



*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.

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

MORNING PRAYER

***Thursday, September 21, 2023***

***Ordinary Time, Proper 19***

## *Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist*

### **Opening Sentence**

*The Officiant says the following*

“For thus says the high and lofty one  
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:  
I dwell in the high and holy place  
and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit,  
to revive the spirit of the humble  
and to revive the heart of the contrite.” *Isaiah 57:15*

### **Invitatory and Psalter**

*Officiant* O God, open our lips.

*People* And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

*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* This is the day the Creator has made:

*People* Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

*read in unison* ***Psalm 67:1-5*** *Deus misereatur*

O God, be merciful to us and bless us, \*

show us the light of your countenance and come to us.

Let your ways be known upon earth, \*

your saving health among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*

let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, \*

for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide all the nations upon earth.

Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*

let all the peoples praise you.

*Officiant* This is the day the Creator has made:

*People* Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

## **Psalm Appointed**

*In Unison or responsively by whole or half verse*

### **Psalm 119:41-64**

*Waw Et veniat super me*

41 Let your loving-kindness come to me, O God, \*  
and your salvation, according to your promise.

42 Then shall I have a word for those who taunt me, \*  
because I trust in your words.

43 Do not take the word of truth out of my mouth, \*  
for my hope is in your judgments.

44 I shall continue to keep your law; \*  
I shall keep it for ever and ever.

45 I will walk at liberty, \*

because I study your commandments.

46 I will tell of your decrees before rulers \*  
and will not be ashamed.

47 I delight in your commandments, \*  
which I have always loved.

48 I will lift up my hands to your commandments, \*  
and I will meditate on your statutes.

Zayin

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

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.

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 8:11-20**

For the Lord spoke thus to me while his hand was strong upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what it fears, or be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. He will become a sanctuary, a stone one strikes against; for both houses of Israel he will become a rock one stumbles over—a trap and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble; they shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken.

Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples. I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. See, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. Now if people say to you, ‘Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that chirp and mutter; should not a people consult their gods, the dead on behalf of the living, for teaching and for instruction?’ surely, those who speak like this will have no dawn!

*Reader* Here ends the reading.

*read in unison* **Canticle D**

***A Song of the Wilderness*** *Isaiah 35:1-7,10*

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 Lord, \*

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.

**The Second Reading**

*Reader* A reading from **Paul’s Letter to the Romans 10:1-15**

Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. I can testify that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that 'the person who does these things will live by them.' But the righteousness that comes from faith says, 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?"' (that is, to bring Christ down) 'or "Who will descend into the abyss?"' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say?

'The word is near you,

on your lips and in your heart'

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'



*Reader* Here ends the reading.

## **An Affirmation of Faith**

*Together*

You, O God, are supreme and holy.  
You create our world and give us life.  
Your purpose overarches everything we do.  
You have always been with us.  
You are God.

You, O God, are infinitely generous,  
good beyond all measure.  
You came to us before we came to you.  
You have revealed and proved  
your love for us in Jesus Christ,  
who lived and died and rose again.  
You are with us now.  
You are God.

You, O God, are Holy Spirit.  
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.  
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.  
You are our God. We worship you.

## **The Prayers**

*Officiant* God be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

*Together*

## **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 B**

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**

*Officiant*

We thank you, Gracious God, for the witness of your apostle and evangelist Matthew to the Gospel of your Son our Savior; and we pray that, after his example, we may with ready wills and hearts obey the calling of our Lord to follow him; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

*Together*

**For the Presiding Bishop Election**

Almighty God, source of all wisdom and understanding: Look graciously on your church, and so guide the hearts and minds of those who will choose our next presiding bishop, that we may receive a faithful pastor who will care for all of your people, equip us for our ministries, and proclaim your word to us and to the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *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*

God, whose word is ingrained in all we eat and drink; free us from the consumption that destroys the roots of life; teach us to eat the living bread in whom all hungers are satisfied by the life that gives of itself and is never consumed; through Jesus Christ, the Lord of the harvest. *Amen.*

*Together*

### **A Collect for Creation and Justice**

Dear God, Creator of the earth, this sacred home we share:

Give us new eyes to see the beauty all around  
and to protect the wonders of creation.

Give us new arms to embrace the strangers among us  
and to know them as family.

Give us new ears to hear and understand those who live off the  
land and sea, and to hear and understand those who extract its  
resources.

Give us new hearts to recognize the brokenness in our  
communities and to heal the wounds we have inflicted.

Give us new hands to serve the earth and its people and to shape  
beloved community.

For you are the One who seeks the lost, binds our wounds and  
sets us free,

And it is in the name of Jesus the Christ we pray. 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**

*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 offer ourselves to you this day, guide and stir us with your Holy Spirit, that we may become one body, one spirit in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

## **Dismissal**

*Deacon or Officiant*     Let us bless God.  
*People*                     To God be thanks forever.

## **Concluding Sentences**

*Officiant says one of the following*

Go forth now to care for God's world. Use resources wisely. Share your knowledge. Sacrifice where necessary. Live in harmony with all creation. Go out into all the world as prophets of a new way of living and preach the good news to all. And the blessing of the Creator God, the Risen Son, and the Promised Holy Spirit bless you that you might be a blessing to others today and always. *Amen.*

May God light in us a holy fire: Light a fire that is worthy of our ancestors. Light a fire that is worthy of our children. Light a fire that is worthy of our fathers. Light a fire that is worthy of our mothers. Light a fire that is worthy of God. Now let us go in peace, lighting a holy fire wherever we go. *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**

Matthew, one of Jesus' disciples, is probably to be identified with Levi, a tax collector ("publican") mentioned by Mark and Luke. In the Gospel according to Matthew, it is said that Matthew was seated in the custom-house when Jesus bade him, "Follow me." When Jesus called him, he at once left everything, followed the Master, and later gave a dinner for him. Mark and Luke also note that Levi was a tax collector. In all three accounts, Jesus is severely criticized for eating at the same table with tax collectors and other disreputable persons. Tax collectors were viewed as collaborators with the Roman State, extortioners who took money from their own people to further the cause of Rome and to line their own pockets. They were spurned as traitors and outcasts. The Jews so abhorred them that pious Pharisees refused to marry into a family that had a publican as a member. Clearly, Matthew was hardly the type of man that a devout Jew would have had among his closest associates. Yet Jesus noted that it was the publican rather than the proud Pharisee who prayed the acceptable prayer, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." There are several favorable references to publicans in the sayings of Jesus in the Gospel according to Matthew. Matthew was called early in Jesus' ministry, but whether he wrote the Gospel that bears his name is seriously doubted by scholars. It is, however, more generally accepted that his "logia" or "sayings of Jesus" have probably been included in that Gospel. It may be that the author of the First Gospel took from Matthew's work some of the numerous parables and comments that make that Gospel so popular a source for homilies and teaching. Through this Gospel, especially, Jesus speaks not only of faith and eternal life, but of duties toward one's neighbors, family, and even enemies. Tradition has it that Matthew, having converted many persons to Christianity in Judea, traveled to the East; but there is

no certain evidence for this. He has been venerated as a martyr, but the time and circumstances of his death are unknown.

—Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018 Church Publishing

*Liturgy created with the following resources:*

*Book of Common Prayer, Enriching Our Worship, Saint Helena Breviary, A New Zealand Prayer Book and The Inclusive Bible, Adapted from <https://socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/prayers/racism/>*