

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Exodus 16:2-15

Faced with hunger in the wilderness, the Israelites longed for life back in Egypt and wished they had never left. Then God miraculously and graciously gave them quails and manna to eat.

²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.” ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?”

⁸And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.’” ¹⁰And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ¹²“I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

¹³In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.”

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

¹Give thanks to the LORD and call up- | on God's name;
make known the deeds of the LORD a- | mong the peoples.

²**Sing to the | LORD, sing praises,
and speak of all God's | marvelous works.**

³Glory in God's | holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the | LORD rejoice.

⁴**Search for the strength | of the LORD;
continually | seek God's face.**

⁵Remember the marvels | God has done,
the wonders and the judgments | of God's mouth,

⁶**O offspring of Abra- | ham, God's servant,
O children of Jacob, God's | chosen ones.**

³⁷You led out your people with sil- | ver and gold;
in all their tribes there was not | one that stumbled.

³⁸**Egypt was glad to | see them go,
because they were a- | fraid of them.**

³⁹You spread out a cloud | for a covering
and a fire to give | light by night.

⁴⁰**They asked, and | you brought quail,
and satisfied them with | bread from heaven.**

⁴¹You opened the rock, and | water flowed,
so the river ran in | the dry places.

⁴²**For you remembered your | holy word
and Abra- | ham your servant.**

⁴³So you led forth your peo- | ple with gladness,
your chosen with | shouts of joy.

⁴⁴**You gave your people the lands | of the nations,
and they took the fruit of | others' toil,**

⁴⁵that they might | keep your statutes
and observe your teachings. | Hallelujah!

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily

wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you.
¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous? ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray...

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, saying “God, in your mercy,” and responding “hear our prayer.”

A brief silence.

Generous God, you make the last first, and the first last. Where this gospel challenges the church, equip it for its works of service. Strengthen those who suffer for Christ. Make us instruments of your peace. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Sun and wind, bushes and worms, cattle and great cities — nothing in creation is outside your concern, mighty God. In your mercy, tend to it all. Give us a spirit of generosity toward all you have made. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. Bring peace to places of conflict and violence, particularly as this pandemic times increases tension. Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Reveal yourself to all in need as you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, ready to relent from punishing. Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving sentences. Give fruitful labour and a livelihood to those seeking work. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously. Grant life, health, and courage to all who are in need (*especially those who we name now, on our hearts...* [pause]). God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We praise you for the generations that have declared your power to us. Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ, until you call us to join them in the joyful song around his throne. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Gloria Dei
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Reflection for Season of Creation from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry (The Episcopal Church)...

There are a lot of good hymns and spirituals about heaven and how wonderful it will be to rest from our labors and be there with the Lord. And this is true. The apostle Paul, when he wrote his letter to the Philippian Christians, was in prison and didn't know if he was about to die. If so, he said, that would be just fine: "To die is gain." But he went on to say that, although this world and its problems can be tiresome, he needed to stick around because there was still work to do. To remain, for Paul and for us, was "necessary for you."

Now, "you" isn't just our loved ones, or even our neighbors, co-workers and folks we meet. "You" is also the world in which we live and breathe, the vineyard in which we toil. To "remain in the flesh" is hard work, because it calls us to be ever more intentional in our care for all around us, including creation itself. German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer once affirmed that "it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith." This world, and all that it holds, is in God's hands. But as long as we remain in the flesh, then by God's call it is in our hands as well.

Liberating, life-giving God, help us to know that we and the world you have created are truly the work of your hands. Give us knowledge and wisdom to care for your handiwork now and for future generations. Amen.



SEASON OF CREATION



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada**
In Mission for Others



The Anglican Church of Canada