

Lenten Vespers

Home Edition
Wednesday, April 1, 2020

(Please light a candle and place it in your midst as we gather.)

OPENING

Lent Dialogue

Behold, now is the acceptable time;
now is the day of salvation.
Turn us again, O God of our salvation,
that the light of your face may shine on us.
May your justice shine like the sun;
and may the poor be lifted up.

Hymn of Light

The Day You Gave Us, Lord, Has Ended



1 The day you gave us, Lord, has end - ed;
2 We thank you that your church, un - sleep - ing
3 As to each con - ti - nent and is - land
4 The sun, here hav - ing set, is wak - ing
5 So be it, Lord; your realm shall nev - er,
the dark - ness falls at your be - hest.
while earth rolls on - ward in - to light,
the dawn leads on an - oth - er day,
your chil - dren un - der west - ern skies,
like earth's proud em - pires, pass a - way;
To you our morn - ing hymns as - cend - ed;
through all the world its watch is keep - ing,
the voice of prayer is nev - er si - lent,
and hour by hour, as day is break - ing,
but stand and grow and rule for - ev - er,
your praise shall hal - low now our rest.
and nev - er rests by day or night.
nor dies the strain of praise a - way.
fresh hymns of thank - ful praise a - rise.
till all your crea - tures own your sway.

Text: John Ellerton, 1826–1893, alt.
Music: ST. CLEMENT, Clement C. Scholefield, 1839–1904

Thanksgiving for Light

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning you called light into being,
and you set light in the sky to govern night and day.
In a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night
you led your people into freedom.

Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ:
may your Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path;
for you are merciful, and you love your whole creation,
and with all your creatures we give you glory,
through your Son Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever.

Amen.

PSALMODY

Psalm 31:9-16

Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble;
my eye is consumed with sorrow, and also my throat and my belly.

**For my life is wasted with grief, and my years with sighing;
my strength fails me because of affliction, and my bones are
consumed.**

I am the scorn of all my enemies, a disgrace to my neighbors, a dismay to
my acquaintances; when they see me in the street they avoid me.

Like the dead I am forgotten, out of mind;

I am as useless as a broken pot.

For I have heard the whispering of the crowd; fear is all around;
they put their heads together against me; they plot to take my life.

But as for me, I have trusted in you, O Lord.

I have said, "You are my God.

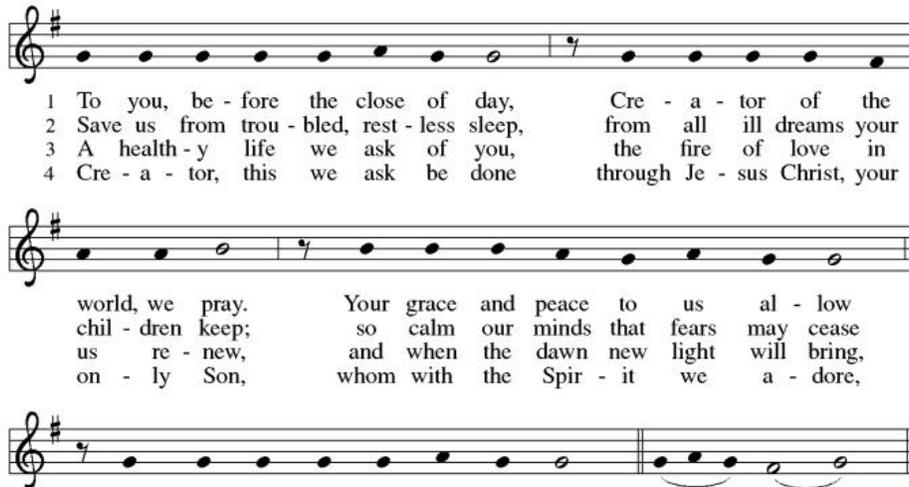
My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies,
and from those who persecute me.

Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love."

(Please observe a long moment of silence for contemplation)

Evening Canticle

To You, Before the Close of Day



1 To you, be - fore the close of day, Cre - a - tor of the
2 Save us from trou - bled, rest - less sleep, from all ill dreams your
3 A health - y life we ask of you, the fire of love in
4 Cre - a - tor, this we ask be done through Je - sus Christ, your

world, we pray. Your grace and peace to us al - low
chil - dren keep; so calm our minds that fears may cease
us re - new, and when the dawn new light will bring,
on - ly Son, whom with the Spir - it we a - dore,

and be our guard and keep - er now.
and rest - ed bod - ies wake in peace.
your praise and glo - ry we shall sing.
with you, one God for - ev - er - more. A - men.

Text: Compline office hymn, c. 6th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: IAM LUCIS, plainsong mode VI

WORD

Reading

Philippians 2:5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

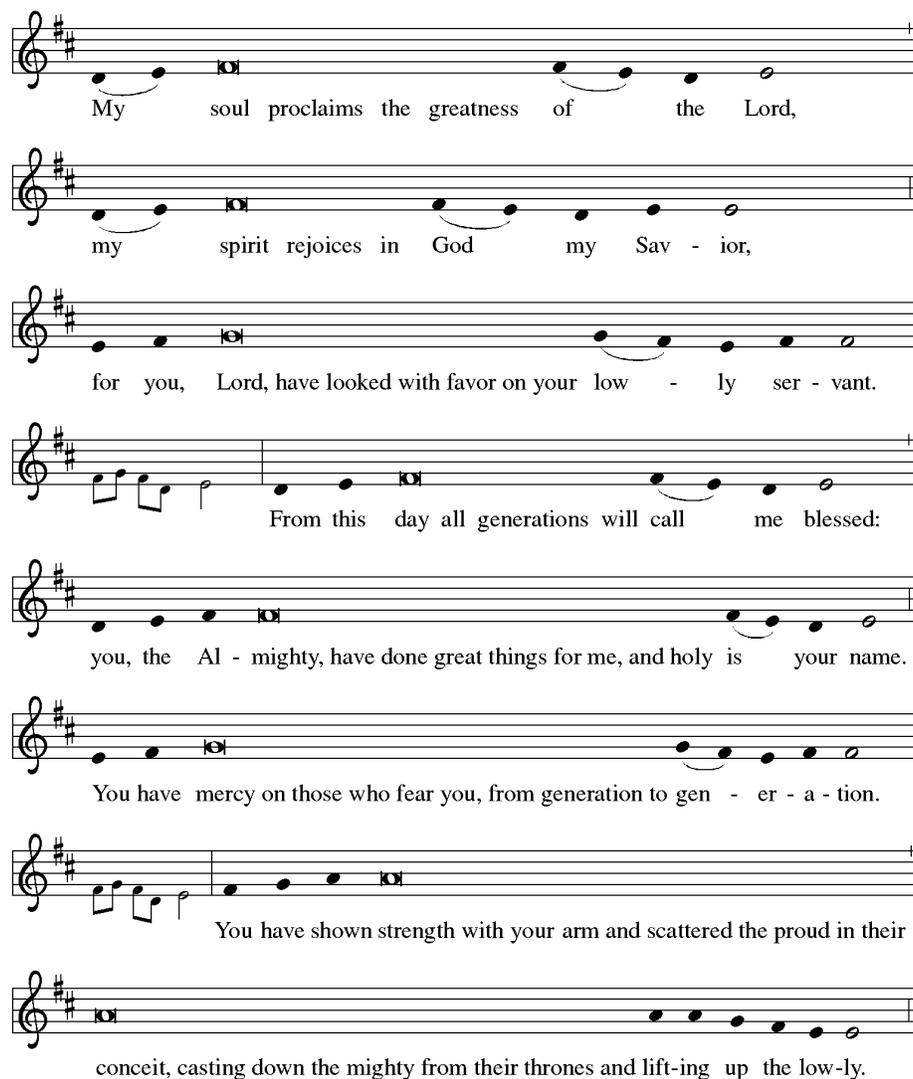
(Please observe a long moment of silence for contemplation)

Dialogue

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors
in many and various ways by the prophets,
but in these last days God has spoken to us by the Son.

Gospel Canticle

The Magnificat



My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Sav - ior,
for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your low - ly ser - vant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
you, the Al - mighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your name.
You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to gen - er - a - tion.
You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their
conceit, casting down the mighty from their thrones and lift-ing up the low-ly.

You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich a - way empty.

You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the

prom - ise of mer - cy, the promise made to our forebears,

to Abraham and his chil - dren for - ev - er.

Music: Bob Moore, b. 1962
 Music © 2004 Augsburg Fortress.

Prayer Litany

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the health of the creation, for abundant harvests that all may share, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For public servants, the government, and those who protect us; for those who work to bring peace, justice, healing, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel, for those who are sick and suffering,
and for those who are in captivity, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance in the time of affliction, wrath, danger, and need,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all servants of the church, gathered near and far,
and for all people who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy,
let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

(A time of silence follows)

Giving thanks for all who have gone before us and are at rest, rejoicing in
the communion of all the saints, we commend ourselves, one another, and
our whole life to you, through Christ our Lord.

To you, O Lord.

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see
the ending, by paths as yet untraveled, through perils unknown. Give us
faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that
your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ
our Lord.

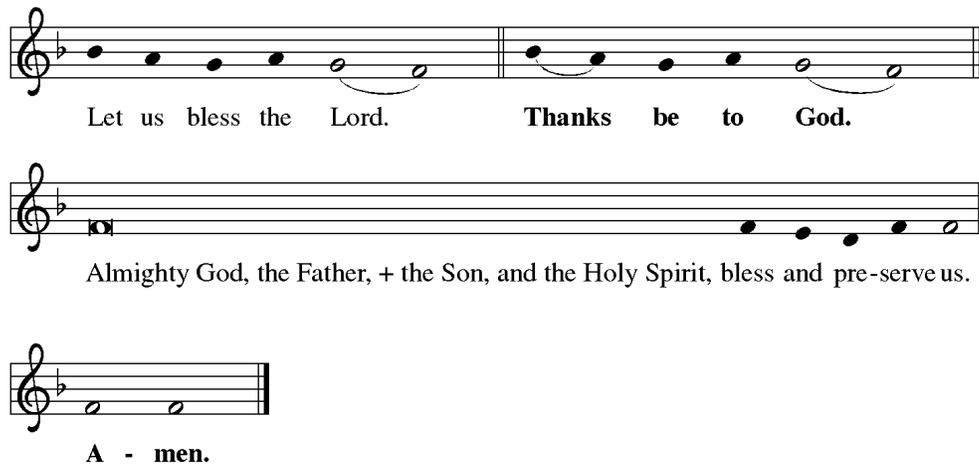
Amen.

Lord's Prayer



Our Fa-ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

Blessing



Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**
Almighty God, the Father, + the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and pre-serve us.
A - men.

(Please share a greeting of peace with one another)

What is Lent?

Lent is an ancient period of preparation leading up to the springtime festival of the Resurrection of our Lord, commonly called *Easter*. It lasts 40 days, which is modeled after the Gospel story of Jesus fasting and praying in the wilderness for 40 days at the beginning of his ministry. So, we do the same: we fast, we pray, and we prepare for the ministry ahead that God calls us to.

What is Vespers?

Vespers is part of the historic prayer pattern known as *daily prayer offices*. In many monastic communities, faithful members gather together every day for simple prayer services at certain proscribed times throughout the day. These services often include music, readings from the Psalms and other important Scripture passages, and almost always prioritize time for quiet, contemplative reflection. Most importantly, they provide a rhythm to daily life that names God's persistent presence among us always, and asks us to ponder what that means for us as God's people.

We as Lutherans have adapted this daily prayer practice for use during the Lenten season. In our tradition, we gather on Wednesdays for the eveningtime prayer office of *Vespers*, which is simply its latin name. There are three prayer offices included in our hymnal:

Matins - morning prayer ("matt-inns")
Vespers - evening prayer ("vess-purrs")
Compline - night prayer ("comp-lynn")

Each time we gather for *Vespers*, the majority of the service will be the same. The same structure, the same responses, the same prayers. Oftentimes, a new scripture reading or musical selection will be offered for contemplation.

We encourage you to embrace the rhythm and contemplative spirit of *Vespers* in this holy season, and open yourself to God's presence as we continue through Lent.

Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA), Lyndhurst, Ohio. Lent 2020. messiahlyndhurst.org
Text and music based on "Evening Prayer Vespers" from Evangelical Lutheran Worship. From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Produced under Augsburg Fortress liturgy license number SAS103281.