

St. James Episcopal Church * Morning Prayer
Worship Leader Bruce Louwagie

Processional Hymn 686 Come, thou fount of every blessing

GOD OF LOVE & MERCY

68 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise to thee an al-tar, hith-er by thy help I've come;
3 O to grace how great a debt-or dai-ly I'm con-strained to be!

streams of mer-cy, nev-er ceas-ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar-rive at home.
Let thy good-ness, like a fet-ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee;

Teach me some me-lo-dious son-net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;
Je-sus sought me when a stran-ger, wan-dering from the fold of God;
prone to wan-der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

praise his name—I'm fixed up-on it—name of God's re-deem-ing love.
he, to res-cue me from dan-ger, bought me with his pre-cious blood.
here's my heart, O, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a-bove.

WORDS: Robert Robinson (1735-1790)
MUSIC: John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, 1813

NETTLETON
8.7.8.7.D.

⁵ They will receive blessing from the Lord,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.

⁶ Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

⁷ Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

⁸ Who is the King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle.

⁹ Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰ Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory.

The Lessons

First Lesson: Isaiah 25:6-9

⁶On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. ⁷And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. ⁸Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

⁹It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Second Lesson: Revelation 21:1-6a

¹¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God

himself will be with them; ⁴he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” ⁵And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

Gradual Hymn: 685 Rock of ages, cleft for me

The Christian Life

685

1 Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my-self in thee;
2 Should my tears for ev - er flow, should my zeal no lan-guor know,
3 While I draw this fleet-ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,

let the wa - ter and the blood from thy wound-ed side that flowed,
all for sin could not a - tone: thou must save, and thou a - lone;
when I rise to worlds un - known and be - hold thee on thy throne,

be of sin the dou-ble cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.
in my hand no price I bring, sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my-self in thee.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are printed between the staves.

Words: Augustus Montague Toplady (1740-1778), alt.
Music: *Toplady*, Thomas Hastings (1784-1872)

77. 77. 77

Third Lesson: John 11:32-44

³²When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

³³When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.”³⁵Jesus began to weep. ³⁶So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”³⁷But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” ³⁸Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

The Sermon:

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“Death, be not proud,” John Donne admonishes, and St. Paul cries, “O death where is thy victory, O death where is thy sting?” The poet John Donne had been hit by death repeatedly. His wife died young, as did five of his twelve children. St. Paul had caused death as a young man, but after his encounter with the Living Lord, the only death that mattered to him was separation from Christ. Yet, they both knew unimaginable tribulation and sorrow which hit them hardest after their conversion. The gift of love through Jesus Christ does not save us from the reality and the sorrow of death. Even Jesus, confronted by the death of his dear friend Lazarus and the immense grief of his sisters, broke down and wept.

Today, as we remember those we have loved and lost and all the saints within the blessed communion, we are allowed to weep and to be sad. This kind of grief is a sign that we are human and that human connections matter. They mattered greatly to Jesus of Nazareth.

But we are also urged toward hope and not despair. “Did I not tell you,” Jesus reminds the grieving Martha, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”

From all we read in the New Testament, the grave is not the absolute finale of the great act of life. “The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,” St. Paul assures the people of the *ekklesia* in Thessaloniki. But we are not given any details as to what happens after death. Lazarus is nowhere quoted, even though his sisters and friends must have asked him what it was that he saw.

In his fascinating Christian fantasy of heaven and hell, *The Great Divorce*, C. S. Lewis describes dramatically his own strong conviction that, even after death, every person has a chance again and again to accept or reject the love of God. Not all accept the love offered, neither here nor on the other side. We can see this reality vividly here on earth. Today, of all days, opening our hearts to our Creator is an assurance of life that death cannot snatch from us. It is not that some are favored to enter Heaven and others are not; the decision remains ours, C. S. Lewis tells us.

Today, we are also reminded that on this earth, death is the great equalizer. There is no difference between rich and poor when death arrives. Money and expensive medicines and interventions may alleviate some of the pain, it may even prolong life, but when death arrives, the rich die just as the poor die. There are many rumors in today’s world that the very rich are trying to prolong their lives; in medicine, there are even efforts to defeat death altogether. The inevitable global warming which is killing many of us already will be avoided by the billionaires (they think); frantically, they are building underground bunkers to avoid the apocalyptic end that will destroy the rest of us. They may try and try, but inevitably death will win. That’s how it is. The great enemy has *not yet* been defeated. Both St. Paul and the writer of Revelation assure us of that reality.

Everyone who has lived has died. That’s simply how it is. Most Christians believe that the Lord of Life, Jesus the Christ, brought Lazarus back from the dead, but that was for a little while, and he too eventually died. We Christians also believe that Jesus died on the cross, was buried, but rose again unto eternity. The Alpha is also the Omega. He is the only one. The New Testament contains promises to us that death is not the ultimate end, that despite the death of the body, we continue to live in the Lord. We trust those promises.

Our greatest problem in believing is that we live within Time and Space, but our dead have escaped these confines. So, we cannot imagine where they are, and how they are. But we trust in him who said, “I go to prepare a place for you.”

On this day, the hope is that we will feel more intensely than ever the reality of the communion of saints and that all in the cloud of witnesses will become real to us as never before. We need to know that we are not alone. Despite disasters and unrest and wars and death, we are not alone. We have the sweet promise that God will wipe away every tear from our eyes and death will be no more.

We cling to the assurance of the One who said, "I am making all things new. . . I will be your God and you will be my children." Let us today remember all of God's children who have left us to enter the cloud of witnesses. Let us cry together with the psalmist:

Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors!
That the King of glory may come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory.

Behold, he is making all things new. Amen.

The Apostles Creed

BCP 96

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

Peace of the lord be with you

Announcements

Offertory Hymn: WLP 812 "Here I Am Lord"

Here I Am, Lord

Verses



1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my
2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my
3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the



peo - ple cry. All who dwell in dark and sin
peo - ple's pain. I have wept for love of them.
poor and lame. I will set a feast for them.



My hand will save. I who made the
They turn a - way. I will break their
My hand will save. Fin - est bread I



stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love a - lone.
will pro - vide Till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call - ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Text: Isaiah 6; Dan Schutte, b.1947

Tune: Dan Schutte, b.1947; arr. by Michael Pope, SJ, John Weissrock

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Offi The Lord be with you.

cian

t

Peo And also with you.

ple

Offi Let us pray.

cian

t

The Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

BCP 97

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

Suffrage B

BCP98

Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;

Govern and uphold them, now and always.

Day by day we bless you;

We praise your Name for ever.

Lord, keep us from all sin today;

Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

Lord, show us your love and mercy;

For we put our trust in you.

In you, Lord, is our hope.

And we shall never hope in vain.

The Collect of the Day: Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers of the People, Form III 387

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Silence

The General Thanksgiving

101

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for your creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostem

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

Recessional Hymn 671 **Amazing Grace**

AMAZING GRACE

NEW BRITAIN



1. A - maz - ing grace! How sweet the sound That saved *a
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my
 3. The Lord has prom - ised good to me, His word my
 4. Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I have al -
 5. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright shin - ing



1. wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 2. fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
 3. hope se - cures; He will my shield and
 4. read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
 5. as the sun, We've no less days to



1. now am found, Was blind but now I see.
 2. grace ap - pear The hour I first be - lieved!
 3. por - tion be As long as life en - dures.
 4. safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.
 5. sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.

*Alternate text: "and set me free!"

Text: CM; verses 1-4, John Newton, 1725-1807; verse 5, anon., fr. *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790.
 Music: *Columbian Harmony*, 1829.

Go in Peace to love and service the Lord –

Thanks be to God –