

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Concord NH
A Sacred Meal for a Dispersed Community
The Eve of the First Sunday after the Epiphany ~ 9 January 2021

Acknowledging that we are not in the same physical space in the same way that Jesus gathered in the Upper Room with his disciples on the night before he suffered, we come together nonetheless via online technology. We do so out of the spiritual yearning for closeness expressed by our Savior who said, "I have eagerly desired to share this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15)

Participants are invited to have ceremonial food – bread and wine, grape juice, or water – prepared and laid out on a table.

The Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins to God.

*We confess our sin, and the sins of our society,
in the misuse of God's creation.
Gracious God, we are sorry
for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly, and acted ungratefully.
We enjoy the fruits of the harvest,
but sometimes forget that you have given them to us.
We belong to a people who are full and satisfied,
but ignore the cry of the hungry.
We are thoughtless, and do not care enough for the world you have made.
We store up goods for ourselves alone,
as if there were no God and no heaven.
Gracious God, in your mercy, forgive us and help us.*

The Absolution

May the God of love and power forgive you and free you from your sins,
heal and strengthen you by the Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Collect of the Day

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit:
Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made,
and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior;
who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.
Amen.

The Gloria

*Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, receive our prayers.*

***For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord;
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.***

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (1:1-5)

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 29

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, *
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his Name; *
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; *
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice; *
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees; *
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD splits the flames of fire; the voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; *
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe *
and strips the forests bare.
- 9 And in the temple of the LORD *
all are crying, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; *
the LORD sits enthroned as King for evermore.
- 11 The LORD shall give strength to his people; *
the LORD shall give his people the blessing of peace.

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (19:1-7)

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— altogether there were about twelve of them.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel

The holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark (1:4-11)

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily

The Rev. Nancy Strong

The Baptismal Covenant

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

***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.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

***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.***

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

I will, with God's help.

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

I will, with God's help.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

I will, with God's help.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?

I will, with God's help.

The Prayers of the People for Epiphany from 'The Promise of His Glory' ©1990 Church House Publishing, UK

The Wise Men knelt before our Savior.

Let us also come before him to worship him with great joy, and make our prayers to him.

Lord Jesus, the wise men came from the east to worship you:
grant to Christians everywhere a true spirit of adoration.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, you are the King of Kings and Lord of Lords: grant an abundance of peace to your world.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, the Holy Family shared the life of the people of Nazareth:
in your mercy, protect our neighbors and our families,
together with the whole community in which we live.

As we pray through our parish list, we lift the following people to you,
giving thanks for each of them and asking for your blessing on their lives:

Mark Carney & Jan Greer-Carney; Eileen Carter; John & Donna Cassidy; Dave & Becky Cawley;
Jean Marie & Pat Chaloux; Gail Church; Bekky Clair; Malcome & Fran Clapp; Faith Clark;
Tim Cline & Shaun Runyon; Katie Clough; Jean Coburn; Barbara Collins; David & Betty Collins;
John Corrigan; Lisa Corvese & Michael Borek; Bob & Robyn Cotton

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, though you were rich, for our sake you became poor:

show your love for the poor and powerless, and strengthen all those who suffer.

We remember especially Jane, Bob, Brenna, Carol, Richard, Bev, Bud, Don, Maeve, Gerry, Stewart,

and all who are struggling to understand the events of this past week, and who strive for unity and peace.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, the wise men presented to you gold, frankincense and myrrh:

accept the gifts we bring and the offering of our hearts at the beginning of this new year.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, you are the King of Heaven, the hope of all who trust in you:

give to all the faithful departed the wonders of your salvation.

We remember especially Jim Jewell and Lillian Warren,

and those in whose memory altar flowers have been given:

Anne Pike, Fanny Kimball, and Dorothy Pike.

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of wise men, shepherds and angels, and of Mary and Joseph,
we commend ourselves and all your beloved people to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father,

Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Announcements

The Agape Meal

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Luke 22:14-20

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe.

You bring forth bread from the earth; you have fed us with the bread of life in the Body of your Son.

Feed us now with your presence among us and your presence in your Word.

As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf,

so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son.

To you be glory and power for ever and ever.

Amen.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Creator of the universe.

You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of Jesus Christ, crucified yet risen.

May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again,

even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Closing Prayer

Generous God, we have shared together this sacred meal.

Kindle us with the fire of your Spirit

that when Christ comes again, we may shine like lights before his face;

who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing

The Dismissal

St. Paul's Episcopal Church 21 Centre Street, Concord, NH 03301 (603) 224-2523,
office@stpaulsconcord.org, www.stpaulsconcord.org

A place to belong ~ Whoever you are ~ Just as you are