

St Francis Episcopal Church, San Jose, CA
Morning Prayer, Tuesday, July 20, 2021
Commemoration of Sojourner Truth, Harriett Ross Tubman,
Amelia Bloomer, & Elizabeth Cady Stanton
Pioneers of black rights and women's rights

When 2 people are reading: READER 1: Plain Text *Reader 2: Italics* **Both: Bold**

You are invited to begin the service by lighting a candle.

People may spend their whole lives climbing the ladder of success only to find, once they reach the top, that the ladder is leaning against the wrong wall.¹ *Thomas Merton*

O Lord God, we have no idea where we are going. We do not see the road ahead of us. We cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do we really know ourselves, and the fact that we think that we are following Your Will does not mean that we are actually doing so. But we believe that the desire to please You does in fact please You. And we hope we have that desire in all that we are doing.²

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. *1 John 4:16*
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind. As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and forever. **Amen.**

Psalm 122

1 Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

2 *Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, for there is no help in them.*

3 When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.

4 *Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! whose hope is in the Lord*

¹ https://www.azquotes.com/author/10004-Thomas_Merton

² Based on a prayer by Thomas Merton.

their God;

5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps his promise for ever;

6 *Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.*

7 The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

8 *The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.*

9 The Lord shall reign for ever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.

Hallelujah!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ver. Amen.

A reading from Judges

50 *Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. ⁵¹But there was a strong tower within the city, and all the men and women and all the lords of the city fled to it and shut themselves in; and they went to the roof of the tower.*

⁵²*Abimelech came to the tower, and fought against it, and came near to the entrance of the tower to burn it with fire. ⁵³But a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, and crushed his skull. ⁵⁴Immediately he called to the young man who carried his armour and said to him, 'Draw your sword and kill me, so people will not say about me, "A woman killed him."' So the young man thrust him through, and he died.*

⁵⁵*When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went home.*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

**Wisdom freed from a nation of oppressors a holy people and a blameless race;
She entered the soul of a servant of the Lord, withstood dread rulers with
wonders and signs.**

**To the saints she gave the reward of their labors, and led them by a marvelous
way;**

She was their shelter by day and a blaze of stars by night.

**She brought them across the Red Sea, she led them through mighty waters;
But their enemies she swallowed in the waves and spewed them out from the
depths of the abyss.**

**And then, Lord, the righteous sang hymns to your Name, and praised with one
voice your protecting hand;**

**For Wisdom opened the mouths of the mute, and gave speech to the tongues of a
newborn people.**

**Glory 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.**

A reading from the Gospel of Luke

5 And he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him."⁷ And he answers from within, "Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything."⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

9 'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Strike up the instruments, a song to my God with timbrels, chant to the Lord with cymbals;

Sing to him a new song, exalt and acclaim his name.

A new hymn I will sing to my God. O Lord, great are you and glorious, wonderful in power and unsurpassable.

Let your every creature serve you; for you spoke, and they were made, You sent forth your spirit, and they were created; no one can resist your word.

The mountains to their bases, and the seas, are shaken; the rocks, like wax, melt before your glance.

But to those who fear you, you are very merciful.

Judith 16:1,13-15

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

**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.**

The Prayers

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.

O God, whose Spirit guides us into all truth and makes us free: Strengthen and sustain us as you did your servants Elizabeth, Amelia, Sojourner, and Harriet. Give us vision and courage to stand against oppression and injustice and all that works against the glorious liberty to which you call all your children; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

We watch as the jets fly in
with the power people and
the money people,
the suits, the budgets, the billions.

We wonder about monetary policy
because we are among the haves,
and about generosity
because we care about the have-nots.

By slower modes we notice
Lazarus and the poor arriving from Africa,
and the beggars from Central Europe, and
the throng of environmentalists
with their vision of butterflies and oil
of flowers and tanks
of growing things and killing fields.

We wonder about peace and war,
about ecology and development,
about hope and entitlement.

We listen beyond jeering protesters and
soaring jets and
faintly we hear the mumbling of the crucified one,

something about
feeding the hungry
and giving drink to the thirsty,
about clothing the naked,
and noticing the prisoners,
more about the least and about holiness among them.

We are moved by the mumbles of the gospel,
even while we are tenured in our privilege.

We are half ready to join the choir of hope,
half afraid things might change,
and in a third half of our faith turning to you,
and your outpouring love
that works justice and
that binds us each and all to one another.

So we pray amidst jeering protesters
and soaring jets.
Come by here and make new,
even at some risk to our entitlements.³

For all those who have fallen victim to hatred and inhumanity, for those loved ones who are left behind to mourn, for the souls of those whose hearts are cold, Lord, hear our prayer.

For the children who are being born into this world of conflict and violence, for women and mothers who suffer needlessly, Lord, hear our prayer.

For all those who have been forced into unemployment, who long to return to work, for all those who struggle to support their families, Lord, hear our prayer.

For the soldiers who are misguided in thinking that their bullets will bring about peace, for those who feel called to conscientiously object to military orders, Lord, hear our prayer.

For the children who cry in their beds at night and wonder "what have I done?"
For the mothers and fathers who must try to explain the unexplainable, Lord, hear our prayer.

For all the children who have died before their time, for the soldiers who allow their uniform to strip them of their humanity, for the healers who are denied the opportunity to use their gifts, Lord, hear our prayer.

For the redemption of souls of both victim and perpetrator, for those who commit themselves to the forgiveness of sins, Lord, hear our prayer. Amen.⁴

The Lord bless us, and preserve us from all evil, and keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

³ Walter Brueggemann (b. 1933). From *Prayers for a Privileged People* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2008), p. 21-22. Posted on **Journey with Jesus**. <http://www.journeywithjesus.net/>

⁴ Author unknown. <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/justice-prayers>

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**
