent

John of Damascus, Priest, c. 760

Opening Sentence

The Officiant says the following

It is time for you to wake out of sleep, for deliverance is nearer to us now than it was when we first believed. *Romans 13:11*

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 Psalm 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.

Psalms Appointed

read in unison Psalms 20 and 21:1-7

Psalm 20 *Exaudiat te Dominus*

1 May the Most High answer you in the day of trouble, *
the Name of the God of Jacob defend you;

2 Send you help from the holy place *
and strengthen you out of Zion;

3 Remember all your offerings *
and accept your burnt sacrifice;

4 Grant you your heart's desire *

and prosper all your plans.

5 We will shout for joy at your victory
and triumph in the Name of our God; *
may the Most High grant all your requests.

6 Now I know that God gives victory to the anointed one; *
out of the holy heaven God will answer,
with a strong and victorious right hand.

7 Some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, *
but we will call upon the Name of our God.

8 They collapse and fall down, *
but we will arise and stand upright.

9 O God, give victory to our sovereign, *
and answer us when we call.

Psalm 2:1-7 *Domine, in virtute tua*

1 The king rejoices in your strength, O God; *
how greatly he exults in your victory!

2 You have given him his heart's desire; *
you have not denied him the request of his lips.

3 For you meet him with blessings of prosperity *
and set a crown of fine gold upon his head.

4 He asked you for life, and you gave it to him: *

length of days, for ever and ever.

5 His honor is great, because of your victory; *
splendor and majesty have you bestowed upon him.

6 For you will give him everlasting felicity *
and will make him glad with the joy of your presence.

7 For the king puts his trust in God; * because of the loving-
kindness of the Most High, he will not fall.

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 5:18-27**

Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!

Why do you want the day of the Lord?

It is darkness, not light;

as if someone fled from a lion,

and was met by a bear;

or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall,

and was bitten by a snake.

Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,

and gloom with no brightness in it?

I hate, I despise your festivals,

and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,

I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.

Take away from me the noise of your songs;

I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

But let justice roll down like waters,

and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You shall take up Sakkuth your king, and Kaiwan your star-god, your images that you made for yourselves; therefore I will take you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

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 22:15-22**

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, 'Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?' But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, 'Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax.' And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, 'Whose head is this, and whose title?' They answered, 'The emperor's.' Then he said to them, 'Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

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.*

Confirm our minds, O God, in the mysteries of the true faith, set forth with power by your servant John of Damascus; that we, with him, confessing Jesus to be true God and true Human and singing the praises of the risen One, may, by the power of the resurrection, attain to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and 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.

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

John of Damascus was the son of a Christian government official for the Muslim Caliph of Damascus. At an early age, he succeeded his father in this office, but in about 715, he entered the monastery of St. Sabas near Jerusalem. There he devoted himself to an ascetic life and to the study of theology. In the same year that John was ordained as a priest, 726, the Byzantine Emperor Leo the Isaurian published his first edict against the Holy Images, which signaled the formal outbreak of the iconoclastic controversy. The edict forbade the veneration of sacred images, or icons, and ordered their destruction. In 729-730, John wrote three "Apologies (or Treatises) against the Iconoclasts and in Defense of the Holy Images." He argued that such images were not idols, for they represented neither false gods nor even the true God in his divine nature; but only saints, or our Lord as a man. He further distinguished between the respect, or veneration (proskynesis), that is properly paid to created beings, and the worship (latreia), that is properly given only to God. The Seventh Ecumenical Council, in 787, decreed that crosses, icons, the book of the gospels, and other sacred objects were to receive reverence or veneration, expressed by salutations, incense, and lights, because the honor paid to them passed on to that which they represented. True worship (latreia), however, was due to God alone. John also wrote a great synthesis of theology, *The Fount of Knowledge*, of which the last part, "On the Orthodox Faith," is best known. To Anglicans, John is best known as the author of the Easter hymns "Thou hallowed chosen morn of praise" (*The Hymnal* 1982, #198) "Come, ye faithful,

raise the strain” (#199; #200), and “The day of resurrection” (#210).

—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*