

A Liturgy of  
**AnteCommunion**  
online or at home

July 5, 2020  
The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost



**Trinity**  
Episcopal Church

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**Prelude**

Variations on *America*  
Charles Wesley

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

*Book of Common Prayer, page 355*

Our worship begins with a greeting that unites us in praising God as holy Trinity.

The opening prayer, or “Collect of the Day” helps to focus our attention on a theme of the day or the season.

The Book of Common Prayer calls for a “song of praise” to begin our worship.

The traditional *Gloria* quotes the words the angels sang to announce the coming of Jesus, and then expands our praise of God and Jesus with the characteristics of majesty and salvation. The church has been singing some form of this hymn of praise for over sixteen centuries.

*Celebrant* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People* **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

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

Let us pray.

*(BCP page 230)*

O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*All sing or say together:*

*S-280; Robert Powell; BCP page 356*

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**A Reading from the Book of Genesis** 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

The man said to Rebekah and her household, “I am Abraham’s servant. The Lord has greatly blessed my master, and he has become wealthy; he has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and donkeys. And Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and he has given him all that he has. My master made me swear, saying, ‘You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live; but you shall go to my father’s house, to my kindred, and get a wife for my son.’

I came today to the spring, and said, ‘O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now you will only make successful the way I am going! I am standing here by the spring of water; let the young woman who comes out to draw, to whom I shall say, “Please give me a little water from your jar to drink,” and who will say to me, “Drink, and I will draw for your camels also” — let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master’s son.’ Before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah coming out with her water jar on her shoulder; and she went down to the spring, and drew. I said to her, ‘Please let me drink.’ She quickly let down her jar from her shoulder, and said, ‘Drink, and I will also water your camels.’ So I drank, and she also watered the camels. Then I asked her, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She said, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bore to him.’ So I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her arms. Then I bowed my head and worshiped the Lord, and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to obtain the daughter of my master’s kinsman for his son. Now then, if you will deal loyally and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so that I may turn either to the right hand or to the left.”

And they called Rebekah, and said to her, “Will you go with this man?” She said, “I will.” So they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse along with Abraham’s servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, “May you, our sister, become thousands of myriads; may your offspring gain possession of the gates of their foes.” Then Rebekah and her maids rose up, mounted the camels, and followed the man; thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

Now Isaac had come from Beer-lahai-roi, and was settled in the Negeb. Isaac went out in the evening to walk in the field; and looking up, he saw camels coming. And Rebekah looked up, and

Our **readings** follow the Revised Common Lectionary, a three-year cycle of readings shared by many Christian denominations. You can find the calendar of readings on pages 888-932 of *The Book of Common Prayer*.

This summer, we’ll be reading many of the stories that describe how the people of Israel came to be and the beginning of human relationship with God.

This story is designed to show that the family of Abraham grows by God’s plan. The servant tells of how he asked God to select a bride for Isaac from the women of Abraham’s kin, to whom he has been sent. When Rebekah’s actions answer his prayer, it shows that she has been provided by God.

when she saw Isaac, she slipped quickly from the camel, and said to the servant, "Who is the man over there, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. He took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

We read the psalm **responsively**, which means that the leader reads one verse and the congregation *responds* with the next.

In this season, the Psalm often connects with a theme from the first reading. Psalm 45 is a bridal song, chosen to connect with the story of Rebekah marrying Isaac.

Paul is using his own experience as an especially faithful Jew to demonstrate to the church in Rome that even living by Torah, the Law of Moses, is not enough to keep us from the influence of sin, which is more powerful than we are.

**Psalm 45:11-18**

*Book of Common Prayer, page 648*

- 11 "Hear, O daughter; consider and listen closely; \*  
forget your people and your father's house.
- 12 **The king will have pleasure in your beauty; \*  
he is your master; therefore do him honor.**
- 13 The people of Tyre are here with a gift; \*  
the rich among the people seek your favor."
- 14 **All glorious is the princess as she enters; \*  
her gown is cloth-of-gold.**
- 15 In embroidered apparel she is brought to the king; \*  
after her the bridesmaids follow in procession.
- 16 **With joy and gladness they are brought, \*  
and enter into the palace of the king.**
- 17 "In place of fathers, O king, you shall have sons; \*  
you shall make them princes over all the earth.
- 18 **I will make your name to be remembered  
from one generation to another; \*  
therefore nations will praise you for ever and ever."**

**A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans**

*7:15-25a*

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies

close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sequence Hymn LEVAS 203**, verses 1 & 3      *Balm in Gilead*

*Deacon*    The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

*People*      **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

*Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30*

Jesus said “To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

*Deacon*    The Gospel of the Lord.

*People*      **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

It is the grace of God, through Jesus, that “rescues” us from the power of sin to control even our best intentions.

Jesus is speaking to the crowds who gather around him out of curiosity. While most reject the message offered by both John the Baptist and Jesus himself, Jesus thanks God for those who do accept his mission and message, saying that they receive it by God’s revelation rather than their own wisdom or knowledge.

A yoke is a common metaphor for following a teacher or obeying a set of teachings – others speak of the “yoke of Torah”, obedience to the commands of the Law of Moses.

## The Sermon

The Rev. Emily Mellott

## The Nicene Creed

*Book of Common Prayer, page 358*

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son  
he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

As part of our response to the Word of God in our lives, we stand to proclaim the core story of our Christian faith together in **The Nicene Creed**, created in the late 4th century by the councils (gatherings of church leaders) in Nicea.

No matter what story of Jesus we are hearing in scripture, we remember and proclaim the whole outline of his life, death, and resurrection, and anticipate his coming again.

## Prayers of the People

Thanksgiving for the Nation      *Book of Common Prayer, page 838*

Almighty God, giver of all good things:  
We thank you for the natural majesty and beauty of this land.  
They restore us, though we often destroy them.

**Heal us.**

We thank you for the great resources of this nation. They make us rich, though we often exploit them.

**Forgive us.**

We thank you for the men and women who have made this country strong. They are models for us, though we often fall short of them.

**Inspire us.**

We thank you for the torch of liberty which has been lit in this land. It has drawn people from every nation, though we have often hidden from its light.

**Enlighten us.**

We thank you for the faith we have inherited in all its rich variety. It sustains our life, though we have been faithless again and again.

**Renew us.**

*The Celebrant adds a concluding prayer:*

Help us, O Lord, to finish the good work here begun. Strengthen our efforts to blot out ignorance and prejudice, and to abolish poverty and crime. And hasten the day when all our people, with many voices in one united chorus, will glorify your holy Name.

**Amen.**

In response to hearing and reflecting on scripture, we turn to prayer together, asking God's care for our world, the church, for others and for ourselves.

The prayers we are using today are found in the "Prayers and Thanksgivings" found in the Book of Common Prayer.

On this Independence Day weekend, we give thanks for the blessings God has given to our nation, acknowledge our limits, and ask God's help to live up to our ideals and commitments.

## The Confession of Sin

*Book of Common Prayer, page 360*

*Deacon or Celebrant:*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*The Priest says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

## Exchange of Peace

*The Celebrant says to the people*

The peace of Christ be always with you.

*People*      **And also with you.**

*The Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

Today, in the spirit of Christ's peace, please reach out to greet someone you might normally see in worship by telephone, internet, or text message.

The Confession of Sin returns to our shared worship today after eight Sundays of Easter celebration.

Praying the Confession together allows us to bring our failures and weakness, individually and as a community, to God, to ask God's help in facing the evil in the world around us, and to receive the assurance of God's forgiveness and strength, which the priest reminds us of in the **Absolution**.

The exchange of peace is rooted in Jesus' call to reconcile with one another as we approach God's altar. In this time of separation, it may be a cue to restore our connections with those we haven't been as close with as we would like to be!

When gathered in person, we would receive a collection of money for the support of the church at this point in a Sunday service.

If you are able to fulfill your annual pledge, please mail your regular pledge check to the office, use your bank's online payment system, or visit [www.trinitymoorestown.org/donate](http://www.trinitymoorestown.org/donate) to make your weekly gift or regular pledge offering while we are unable to gather in person.

*Instead of praying the Great Thanksgiving over bread and wine, in this time when we are physically separated, we join together in an act of spiritual communion, beginning with the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples as the basis of all prayer.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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.**

*During this time of worshipping together but physically distant, we depend on the long established teaching of the Church that if a person is prevented from physically receiving the Sacrament for reasons of extreme illness or disability, the desire for Christ's presence alone is enough for all the benefits of the Sacrament to be received. This is often referred to as "spiritual communion."*

At every service in the Episcopal Church, we pray **the Lord's Prayer**, which we learn in the gospels (Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:1-4) The prayer takes its name from the request of Jesus' disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Because we cannot physically receive the bread and wine together today, we name our need for Christ's nourishing presence in our spirits in this prayer for spiritual communion.

We pray the usual **Post-Communion Prayer** thanking God for the blessings received in the spiritual food of this sacrament, even though we have not physically received the bread or wine, and asking that we be prepared by those spiritual riches to go into the world to share in God's ongoing work.

We are blessed, then sent to take our worship into the world and our our daily lives, and we affirm that commitment with our thanks to God. The celebratory "Alleluias" are optional in this season, but often used to express our joy in God as we complete our worship.

## A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

**Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life, until by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.**

*(From Saint Augustine's Prayer Book, rev 2014.,  
based on a prayer by St. Alphonsus de Liguori)*

## Post communion prayer

*Book of Common Prayer, page 366*

**Almighty and everliving God,  
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food  
of the most precious Body and Blood  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,  
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.  
And now, Father, send us out  
to do the work you have given us to do,  
to love and serve you  
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.  
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

## Blessing

*The priest offers a blessing, and the people respond. Amen.*

## Closing Hymn 719

*Materna*

## The Dismissal

*The Deacon dismisses us to go forth into the world.*  
*People*     **Thanks be to God. [Alleluia, alleluia!]**

## Postlude

The Star-Spangled Banner  
arr. Charles Callahan

+++++

Steven Sweet (with Anne Sweet), *online Lector*

Peter Knerr, *telephone Lector*

The Rev. Leslie G. Mazzacano, *Deacon*

The Rev. Emily A. Mellott, *Celebrant and Preacher*

Vernon Williams, *Organist and Video Editor*