



FROM MANY

A VIGIL FOR AN ELECTION

ONE

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MISSOURI

A VIGIL FOR AN ELECTION



GATHERING

Presider Dear friends in Christ, at a moment in our country's history when we seem more divided than ever: We gather in vigil and prayer to seek divine guidance from the God who unites us all. We gather to remember what we are called to do and be as followers of Jesus: To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God and one another, to seek welfare, peace, justice, and equity for the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized, to be a neighbor to all.

Silence

Presider Jesus said, "Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35)

Presider O God, make speed to save us.

All **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Presider Let us pray. *Silence.*

Presider O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presider Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

All **Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift: You create all people in your image and call us to love one another as you love us. We confess that we have failed to honor you in the great diversity of the human family. We have desired to live in freedom, while building walls between ourselves and others. We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are, while making judgements of others based on the color of skin, or the shape of features, or the varieties of human experience.**

All **We have tried to love our neighbors individually while yet benefitting from systems that hold those same neighbors in oppression. Forgive us, Holy God. Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people. Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love. Restore us in your image, to be Beloved Community, united in our diversity, even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit, Holy and undivided Trinity, now and forever. Amen.**

The Presider offers absolution and assurance of God's love.

Presider May Almighty God have mercy on us, grant us courage and conviction, and strengthen us to love others who are unlike us. May God, the Holy and Undivided Trinity, make us compassionate in our actions and courageous in our works, that we may see Christ's Beloved Community in our own day. Amen.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF SIRACH 10:1-9, 12-18

A wise magistrate educates his people, and the rule of an intelligent person is well ordered. As the people's judge is, so are his officials; as the ruler of the city is, so are all its inhabitants. An undisciplined king ruins his people, but a city becomes fit to live in through the understanding of its rulers. The government of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and over it he will raise up the right leader for the time. Human success is in the hand of the Lord, and it is he who confers honor upon the lawgiver. Do not get angry with your neighbor for every injury, and do not resort to acts of insolence. Arrogance is hateful to the Lord and to mortals, and injustice is outrageous to both. Sovereignty passes from nation to nation on account of injustice and insolence and wealth. How can dust and ashes be proud? The beginning of human pride is to forsake the Lord; the heart has withdrawn from its Maker. For the beginning of pride is sin, and the one who clings to it pours out abominations. Therefore, the Lord brought upon them unheard-of calamities and destroyed them completely. The Lord overthrew the thrones of rulers and enthroned the lowly in their place. The Lord plucked up the roots of the nations and planted the humble in their place. The Lord laid waste the lands of the nations and destroyed them to the foundations of the earth. He removed some of them and destroyed them and erased the memory of them from the earth. Pride was not created for human beings or violent anger for those born of women.

Reader Here ends the reading.

Poem: Democracy by Langston Hughes

*Democracy will not come
Today, this year
Nor ever
Through compromise and fear.
I have as much right
As the other fellow has
To stand
On my two feet
And own the land.
I tire so of hearing people say,
Let things take their course.*

*Tomorrow is another day.
I do not need my freedom when I'm dead.
I cannot live on tomorrow's bread.
Freedom
Is a strong seed
Planted
In a great need.
I live here, too.
I want freedom
Just as you.*

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 22:34-40

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Reader Here ends the reading.

REFLECTION: *"Caged Bird*

*A free bird leaps on the back of the wind
and floats downstream till the current ends
and dips his wing in the orange suns rays and dares to claim the sky.*

*But a bird that stalks down his narrow cage
can seldom see through his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.*

*The caged bird sings with a fearful trill
of things unknown but longed for still
and his tune is heard on the distant hill
for the caged bird sings of freedom.*

*The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn and he names the sky his own.*

*But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied so he opens his throat to sing.*

*The caged bird sings with a fearful trill
of things unknown but longed for still
and his tune is heard on the distant hill
for the caged bird sings of freedom."*
— Maya Angelou, *The Complete Collected Poems*

LITANY FOR AN ELECTION

Presider O Lord our Governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth. Lord, keep this nation under your care.

Silence.

Presider To the President and members of the Cabinet, to Governors of States, Mayors of Cities, and to all in administrative authority, grant wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties. Give grace to your servants, O God.

Silence.

Presider To Senators and Representatives, and those who make our laws in States, Cities, and Towns, give courage, wisdom, and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people, and to fulfill our obligations in the community of nations. Give grace to your servants, O God.

Silence.

Presider To the Judges and officers of our Courts, give understanding and integrity, that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served. Give grace to your servants, O God.

Silence.

Presider And finally, teach our people to rely on your strength and to accept their responsibilities to their fellow citizens, that they may elect trustworthy leaders and make wise decisions for the well-being of our society; that we may serve you faithfully in our generation and honor your holy Name. For yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Amen.

THE PRAYERS:

Presider Let us pray in the way that our Savior has taught us.

All **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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

THE COLLECTS

Presider Almighty God, the source of all wisdom, give grace to all those who will vote in the election, and bless with your spirit of humility and charity all who will be elected to public office. Make your kingdom of love visible among us, and make all things subject to your just and gentle rule, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presider Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges: Guide the people of the United States in the election of our president, officials, and representatives; that, by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presider O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presider Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presider Lord God, when we are assaulted by the troubles of life, and the deep waters of anger threaten to overwhelm us, do not let us sink. In your great compassion, hear us and help us. Deliver us from anger's power over us. Lead us out of bitter silence and hurtful words so that we may speak the truth in love. Heal every heart set on vengeance, and show us the way to honesty and reconciliation; through the one who has shown us both impassioned zeal and forgiving love, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

Presider From the cowardice that dare not face new truth, from the laziness that is contented with half-truth, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, good Lord, deliver us. Amen.

Presider Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. And the blessing of God almighty...

Presider Let us bless the Lord our God.

All **Thanks be to God.**



PRAY FERVENTLY.
VOTE FAITHFULLY.



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