

St Francis Episcopal Church, San Jose, CA
Morning Prayer, Tuesday, May 4, 2021
Commemoration of Monica
Mother of Augustine of Hippo, 387 C.E.

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.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

We have not seen the risen Christ,

but we see him in the lives of those transformed by grace.

We have not seen Jesus face-to-face,

but we have seen him in the faces of everyone whose love encourages us.

We have not touched the wounds from the cross,

but we have been called to bring healing to the scarred of the world.

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 115

12 The Lord has been mindful of us, and he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron;

13 He will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great together.

14 May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children after you.

15 May you be blessed by the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

16 The heaven of heavens is the Lord's, but he entrusted the earth to its peoples.

17 The dead do not praise the Lord, nor all those who go down into silence;

18 But we will bless the Lord, from this time forth for evermore.

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 ever. Amen.

A reading from the First Book of Samuel

¹⁰She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly. ¹¹She made this vow: 'O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite* until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants,* and no razor shall touch his head.' As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. ¹³Hannah was praying silently; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴So Eli said to her, 'How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Put away your wine.' ¹⁵But Hannah answered, 'No, my lord, I am a woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. ¹⁶Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation all this time.' ¹⁷Then Eli answered, 'Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him.' ¹⁸And she said, 'Let your servant find favour in your sight.' Then the woman went to her quarters,* ate and drank with her husband,* and her countenance was sad no longer.* They rose early in the morning and worshipped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. ²⁰In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.'

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God and no torment will ever touch them.

In the eyes of the foolish, they seem to have died; but they are at peace.

For though, in the sight of others, they were punished, their hope is of immortality.

Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy.

Like gold in the furnace, God tried them and, like a sacrificial burnt offering, accepted them.

In the time of their visitation, they will shine forth and will run like sparks through the stubble.

They will govern nations and rule over peoples and God will reign over them for ever.

Wisdom 3: 1-8

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.

A reading from the Gospel of Luke

Soon afterwards,* he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. ¹³When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.' ¹⁴Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you, rise!' ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus* gave him to

his mother. ¹⁶Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has risen among us!' and 'God has looked favourably on his people!' This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens. God chose us in him before the world began to be holy and blameless in his sight. He destined us to be his adopted sons through Jesus Christ, such was his will and pleasure, that all might praise the glorious favor he has bestowed on us in his beloved. In him and through his blood, we have been redeemed, and our sins forgiven, so immeasurably generous is God's favor to us. God has given us the wisdom to understand fully the mystery, the plan he was pleased to decree in Christ. A plan to be carried out in Christ, in the fullness of time, to bring all things into one in him, in the heavens and on earth.

Ephesians 1:3-10

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

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

**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,
for ever and ever. *Amen.***

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.

Deepen our devotion, O Lord, and use us in accordance with your will, that inspired by the example of your servant Monica, we may bring others to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, One God, forever and ever. ***Amen.***

We pray for your love and compassion to abound as we walk through this challenging season. We ask for wisdom for those who bear the load of making decisions with widespread consequences. We pray for those who are suffering with sickness and all who are caring for them. We ask for protection for the elderly and vulnerable to not succumb to the risks of the virus. We pray for misinformation to be curbed that fear may take no hold in hearts and minds. As we exercise the good sense that you in your mercy provide, may we also approach each day in faith and peace, trusting in the truth of your goodness towards us. ***Amen.***

O Parent God, Deliverer of our daily bread, we, Your children, come before You hungry and thirsty for the spiritual nourishment that only You can provide.
For we have tasted that You are good and we cannot live without Your goodness.

God in Christ,
Cornerstone of our fellowship and faith, we Your living stones come to be built up together as Your house, to Your design.
For we are ready to be chiselled and polished until we are fit for Your present purpose for us.

Forgive us, Gracious God,
if we are feeding ourselves on the junk food of idols
stuffing full with excessive meals, our fridges and freezers with much that will go to waste, and our homes with space and possessions that we do not truly need.
And if we are those of Your children, Lord, who are at this moment having a hard time making ends meet then show us where and who to ask, where to seek and the doors upon which we should knock.
Reveal to us who in our faith family we might approach for sharing or help.

Living God,
if we have lost the life in us and become as dry, lustre-lacking, dead stones,
then forgive us. Refresh us with water and Spirit
that we may emerge gleaming with Your presence and filled again with a passion for the Gospel.

Compassionate God,
in the quietness now, we make our personal prayers to you:
our confessions of wrongdoing,
our needs for healing and our offloading of anything that troubles or burdens us.
Through the silence Lord, hear our prayers.

[silence]

God whose Spirit interprets our deepest longings
we praise You for Your never-ending and limitless love and mercy.

Now we are ready to feast upon Your Word to us today.

In Jesus' Name we pray. **Amen.**¹

If the God who raised Jesus from the dead is for us, who dare be against us?

We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Step out into the world in humble confidence:

there is nothing about to happen that God has not foreseen,
and no situation where Christ will not be there ahead of you,
preparing a place and an opportunity for you.

Thanks be to God.²

¹ written by Rev Carol Ford, and posted on the Church of Scotland's **Starters for Sunday** website.
<http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

² <http://www.bruceprewer.com/>

MONICA

MOTHER OF AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (4 MAY 387)

A fresco of Augustine
leaving his mother
Monnica



We know about Monnica almost entirely from the autobiography (the *Confessions*) of her son Augustine, a major Christian writer, theologian and philosopher (see 28 August). Monnica was born in North Africa, near Carthage, in what is now Tunisia, perhaps around 331, of Christian parents, and was a Christian throughout her life. Her name has usually been spelled "Monica," but recently her tomb in Ostia was discovered, and the burial inscription says "Monnica," a spelling which all AC (Archaeologically Correct) persons have hastened to adopt. (On the other hand, it may simply be that the artisan who carved the inscription was a bad speller.) As a girl, she was fond of wine, but on one occasion was taunted by a slave girl for drunkenness, and resolved not to drink thereafter. She was married to a pagan husband, Patricius, a man of hot temper, who was often unfaithful to her, but never insulted or struck her. It was her happiness to see both him and his mother ultimately receive the Gospel.

Monnica soon recognized that her son was a man of extraordinary intellectual gifts, a brilliant thinker and a natural leader of men (as a youngster he was head of a local gang of juvenile delinquents), and she had strong ambitions and high hopes for his success in a secular career. Indeed, though we do not know all the circumstances, most Christians today would say that her efforts to steer him into a socially advantageous marriage were in every way a disaster. However, she grew in spiritual maturity through a life of prayer, and her ambitions for his worldly success were transformed into a desire for his conversion. He, as a youth, rejected her religion with scorn, and looked to various pagan philosophies for clues to the meaning of life. He undertook a career as an orator and teacher of the art of oratory (rhetoric), and moved from Africa to Rome and thence to Milan, at that time the seat of government in Italy. His mother followed him there a few years later. In Milan, Augustine met the bishop Ambrose, from whom he learned that Christianity could be intellectually respectable, and under whose preaching he was eventually converted and baptized on Easter Eve in 387, to the great joy of Monnica.

After his baptism, Augustine and a younger brother Navigius and Monnica planned to return to Africa together, but in Ostia, the port city of Rome, Monnica fell ill and said, "You will bury your mother here. All I ask of you is that, wherever you may be, you should remember me at the altar of the Lord. Do not fret because I am buried far from our home in Africa. Nothing is far from God, and I have no fear that he will not know where to find me, when he comes to raise me

to life at the end of the world."

by James Kiefer

<http://satucket.com/lectionary/Monnica.htm>