



*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!

MORNING PRAYER

Friday, May 22, 2026
Week 7 in Eastertide
Helena of Constantinople
Protector of the Holy Places, 330

Opening Sentence

The Officiant says the following

After his suffering Jesus presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. *Acts 1.3*

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 forever. Amen. Alleluia.

Officiant Alleluia, Christ is risen indeed:

People O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

Said in unison **Christ our Passover** *Pascha nostrum*
1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Romans 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

Alleluia.

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; *
therefore let us keep the feast,
Not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, *
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.
Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; *
death no longer has dominion over him.

The death that he died, he died to sin, once for all; *
but the life he lives, he lives to God.
So also consider yourselves dead to sin, *
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia.
Christ has been raised from the dead, *
the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.
For since by a man came death, *
by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.
For as in Adam all die, *
so also in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia.

Officiant Alleluia, Christ is risen indeed:

People O come, let us adore him, alleluia.

Psalm Appointed 102

Read responsively by whole verse

1 O God, hear my prayer, and let my cry come before you; *
hide not your face from me in the day of my trouble.

2 Incline your ear to me; *
when I call, make haste to answer me,

3 For my days drift away like smoke, *
and my bones are hot as burning coals.

4 My heart is smitten like grass and withered, *
so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 Because of the voice of my groaning, *
I am but skin and bones.

6 I have become like a vulture in the wilderness, *
like an owl among the ruins.

7 I lie awake and groan; *

I am like a sparrow, lonely on a house-top.

8 My enemies revile me all day long, *
and those who scoff at me have taken an oath against me.

9 For I have eaten ashes for bread *
and mingled my drink with weeping.

10 Because of your indignation and wrath, *
you have lifted me up and thrown me away.

11 My days pass away like a shadow, *
and I wither like the grass.

12 But you, O God, endure for ever, *
and your Name from age to age.

13 You will arise and have compassion on Zion,
for it is time to have mercy; *
indeed, the appointed time has come.

14 For your servants love its very rubble *
and are moved to pity even for its dust.

15 The nations shall fear your Name, O God, *
and all the rulers of the earth your glory.

16 You, O God, will build up Zion, *
and your glory will appear.

17 You will look with favor on the prayer of the homeless *
and will not despise their plea.

18 Let this be written for a future generation, *
so that a people yet unborn may praise you, O God.

19 For you looked down from your holy place on high; *
from the heavens you beheld the earth,

20 That you might hear the groan of the captive *
and set free those condemned to die,

21 That they may declare in Zion your Name, O God, *
and your praise in Jerusalem,

22 When the peoples are gathered together *
and the nations also, to serve you.

23 You have brought down my strength before my time; *
you have shortened the number of my days.

24 And I said, "O my God,
do not take me away in the midst of my days; *
your years endure throughout all generations.

25 In the beginning, O God, you laid the foundations of the earth, *
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

26 They shall perish, but you will endure;
they all shall wear out like a garment; *
as clothing you will change them,
and they shall be changed,

27 But you are always the same, *
and your years will never end.

28 The children of your servants shall continue, *
and their offspring shall stand fast in your sight."

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

The Lessons

First Reading

Reader A reading from **Ephesians 5:1-20**

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

But fornication and impurity of any kind, or greed, must not even be mentioned among you, as is proper among saints. Entirely out of place is obscene, silly, and vulgar talk; but instead, let there be thanksgiving. Be sure of this, that no fornicator or impure person, or one who is greedy (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be associated with them. For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,
'Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.'

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here ends the reading.

read in unison **A Song of Ezekiel** *Ezekiel 36:24-28*

I will take you out of the nations *
and gather you from every land, and bring you to your own soil.
I will sprinkle clean water over you,
and you shall be clean from all that defiles you; *
I will cleanse you from the taint of all your idols.
I will give you a new heart *
and put a new spirit within you;
I will take the heart of stone from your body *
and give you a heart of flesh.
I will put my spirit into you
and make you conform to my statutes; *
you shall keep my laws and live by them.
You shall live in the land which I gave to your ancestors; *
you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

The Gospel

Reader: A reading from the **Gospel of Matthew 9:9-17**

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.'

Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?' And Jesus said to them, 'The wedding-guests cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is

made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.'

Here ends the reading.

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

The Apostle's Creed

Officiant Let us say together in faith

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 The Lord 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.

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

Officiant

Most Merciful God, who blessed your servant Helena with such grace and devotion to you that she venerated the very footsteps of our Savior; Grant

unto us the same grace that, aided by her prayers and example, we also may always behold your glory in the cross of your Son. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Officiant

A Collect for Fridays

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Together, Led by Responder

For Justice

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

During this time, one of our Abbey intercessors will offer our collective prayers for this community, the church, and the world.

The Intercessor concludes: Lord in your mercy.

People: Hear our prayer.

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.

Dismissal

Deacon Let us bless God. Alleluia, Alleluia.

People To God be thanks forever. Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Officiant ends with a Concluding Sentence

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

Helena was the mother of the Emperor Constantine of Rome and a devout Christian, but she is perhaps most renowned for her discoveries of holy sites related to the life of Jesus.

Helena was born into a lower-class family in the middle of the third century, though we are unsure about where. Many believe she was born in Drepana (now Helenopolis) in northern Asia Minor but this is uncertain. There are also later legends that place her birth in England, and for that she is honored with numerous holy wells across the country. Regardless of birthplace she would eventually become the wife, or at least consort, of Constantius I, who was co-emperor and ruled over Gaul (France) and Britannia (Britain). During this time Helena would give birth to a son, Constantine, in the year 272, but she would soon be divorced and live in the East in the palace of Diocletian.

Once her son gained the Western Empire in the year 312, she returned to Rome and was granted the title Augusta, or Empress, in 325. It was during this time that she made her famous journey to the Holy Land to find the

places mentioned in the Gospels, with the most important finds being the Cross of the Crucifixion and the site of the Resurrection.

Long after the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70, the Emperor Hadrian had the area rebuilt. As part of this restoration a pagan temple was built on the very site of the Resurrection. Helena ordered this temple destroyed, had the area excavated, and discovered three crosses along with the epitaph that said, “Jesus, King of the Jews.” To ensure it was truly the cross of Christ, a woman near death was carried to the site and touched each cross in turn. On the third one she was cured and Helena declared this to be the one. She ordered that a church be built which would be called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Regardless of the truth of the legend itself, it is certain that she claimed to have found this and many other holy sites and relics on her journey, and that many of these remain prominent sites of Christian pilgrimage to this day. Unfortunately, she would not live to see the completion of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, as she died in 330, five years before its completion.

Helena also had a reputation as a faithful Christian who cared for the poor. After her death several towns would be named in her honor and she would also eventually be given the title of “Equal to the Apostles” in the Orthodox Church. Helena’s faith in her Lord was not a detached spirituality, but an embodied and historical one, such that she eagerly sought to find the very places where the Son of God had walked, taught, died, and rose again.

—Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2022 Church Publishing

Liturgy created with the following resources: Book of Common Prayer, Enriching Our Worship, and Saint Helena Breviary