

A Service of Morning Prayer on the Fourth Sunday in Lent Sunday, March 22, 2020

*With the Parish of the Valley Clergy Team
www.valleyanglicans.ca*

Words of Welcome

Opening Words

A candle may be lit, to set apart this time of prayer

Opening Sentence

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

The Penitential Rite

Rev. Gillian: Dear friends in Christ,
as we prepare to worship almighty God,
let us with penitent and obedient hearts
confess our sins,
that we may obtain forgiveness
by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Silence is kept

**All: Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us,
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Rev. Gillian: Almighty God have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

Rev. Gillian: Lord, open our lips.

People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Rev. Gillian: O God, make speed to save us.

People: O Lord, make haste to help us.

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

The Invitatory

Rev. Gillian: The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: O come, let us worship.

Jubilate (Psalm 100)

**All: Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness and come into the divine presence with a song.
Know this: the Lord, the Lord, is God;
the One made us and to whom we belong;
we are God's people, the sheep of God's pasture.
Enter the gates of the Lord with thanksgiving;
go into these courts with praise;
give thanks to God and call upon the name of the Lord.
For the Lord is good, whose steadfast love is everlasting;
and whose faithfulness endures from age to age.**

Rev. Gillian: The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: O come, let us worship.

The Proclamation of the Word

Rev. Matthew: A reading from the first book of Samuel (16:1-1-13)

The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' Samuel said, 'How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.' And the Lord said, 'Take a heifer with you, and say, "I have come to sacrifice to the Lord." Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.' Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, 'Do you come peaceably?' He said, 'Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.' And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed is now before the Lord.' But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the

outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.' Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel.

He said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, 'Neither has the Lord chosen this one.' Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen any of these.' Samuel said to Jesse, 'Are all your sons here?' And he said, 'There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.' And Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.' He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, 'Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.' Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Rev. Matthew: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks Be to God.**

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

You make me lie down in green pastures and lead me beside still waters.

You revive my soul

and guide me along right pathways for your 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 goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Rev. Matthew: A reading from the letter to the Ephesians (5:8-14)

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.'

Rev. Matthew: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks Be to God.**

Canon Susan: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (9:1-25):

People: Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

As he 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 neighbours 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.'

Canon Susan: The Gospel of Christ

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon – Bishop Michael Bird

Affirmation of Faith

All: **Hear, O Israel**
 the Lord our God, the Lord is one.
 Love the Lord your God
 with all your heart,
 with all your soul,
 with all your mind,
 and with all your strength.

This is the first and the great commandment.
The second is like it:
Love your neighbour as yourself.

There is no commandment greater than these.

Intercessions and Thanksgivings

Written and Led by Canon Susan Clifford

The response to our bidding “Lord in Your mercy” is “hear our prayer.”

We begin by acknowledging the Power and Merciful Grace of our loving God.

Heavenly Father, You alone know the challenges that we each face at this time of great uncertainty. In You alone do we seek shelter from this storm. In You alone will we find ultimate Guidance, Purpose, and the Peace that passes all understanding. By Your Loving Power and Merciful Grace, may You deliver us all from the harm caused by this covid-19 crisis.

Lord, in Your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for Your Church as we respond to the challenges that lie before us. May Your transforming power help us to change and to grow in new and creative ways. May You empower our prayer to touch the many who are in need. Guide Your Church as we seek to serve our “neighbour” and to “be” Your loving body in our communities even as we are restrained from gathering.

Lord, in Your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks, dear Lord, for the many ways we have of connecting through prayer, and telephone, and internet. May we be channels of Your Love in these simple ways. We ask now that you empower and support our front line staff and first-responders. We pray for doctors, nurses, PSW’s, Care Home staff, all hospital staff, paramedics, fire and police officers. We pray for all businesses that provide essential service: for grocery stores and pharmacies, for banks, for Food Banks, for all who are working to provide care in our communities.

Lord, in Your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we pray for those who are most vulnerable in our society: for the needs of children, for seniors, those who have health problems, the homeless, for those struggling with addiction. We pray for travellers who are stranded overseas. We pray for businesses that will fail because of this unprecedented economic meltdown, and we pray for those who have no money and are financially in despair. May our government ministers make wise decisions on how best to allocate funds for those in need. And again, Lord, we look to You for Guidance and for the Compassion that we will need as we respond to this crisis.

Lord, in Your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

Lord of Wholeness and Strength, we ask for Protection for all people from all sickness and disease, worldwide. We pray for inspiration and God-speed for the scientists working to create a vaccine for covid-19. For those who are sick we ask for Your Healing. For those who have died we pray for Peace, and for those who mourn may Your Loving Light provide Comfort and Relief from their grief.

In a moment of silence we now lift up to You Lord, those whom we know to be most in need (PAUSE).

Lord, in Your mercy... **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Father,
accept these prayers
for the sake of Your Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Collect

Rev. Gillian: Creator and Healer,
you work your Sabbath will
in the chaos of our life:
teach us the insight that gives true judgement and praises you wherever you are found,
making miracles from spit and mud;
through Jesus Christ, the Son of earth.

All: Amen.

Alternative Collects: Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.

Rev. Gillian: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**All: 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,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Rev. Gillian: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Rev. Gillian: The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of God's Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

If a candle was lit, it is extinguished now

This service is assembled from resources found in the Book of Alternative Services, Published by the Anglican Church of Canada.

And from ALTERNATIVE COLLECTS FOR YEARS A, B & C OF THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY AND SEASONAL PRAYERS OVER THE GIFTS AND AFTER COMMUNION Prepared by the Liturgy Task Force, Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee

Of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada and found online at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Alternative-RCL-Collects-Final-2019.pdf>

The Psalms are drawn from the Inclusive Language Psalter, commended for use by the Council of General Synod, March 2019 and found online at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/GS2016-Liturgical-Psalter-2016-05-04.pdf>