



*A ministry and community of prayer 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.

MORNING PRAYER

***Wednesday, January 25, 2023
The Season of Epiphany***

The 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** *Psalms 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 119:49-72**

Zayin Memor esto verbi tui

49 Remember your word to your servant, *
because you have given me hope.

50 This is my comfort in my trouble: *
that your promise gives me life.

51 The proud have derided me cruelly, *
but I have not turned from your law.

52 When I remember your judgments of old, *
O God, I take great comfort.

53 I am filled with a burning rage, *
because of the wicked who forsake your law.

54 Your statutes have been like songs to me *
wherever I have lived as a stranger.

55 I remember your Name in the night, O God, *
and dwell upon your law.

56 This is how it has been with me, *
because I have kept your commandments.

Heth *Portio mea, Domine*

57 You only are my portion, O God; *
I have promised to keep your words.

58 I entreat you with all my heart: *
be merciful to me according to your promise.

59 I have considered my ways *
and turned my feet toward your decrees.

60 I hasten and do not tarry *
to keep your commandments.

61 Though the cords of the wicked entangle me, *
I do not forget your law.

62 At midnight I will rise to give you thanks, *
because of your righteous judgments.

63 I am a companion of all who fear you *
and of those who keep your commandments.

64 The earth, O God, is full of your love; *
instruct me in your statutes.

Teth *Bonitatem fecisti*

65 O God, you have dealt graciously with your servant, *
according to your word.

66 Teach me discernment and knowledge, *
for I have believed in your commandments.

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, *
but now I keep your word.

68 You are good and you bring forth good; *
instruct me in your statutes.

69 The proud have smeared me with lies, *
but I will keep your commandments with my whole heart.

70 Their heart is gross and fat, *
but my delight is in your law.

71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted, *
that I might learn your statutes.

72 The law of your mouth is dearer to me *
than thousands in gold and silver.

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 Isaiah 49:1-12**

Listen to me, O coastlands,

pay attention, you peoples from far away!

The Lord called me before I was born,

while I was in my mother's womb he named me.

He made my mouth like a sharp sword,
in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow,
in his quiver he hid me away.
And he said to me, 'You are my servant,
Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'
But I said, 'I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the Lord,
and my reward with my God.'

And now the Lord says,
who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the Lord,
and my God has become my strength—
he says,
'It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

Thus says the Lord,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,
the slave of rulers,
'Kings shall see and stand up,
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the Lord, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.'

Thus says the Lord:
In a time of favor I have answered you,
on a day of salvation I have helped you;
I have kept you and given you
as a covenant to the people,
to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages;
saying to the prisoners, 'Come out',
to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.'
They shall feed along the ways,
on all the bare heights shall be their pasture;
they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.
And I will turn all my mountains into a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.
Lo, these shall come from far away,
and lo, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene.

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..

Then a shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse;
from Jesse's roots, a branch will blossom:
The Spirit of God will rest on you--

a spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a spirit of counsel and strength,
a spirit of knowledge and reverence for God.

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

You will treat poor people with fairness
and will uphold the rights of the land's
downtrodden.

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

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

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.

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

The lion will eat hay like the ox.

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

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 God.

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 **Mark 6:13-29**

They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, 'John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.' But others said, 'It is Elijah.' And others said, 'It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.' But when Herod heard of it, he said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.'

For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.' And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, 'Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.' And he solemnly swore to her, 'Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.' She went out and said to her mother, 'What should I ask for?' She replied, 'The head of John the baptizer.' Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, 'I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.' The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders

to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

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

The Officiant and People say together

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

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 Savior, 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 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 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.

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" (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:

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