

Lenten Evening Worship

March 13, 2024

Worship 7:00 PM

Opening Litany

The prophet Joel calls us to return to the Lord with all our hearts.

Lord, use this holy season of Lent to reorient our lives toward you.

As we raise our voices in lament,

comfort us and give us cause for hope.

Bless our worship, our work, and our play.

Guide us with your Spirit, that we may follow where you lead in confidence and trust.

Gathering Song

God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me

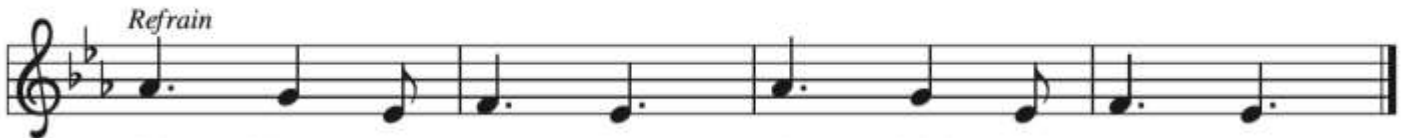
ACS 1084



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho-ly, great cloud of wit-ness-
3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash-ing of light-ning,
4 Walk-ing be-hind to hem my jour-ney, go-ing a-head to
5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up-hold me:
es en-fold; proph-ets, a-pos-tles, an-gels wit-ness:
strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan-et:
light my way, and from be-neath, a-bove, and all ways:
hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur-round me; O Christ, sur-round me.

Text: Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, b. 1967
Music: GREEN TYLER, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan
Text and music © 2004 This Here Music, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Let us pray:

Gracious God, our lives are a beautiful and sometimes terrifying mix of great joy and deep sorrow. When we grieve, remind us that no matter how personal our experience, we can still lean on the community of faith around us for hope and support. Inspire us to notice those in our midst who need encouragement this day. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

A reading of Psalm 13

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long shall I have perplexity in my mind, and grief in my heart, day after day? How long shall my enemy triumph over me?

Look upon me and answer me, O LORD my God; give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death; lest my enemy say, "I have defeated you," and my foes rejoice that I have fallen. But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart is joyful because of your saving help. I will sing to the LORD, who has dealt with me richly.

Reflection

In the Bible laments take many forms. Sometimes a lament is made by an individual talking about a personal affliction or situation. Calling something an "individual lament" can be a bit of a misnomer. When we grieve, we rarely do so in a vacuum.

Even if a loss is deeply personal, those around us may still be touched by the sadness, disappointment, or loss. Although we grieve in different ways about different things, we find common ground when we acknowledge that lament and grief are a part of the life of faith. When we lament, it is good to do so in the company of others. God created human beings to be in relationship, a companionship that is meant to be enjoyed no matter what the circumstances. At its best, the Christian community is a place where we can laugh and sing together, and where we can mourn together as well.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you prefer to grieve privately or with others? (Note: There is no wrong answer to this question – we all do this differently.)
2. How can the Psalms help you when you are mourning a personal loss?

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Hymn

Day by Day

ELW 790

1 Day by day, your mer - cies, Lord, at - tend me, bring - ing com - fort
2 Day by day, I know you will pro - vide me strength to serve and
3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my bur - dens

to my anx-ious soul. Day by day, the bless-ings, Lord, you send me
wis - dom to o - bey; I will seek your lov - ing will to guide me
grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will hear me

draw me near - er to my heav'n-ly goal. Love di - vine, be - yond all
o'er the paths I strug - gle day by day. I will fear no e - vil
when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer. Day by day, no mat - ter

mor - tal mea - sure, brings to naught the bur - dens of my quest; Sav - ior,
of the mor - row, I will trust in your en - dur - ing grace. Sav - ior,
what be - tide me, you will hold me ev - er in your hand. Sav - ior,

lead me to the home I trea - sure, where at last I'll find e - ter - nal rest.
help me bear life's pain and sor - row till in glo - ry I be - hold your face.
with your pres - ence here to guide me, I will reach at last the prom - ised land.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Robert Leaf, 1936–2005
Music: BLOTT EN DAG, Oskar Ahnfelt, 1813–1882
Text © 1992 Augsburg Fortress.

Trusting that God hears our every cry and promises to wipe away every tear, we offer our prayers and our laments for the church, the world, and all who are in need. Hearing the words "Hear us, O God" God's people may reply, "your mercy is great."

Free us to present ourselves fully to you in all our messiness. Enable us to share with you all that worries us or concerns us, the tremendous and the tiny, knowing that you love us to the end. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Call us not only to lament the damage we have done to your creation but to take part in the healing of it. Suppress our greedy nature so that all can live with a sufficiency. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Encourage us to use whatever power we have to create a community, a country, and a world where all people are recognized as your beloved children. May there be no person whose worth is questioned. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, receive these prayers and those that remain unspoken, and in return grant us your peace, all for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one across time and space by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using whatever version of that prayer comforts you. We pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord watches over your going out and your coming in. The Lord shields your joys and holds your sorrows. God bless you and keep you this day and always.

Amen.

Hymn

Spirit, Open My Heart

ACS 1043

Refrain

Spir-it, o - pen my heart to the joy and pain of
liv-ing. As you love may I love, in re - ceiv - ing

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the refrain, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

and in giv - ing. Spir - it, o - pen my heart.

1 God, re - place my ston - y heart with a heart that's
 2 Write your love up - on my heart as my law, my
 3 May I weep with those who weep; share the joy of

kind and ten - der. All my cold - ness and
 goal, my sto - ry. In each thought, word, and
 friend and neigh - bor. As I live from day to

Refrain

fear deed, to your grace I now sur - ren - der.
 day, may my liv - ing bring you glo - ry.
 love will be my fin - est la - bor.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
 Music: WILD MOUNTAIN THYME, Irish melody; adapt. Alfred V. Fedak, b. 1953
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Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Presiding Minister: Rev. Diana Edis

Musician: Sheila Seidemmann

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* Our Bible readings are taken from the New Revised Standard Version, covered under AF #SB157842.

Holy Lament

This series explores various kinds of lament found in scripture. Each week we will consider what it means to sit with our grief rather than try to push it aside. We will discover that many faithful believers have wrestled with grief, sorrow, and questions for God about why the innocent suffer. This series understands lament as one of the more faithful things we can do. When we approach God with honesty and humility, and we admit that some things are too big for our hearts to bear, we will find there not a disapproving God but one who weeps with us. We will find a God who can take our grief and disappointment and transform them into holy joy and renewed hope. We will learn, ultimately, that Jesus' death on the cross – the place to which the season of Lent leads us – is the reason we never mourn as those without hope.