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February 24, 2021 † Midweek of Lent 1

RETURN TO PRAYER

The season of Lent is a time for self-examination and repentance, and it is a time for prayer. "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire . . . the Christian's vital breath," penned hymnwriter James Montgomery (*TLH* 454:1, 5). But sometimes that holy conversation is interrupted or sidelined from a place of priority in our lives. Even our Lord's closest disciples did not serve Him faithfully as watchers and prayers with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. In this holy season, we return to prayer, treasuring the opportunity to pray without ceasing and leading prayerful lives that reflect the mercy of our heavenly Father, who hears our supplications and responds to them in love.

Stand

- P** O Lord, open my lips,
C and my mouth will declare Your praise.
- P** Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
C make haste to help me, O Lord.
- C** Glory be 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.
Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.

+ PSALMODY +

PSALM

Psalms 121

- ¹ I lift up my eyes | to the hills.*
From where does my | help come?
² My help comes | from the LORD,*
who made | heaven and earth.
³ He will not let your | foot be moved;*

He who keeps you will not | slumber.
4 Behold, He who keeps | Israel*
will neither slum- | ber nor sleep.
5 The LORD is your | keeper;*
the LORD is your shade on your | right hand.
6 The sun shall not strike | you by day,*
nor the | moon by night.
7 The LORD will keep you from all | evil;*
He will | keep your life.
8 The LORD will keep your going out and your | coming in*
from this time forth and for- | evermore.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Sit

OFFICE HYMN

“Christ, Mighty Savior” (LSB 881)

+ READINGS +

FIRST READING

Genesis 32:22–30

P A reading from Genesis, the thirty-second chapter.

²² The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. ²⁴ And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. ²⁵ When the man saw that He did not prevail against Jacob, He touched his hip socket, and Jacob’s hip was put out of joint as He wrestled with him. ²⁶ Then He said, “Let Me go, for the day has broken.” But Jacob said, “I will not let You go unless You bless me.” ²⁷ And He said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” ²⁸ Then He said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.” ²⁹ Then Jacob asked Him, “Please tell me Your name.” But He said, “Why is it that you ask My name?” And there He blessed him. ³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

“My Song Is Love Unknown” (LSB 430)

SECOND READING

Romans 8:22–28

P A reading from Romans, the eighth chapter.

²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And He who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SERIES HYMN

“Break Your Hearts” (*See insert*)

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 26:36–46

P A reading from St. Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and He said to His disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.” ³⁷ And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸ Then He said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with Me.” ³⁹ And going a little farther He fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” ⁴⁰ And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And He said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” ⁴² Again, for the second time, He went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, Your will be done.” ⁴³ And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So, leaving them again, He went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words again. ⁴⁵ Then He came to the disciples and said to them, “Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed

into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise, let us be going; see, My betrayer is at hand.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

LENT RESPONSORY

LSB, p. 231

P Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

P In You, O Lord, do I put my trust, leave me not, O Lord, my God.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

P Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.

C **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

SERMON

+ CANTICLE +

Stand

ANTIPHON

LSB, p. 231

P Let my prayer rise before You as incense,

C **and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**

MAGNIFICAT

“My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord” (*LSB* 934)

OFFERING

+ PRAYER +

Stand

KYRIE

LSB, p. 233

C **Lord, have mercy;
Christ, have mercy;
Lord, have mercy.**

LORD’S PRAYER

LSB, p. 233

C **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 forever and
ever. Amen.**

COLLECTS

- P** O Lord, hear my prayer.
C And let my cry come to You.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

- P** God our Father, You promise to hear our prayers, whether spoken or even too deep for words. During these Lenten days, breathe the breath of Your Spirit into our mouths, that we learn to pray without ceasing; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

ADDITIONAL COLLECTS OF INTERCESSION AND THANKSGIVING

COLLECT FOR LENT

- P** Faithful God, through the ancient prophets You call us to return to You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let these Lenten days be a time when, remembering how You relentlessly return to us in mercy, we return also to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

COLLECT AT EVENING

- P** Ever-present God, stay with us, for darkness has come and the day is now past. Forgive, we pray, both our neglect in doing good this day and the wrongs we have done. Awaken us in the morning, bathed in the light of our Baptism, so that we will be ready to love and serve You and our neighbor; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

COLLECT FOR PEACE

- P** God our strength, the peace You provide through the cross of Christ flows like a river through the chaos of our lives. Lead us to drink deeply from the still waters of Your peace, and thereby dispel our anxieties and fears, so that we may serve you with humility and grace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

Stand

BENEDICAMUS

LSB, p. 234

P Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

BENEDICTION

LSB, p. 234

P The grace of our Lord † Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **Amen.**

Acknowledgments

Vespers from *Lutheran Service Book*

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