



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

A few notes about our service:

The Green Mountain Online Abbey is a community of liturgical prayer that uses a range of resources approved by the Anglican communion and our Bishop. Within the liturgy, we offer intercessions on behalf of the community, the church, and the world. At some services, the leader will invite personal intercession, at which time you are welcome to unmute and offer your own biddings. Otherwise, please keep your microphone muted as you pray with the responder.

If you would like to add to our prayer list, please email Vicar adwoa Wilson at awilson@diovermont.org.

As an Abbey, we also offer formation in Scripture, Anglican tradition, and the spiritual life. With some occasional or seasonal omissions, these offerings occur on Saturday mornings for 30-60 minutes, immediately following 8:00 am prayer.

Welcome!

VIGIL OF LAMENT FOR OUR COUNTRY AND THE WORLD HOLY MONDAY

Invitation

Officiant The day is long.
People **God, renew our strength.**
Officiant Be near to our souls.
People **Keep us near to ourselves.**

Confession *Together*

Tender God,
We confess that we have forgotten what it means to feel fully. We have demeaned sadness as a lesser emotion. We have exalted toxic positivity over complicated emotions. We have forgotten that the hope of resurrection is tied to Jesus' suffering on the cross, and the women who wailed in sorrow at the foot the cross. Forgive us, God. Forgive us who have forgotten how to bear our souls open in lament. Move us now, at last, and protect us from despair on the journey. Amen.

Forgiveness *Bishop*

Let your soul receive this rest: May the God of many sorrows behold your tears before rushing to wipe them away. May God protect your grief from those who have everything to gain from its erasure. And may they have mercy on you and cradle you as you dare cry out for comfort in your own time. Amen.

The Officiant then says

 O God, make speed to save us.
People O God, make haste to help us.

The Psalm Appointed 69:1-23

Read responsively by whole verse

1 Save me, O God, *

for the waters have risen up to my neck.

2 I am sinking in deep mire, *
and there is no firm ground for my feet.

3 I have come into deep waters, *
and the torrent washes over me.

4 I have grown weary with my crying;
my throat is inflamed; *
my eyes have failed from looking for my God.

5 Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head;
my lying foes who would destroy me are mighty. *
Must I then give back what I never stole?

6 O God, you know my foolishness, *
and my faults are not hidden from you.

7 Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me,
O God of hosts; *
let not those who seek you be disgraced because of me, O God of Israel.

8 Surely for your sake have I suffered reproach, *
and shame has covered my face.

9 I have become a stranger to my own kindred, *
an outcast to my mother's children.

10 Zeal for your house has eaten me up; *
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

11 I humbled myself with fasting, *
but that was turned to my reproach.

12 I put on sack-cloth also, *

and became a byword among them.

13 Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, *
and the drunkards make songs about me.

14 But as for me, this is my prayer to you, *
at the time you have set, O God.

15 “In your great mercy, O God, *
answer me with your unfailing help.

16 Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; *
let me be rescued from those who hate me
and out of the deep waters.

17 Let not the torrent of waters wash over me,
neither let the deep swallow me up; *
do not let the Pit shut its mouth upon me.

18 Answer me, O God, for your love is kind; *
in your great compassion, turn to me.”

19 “Hide not your face from your servant; *
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.

20 Draw near to me and redeem me; *
because of my enemies deliver me.

21 You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; *
my adversaries are all in your sight.”

22 Reproach has broken my heart, and it cannot be healed; *
I looked for sympathy, but there was none,
for comforters, but I could find no one.

23 They gave me gall to eat, *
and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

Glory 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 **Lamentations 1:1-12**

Oh, no!
She sits alone, the city that was once full of people.
Once great among nations, she has become like a widow.
Once a queen over provinces, she has become a slave.

She weeps bitterly in the night, her tears on her cheek.
None of her lovers comfort her.

She lives among the nations; she finds no rest.
All who were chasing her caught her—
right in the middle of her distress.

Zion's roads are in mourning; no one comes to the festivals.
All her gates are deserted. Her priests are groaning,
her young women grieving. She is bitter.

Her adversaries have become rulers; her enemies relax.
Certainly the Lord caused her grief because of her many wrong acts.
Her children have gone away, captive before the enemy.)

Daughter Zion lost all her glory.
Her officials are like deer that can't find pasture.
They have gone away, frail, before the hunter.

While suffering and homeless, Jerusalem remembers all her treasures from days long past. When her people fell by the enemy's hand, there was no one to help her. Enemies saw her, laughed at her defeat.

Jerusalem has sinned greatly; therefore, she's become a joke. All who honored her now detest her, for they've seen her naked. Even she groans and turns away.

Her uncleanness shows on her clothing; she didn't consider what would happen to her. She's gone down shockingly; she has no comforter. "Lord, look at my suffering—the enemy has definitely triumphed!"

The enemy grabbed all her treasures.
She watched nations enter her sanctuary—
nations that you, God, commanded: They must not enter your assembly.

All her people are groaning, seeking bread.
They give up their most precious things for food to survive.
"Lord, look and take notice: I am most certainly despised."

Is this nothing to all you who pass by?
Look around: Is there any suffering like the suffering inflicted on me,
the grief that the Lord caused on the day of his fierce anger?

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

WISDOM

—*Jamaica Kincaid*

Reader You cry when you're born because your lungs expand.
You breathe.

I think that's really kind of significant.

People You come into the world crying, and it's a sign that you're alive.

Second Reading

Reader A reading from the **Gospel of Mark 11:12-25**

The next day, after leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. From far away, he noticed a fig tree in leaf, so he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing except leaves, since it wasn't the season for figs. So he said to it, "No one will ever again eat your fruit!" His disciples heard this.

They came into Jerusalem. After entering the temple, he threw out those who were selling and buying there. He pushed over the tables used for currency exchange and the chairs of those who sold doves. He didn't allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He taught them, "Hasn't it been written, My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you've turned it into a hideout for crooks." The chief priests and legal experts heard this and tried to find a way to destroy him. They regarded him as dangerous because the whole crowd was enthralled at his teaching. When it was evening, Jesus and his disciples went outside the city.

Early in the morning, as Jesus and his disciples were walking along, they saw the fig tree withered from the root up. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look how the fig tree you cursed has dried up." Jesus responded to them, "Have faith in God! I assure you that whoever says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea'—and doesn't waver but believes that what is said will really happen—it will happen. Therefore I say to you, whatever you pray and ask for, believe that you will receive it, and it will be so for you. And whenever you stand up to pray, if you have something against anyone, forgive so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your wrongdoings."

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION FROM THE BISHOP

A full minute of silence is observed so that we may reflect.

A CONTEMPLATIVE LITANY OF LAMENT FOR OUR TIMES

Breathe

INHALE: How long, O God?

EXHALE: This is too much to hold.

INHALE: I am not okay.

EXHALE: God, with you I am safe.

INHALE: I don't have to hold every pain at once.

EXHALE: I can feel and not be consumed.

INHALE: I won't rush my grief.

EXHALE: These tears are sacred.

Bishop: Let us pray:

For the exploitation of nature/creation

God of the land that cries out,

We confess that we have failed this land. We have bowed down to the convenience of machines and taken pleasure in our overconsumption.

Grant us courage to name the atrocities of climate degradation, even when it implicates our daily habits. Upheave the governmental policies, corporations and institutions that leech off the earth. Remind us that the welfare of creation is bound to our own. More than that, help us to decenter humanity in the story of the cosmos. Even if our time here is to end, plant in us an unchanging desire for the shalom of the earth we leave behind.

May we grieve what has already been lost, and may we be granted time to heal what's been marred.

Silence is kept

For a justice system that cannot be trusted

God Awake,

We are grateful that your love cannot be separated from truth-telling and justice. You are exposing how fully our government, justice system, and institutions have been poisoned by the steady, desperate grasping for power. Now, God, root out of each of us the politeness about these truths that masquerade as love. Raise up leaders who can kneel—who can draw near to those whose power has been overcome by socioeconomic injustice. May all those we've pushed to the margins rise up and receive what has been stolen from them. Reveal yourself as near to the brokenhearted, the suffering, the imprisoned, the impoverished and the unloved.

Love is never complicit. Use us to dismember the schemes of injustice.

Make us agents of true restoration in a tired world.

Silence is kept

For trans and nonbinary lives

God of our truest names,

We confess all the ways we neglect trans people in our activism, blind to the hatred we have inherited and the violence enacted by those who came before us—Christianity playing no small part in a culture of transphobia. Liberate us and them from our own jealousy of people capable of living into their true selves, when we ourselves are suffocating. Break our bondage to binaries that limit our imaginations for full liberation. Let us encounter the divine that refuses to be contained by human definition or imagination.

Protect those with the courage to stay near to themselves.

May their liberation be multiplied in all who encounter it.

Silence is kept

For the detained and incarcerated

God who breaks chains,

Remind us that true spiritual liberation is revealed in setting the captives free. Open our eyes to those who are jailed, detained, and incarcerated out of sight. We decry the slavery that was the norm in this country even as we watch it continue unchecked in this present corrupt system. Convict the hypocrisy and profiteering in our immigration laws and prison system. Destroy all systems that exploit Black and brown bodies. Make us shrewd about the fact that the hand that holds the gavel is often capable of far greater evil than the hand confined to chains. Grant tangible relief to the incarcerated adults and children. Protect their will, their courage, and their hope, that they may remember always that their humanity cannot be diminished by a country that wants to destroy them. May they rise each day with renewed belief in their dignity and worth.

And expand our imaginations for what accountability and redemption might look like.

Silence is kept

For grieving

God who knows sorrow,

We have nowhere to hide from this void. We have nowhere to hide from the bewilderment of lost lives, lost trust, lost self-images, lost security. Yet in the mystery of Jesus, you remind us that hope and grief are not mutually exclusive. Strengthen our Christian communities to hold all of Christ's passion: processing our loss, and steadfast companions for the journey toward healing. May we not speak platitudes or try to drag our souls toward happiness, that we might escape our pain. Remind us of the holy and healing tension in the journey from the cross to resurrection.

Remind us that our freedom is wrapped up in staying human.

Silence is kept

Prayers For those who have forgotten how to cry

God of baptism,

Move our spirits to reclaim our emotions like water from the rock of our stoicism. Shatter the lie that to feel and express it will make us look the fool or double the pain. Remind us of the beauty and necessity in our tears, our moans, and our screams. Bring into focus our child selves that wailed without shame. Call us back into a wholeness and nuance that honor the dignity of the world with mourning. Soften our hearts to tragedy, even our own. Bring us into proximity with the wisely vulnerable, that they may teach us true courage. Give us aids in our anguish, to journey with us in and out of sorrow.

Give us courage to welcome our bodies into grief, incarnate expressions of our collective mourning.

Silence is kept

For those who are far from their anger

God of the prophets and Christ of temple tables overturned,
We confess that we have wielded language of civility against the oppressed in attempts to mitigate our own discomfort and guilt. Rattle our exaltation of calm nicety as a pinnacle of character. Shatter our false repression of the shouts that stir from our souls. Release us from the kind of niceness that only serves and protects the oppressor. Awaken our collective rage in defense of dignity in the world.

Make us people of holy fury.

Silence is kept

For boundaries in our empathy

God of shared tears,
Though we ask to feel, we need to feel, sometimes there is too much to hold. Our bodies cannot take it. Release us from the underlying guilt that we are not doing enough, crying enough, working hard enough. Sometimes it is easier to cry for another than for ourselves. Develop our discernment for when our experience of the pain of others is good. Make us discerning of how we sometimes give our attention only to receive attention. Protect

us from the performative empathy and commodifying our shared lament. In all our efforts toward emotional solidarity, help us to truly center those who are hurting, and decenter the forces of privilege that leverage tragedy for profit.

If we weep with the suffering, may it be their voices that ring louder. If we feel anything at all, make it honest.

Silence is kept

For the Departed

God who wept,

Thank for being moved by the reality of death. Give us true sorrow at the senseless and violent deaths of those who depart too soon. Regardless of our political views, give us each a heart to recognize and to grieve that real people whom you made and love, have died as a result of our immigration policy, the war in Iran, and many of our national policies. It has always been so. May true contrition arise in our generation. May the families and friends who cry out their betrayal and despair and mourning be consoled. Comfort all for whom death has come too soon. Let their deaths remind us of our own mortality, that we would live and love with awareness of the gift of each unpromised day. And as we stare into the portal of their passing, may we find beauty in our ending, however solemn that beauty may be.

Dust to dust:

May they at last be at peace, and may your just mercy welcome them home.

Silence is kept.

For solidarity

God of radical possibilities,

Your eternal love makes fullness of redemption possible for both saint and sinner. As we have raged and wept and shaken with tears, so also let us hope. Gather us with Oscar Romero, Martin Luther King, Mahatma

Ghandi, Stephen the first Martyr, the Holy Innocents of Bethlehem, Jeremiah, and all your saints of justice into that kingdom where there is neither sorrow nor sighing but restoration of goodness, right relationship, and true peace. Heal us, God, that our hearts may, in due time, long for the possibility that even those who have caused or stood by the deaths of our martyrs may, like St. Paul, be converted into right relationship with you and all beings. Make real in us the hope of reconciliation under your just reign and merciful correction.

With the Man of Sorrows and Prince of Peace,

Grant us true solidarity with and living hope for the redemption of all.

Silence is kept

Officiant God be with you.

People And also with you.

Officiant Let us 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.

Benediction

Awake, awake, oh sleeper. Go in freedom, with tear-stained cheeks and stability of heart. Feel deeply and honestly, without being consumed. Be reminded that the world deserves so much more than apathy in the presence of injustice. May you be sewn into the complicated tapestry of oppressed and oppressor, knowing you are more than one thing. May you march and write and sing and educate and use what power you have to call forth justice. Go with a full range of emotions, including fear, anger, and sorrow, not as enemies but as guardians. May they be sacred protectors in a world of so much hatred, reminding us we deserve to be protected.

We breathe, we feel. And we befriend our emotions because the liberation of the world depends on it.

And the blessing of God,...

Amen.

Liturgy adapted from the following resources

Book of Common Prayer; Evening Prayer

Arthur Riley, Cole. *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human* - resources adapted from liturgies for - Day; Dignity; Lament; Justice; Rage

Scripture passages appointed for Monday of Holy Week; translations from *Common English Bible & BCP, The St. Helena Psalter*