

## Pentecost 23, November 8, 2020

### Opening Acclamation

Blessed be the one holy and living God  
**Glory to God, forever and ever**

### Collect of the Day (together)

You let us choose, O God, between you and the false gods of this world. In the midst of the night of sin and death, wake us from our slumber and call us forth to greet Christ, so that with eyes and hearts fixed on him, we may follow to eternal light. Amen.

### First Lesson: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

“Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good.” And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the Lord!” Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.” The people said to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

## **Psalm 78:1-7**

- 1 Hear my teaching, O my people; \*  
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; \*  
I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.
- 3 That which we have heard and known,  
and what our forebears have told us, \*  
we will not hide from their children.
- 4 We will recount to generations to come  
your praiseworthy deeds and your power, O God, \*  
and the wonderful works you have done.
- 5 You gave your decrees to Jacob  
and established a law for Israel, \*  
which you commanded them to teach their children;
- 6 That the generations to come might know, and the children yet unborn, \*  
that they in their turn might tell it to their children;
- 7 So that they might put their trust in you, \*  
and not forget your deeds,  
but keep your commandments;

## **Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

## **The Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13**

Jesus said, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

## The Sermon

The Rev. Beth Sherman

### The Prayers of the People *(The people stand as they are able.)*

*Reader:* Let us be filled with the Holy Spirit and pray for the common good of the whole human family. *In the pause after each bidding, add your own prayers either silently or aloud.*

We pray for the Church, the Body of Christ, especially Michael, our Presiding Bishop and Nicholas, our Bishop; for the people of God, gathered from every nation under heaven; may we proclaim in every language, the dawning of a new age. In the **Anglican Cycle of Prayer**, we pray for the Church of the Province of the West Indies. In the **Diocesan Cycle of Prayer**, we pray for the people and clergy of St. Martin's, Providence.

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

For the world: For the United Nations and for all dedicated to world peace; may the Spirit's call put an end to division and gather us as one. In this time of COVID, and in a world where racial inequality abounds, bring healing and give us courage to seek justice for all people. We remember especially.....

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

For creation: that each person may have a reverence for the earth, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and share the abundance of this earth with generosity and integrity. We remember especially.....

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

For those oppressed, afflicted or in need: that we may seek out those who feel unloved or neglected, the prisoner and the stranger, with welcome and care. We remember also those in need of prayer and healing, especially .....

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

For the needs of the local community: for those whose labor is difficult, for those whose hearts are hurting, for those who are bereaved and for those who have lost their way. For those who serve this community in a wide variety of ministries especially..... May the spirit inspire all of us to place the gifts we have received at the service of the common good.

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

For those who have died: that they continue to rest in your love, and discover the joys of eternal life, remembering today ....

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

We give thanks for all the blessings of this life, including those celebrating birthdays: Elizabeth Javery, Calden Beeley, Victoria Grace Olsen, Cynthia Baptista, The Rev. Rob Izzi and Susan Brown.

*Reader:* For this we pray.

*People:* **Holy Spirit, guide our prayer.**

*All:* O God, who created all people in your image, we thank you for the wonderful diversity of races and cultures in this world. Enrich our lives by ever widening circles of fellowship and show us your presence in those who differ most from us, until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Peace** *The people stand as they are able.*

*Celebrant:* The peace of Christ be with you.

*People:* **And also with you.**

## **The Eucharist**

### **At the fraction:**

*Celebrant:* We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

*Response:* We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

## **Post Communion Prayer**

**Gracious God, we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; in Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.**

## **The Blessing**

**Dismissal response: Thanks be to God.**

**Announcements: Please put offertory in the basket on the table upon entering or exiting.**