



Celebrate

Sunday, November 12, 2023

24th Sunday after Pentecost

Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the lamb.

Prayer of the Day

O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Amos 5:18-24

In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.

Alas for you who desire the day of
the LORD!

Why do you want the day of
the LORD?

It is darkness, not light;

¹⁹as if someone fled from a lion,
and was met by a bear;

or went into the house and
rested a hand against the wall,
and was bitten by a snake.

²⁰Is not the day of the LORD darkness,
not light,
and gloom with no brightness
in it?

²¹I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your
solemn assemblies.

²²Even though you offer me your
burnt offerings and grain
offerings,

I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being
of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.

²³Take away from me the noise of
your songs;

I will not listen to the melody of
your harps.

²⁴But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-
flowing stream.

or Wisdom 6:12-16 [not printed]

Wisdom is part of the structure of the universe and is easily accessible to those who want to find her. Wisdom actually seeks people out. People who are wise are free from care.

Psalm

Psalm 70; refrain, Ps. 70:5

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of text: "You are my help - er and my de - liv - er - er;". The second staff contains the melody for the second line of text: "O LORD, do not tar - ry.". The notes are simple quarter and eighth notes with stems, and there are rests where appropriate. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Be pleased, O God, to de-^liver me;

O LORD, make ^lhaste to help me.

²Let those who seek my life be put to shame ^land confounded;
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune
draw back and ^lbe disgraced. **R**

³Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat ^lover me
turn back because ^lof their shame.

⁴Let all who seek you rejoice and be ^lglad in you;
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great ^lis the LORD!"

⁵But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quick-^lly, O God.
You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, ^ldo not tarry. **R**

or Wisdom 6:17-20; refrain, Wis. 6:17 [not printed]

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.

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. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵For 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. ¹⁶For 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. ¹⁷Then 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. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Gospel

Matthew 25:1-13

Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise,

'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But 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.' ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹²But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God for whom we wait, come quickly to your people, bring your salvation, and center us in hope found only in you. Deepen our faith through meaningful worship and send us out with your justice and truth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God for whom we watch, we glimpse your power in rushing water and your beauty in the darkening night. Restore this creation, and provide clean water to all people and animals. Save us from foolish, wasteful living. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God for whom we long, let justice roll down like waters on all nations. Bless citizens with wise leaders; save your children from war. We pray for the veterans of this community, that they are supported and loved. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 63. **Tuesday** 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13. **Wednesday** Matthew 24:29-35. **Thursday** Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12. **Friday** (commemoration of Elizabeth of Hungary, renewer of society, died 1231) Ezekiel 7:1-9. **Saturday** Matthew 12:43-45. **Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost** Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30.

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12 of 14
Tracks 1 and 2

O God, in whom we hope, we pray for all who are in need. Provide for those who experience homelessness or hunger, support the under- or unemployed, and comfort any who are suffering this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God for whom we listen, inspire the music ministry of our congregation. Fill our worship with songs to proclaim your greatness. Help us to sing and dance with joy and tell boldly of your salvation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O God, in whom we remain, we remember our loved ones who have died and now live in you (*especially*). Bring comfort and the assurance of new life to all who grieve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.