

## Morning Prayer II, *The Book of Common Prayer* (1979)

*All stand*

*Officiant* Lord, open our lips.

*People* **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

*Officiant and People*

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

*Officiant* The Lord is full of compassion and mercy:

*People* **Come let us adore him.**

*Psalm 95:1-7 Read aloud in unison*

Come, let us sing to the Lord; \*  
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving \*  
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, \*  
and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth, \*  
and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, \*  
and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, \*  
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. \*  
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

**Psalm 23** *Read aloud responsively by half-verse, standing*

The Lord is my shepherd; \*

**I shall not be in want.**

He makes me lie down in green pastures \*  
**and leads me beside still waters.**

He revives my soul \*  
**and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.**

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; \*  
**for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; \*  
**you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.**

Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, \*  
**and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

## **The Lessons** *Seated*

### **Ephesians 5:8-14**

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.”

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.    *People:* **Thanks be to God.**

### **John 9:1-41**

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.      *People:* **Thanks be to God.**

*The **provided meditation** may be read, if desired.*

## **The Apostles' Creed**

*Officiant and People together, all standing*

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**     *The People stand or kneel*

*Officiant*     The Lord be with you.

*People*     **And also with you.**

*Officiant*     Let us pray.

*Officiant and People in unison*

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

V.     Show us your mercy, O Lord;

**R.     And grant us your salvation.**

V.     Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

**R.     Let your people sing with joy.**

V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;  
**R. For only in you can we live in safety.**  
V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;  
**R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.**  
V. Let your way be known upon earth;  
**R. Your saving health among all nations.**  
V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;  
**R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**  
V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;  
**R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

*Collects*

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O God of heavenly powers, by the might of your command you drive away from our bodies all sickness and all infirmity: Be present in your goodness with your servants., that *their* weakness may be banished and *their* strength restored; and that, *their* health being renewed, *they* may bless your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 458)

*Thanksgivings and intercessions are invited at this time.*

*A Prayer of St. Chrysostom*

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.  
People ***Thanks be to God.***

*The Officiant may then conclude with*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

*2 Corinthians 13:14*



## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH *of* THE ASCENSION

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The Reverend Joseph E. Daly

*Rector*

*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me.*

The 23rd Psalm is attributed to David, the shepherd boy who became king of Israel. Who guides the king as he shepherds the people? It is the Lord God himself who will lead him, feed him, refresh him, protect him and grant him a place at the table in his Lord's own house forever. Until then, David remains confident in the Lord who is with him in the darkness, even the shadowlands of Death.

Today's gospel remembers Jesus' healing of a man who was born blind. His blindness quarantined him from the Lord's house so he spent his days outside the temple entrance, relying on the kindness of worshippers. Although he is banned, he is in good company. Jesus, a descendant of King David, has been threatened by the religious leaders with stones. And as he leaves his Father's house, he spits on the chalky dust and pastes the eyes of the blind man with khaki mud, telling him to wash in the Siloam Pool nearby.

At Siloam, pilgrims ritually cleansed themselves before entering the Temple Mount. Religious leaders would inspect the faithful to deem them worthy of the holy site. Jesus sends a blind messenger to the blind inspectors: Are they so blind they cannot see the Son of David, the Son of God, who restores sight to the blind? It seems everyone is in darkness. No one sees God's Son in their midst, not even the blind man who, even when he is healed, has no idea Jesus is speaking with him until he identifies himself.

At this moment, the world is acutely aware of the Darkness and threat of Death. We are all affected: closures, cancellations, lay-offs, quarantines, and illness. We cannot be blind to this grim reality. But we cannot be blinded by it either. As the fears creep in and the panic spreads, we must be alert as well as compassionate, always aware of our Lord the Great Shepherd-King who conquered Death and Darkness who promised to be in our midst. As Paul encourages us, "[N]ow in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light."