

I AM
THE WAY,
THE
TRUTH &
THE LIFE



Holy Eucharist Rite Two
Sunday, June 23, 2019

PRAYER LIST

Let us pray...

...in thanksgiving for the members of our congregation: Dan Hockett, Sue Hunt, June Leyland, and Gary Leyland;

...for support and protection for those who serve our country at home and abroad: Alex Berger, Mike Busey, Christopher Walker, Steven Mattingly, Sam Gray, Wes Dyson, Michael Petrusic, and Thomas J. Hunt;

...for those in need of God's healing grace: Christopher Finn, Carl Fletcher, and Lindy Lynch; *Our continuing prayers are offered for:* Vivian Aldridge, George Dyson, Butch Helwig, Buddy Linton, Rhonda McGraw, Jeanne Read, Jean Santora, Rose Speake, Joan Shoemaker, Roy Squires, and Luci Wright.

The Diocese of Washington cycle of prayer: Presiding Bishop Michael Curry; The Cathedral Church of St. Peter and St. Paul; Cathedral Chaplains and Cathedral Volunteers.

The Anglican Communion cycle of prayer: Pray for the United Church of North India: The Most Revd Dr Prem Chand Singh - Moderator of CNI & Bishop of Jabalpur.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Don't forget that these announcements can also be found on the church website, OldDurham.org. You can view them in the calendar (look under "About Us" in the upper left) or view the service bulletin via the "Bulletin Announcements" button.

Adult Forum: Please join us at 9:15am in the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings for coffee, learning, and thought-provoking discussion.

Coffee After Church: Join us for a chat and a cup of coffee in the Parish Hall after the service.

Finance Committee meets today after church in the Parish Hall.

Vestry meets Wednesday, June 26th at 7pm in the Parish Hall.

Joe's Place Food Pantry distributions are on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month from 4:30 to 6pm in the Parish Hall. The next distributions are June 27 and July 11. Volunteers are always welcome to sort and distribute food to our neighbors.

Several of our regular volunteers will be unavailable on July 11. If you can lend a hand that afternoon, it would be particularly valuable. Contact Mary Lou Clem or John Welch with any questions.

There will be a special Coffee Hour after church on June 30th, hosted by DOK members Patrice Rhode, Mary Lou Clem, and Melinda Torreyson.

Daughters of the King and Mens Group meet on July 1 at 6:30pm in the Parish Hall.

Jam Session! July 5 at 7pm in the Parish Hall. All are welcome.

Ladies Mite Society meets on July 9 at 1:30pm in the Parish Hall.

Festival 2019: The next planning meeting for this year's Durham Festival will be on Monday July 22nd at 5 PM.

The Way of Love, BLESS: Share faith and unselfishly give and serve

“Freely you have received; freely give.” – Matthew 10:8

“Presider: Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People: We will, with God's help.” – *BCP, p. 305*

Jesus called his disciples to give, forgive, teach, and heal in his name. We are empowered by the Spirit to bless everyone we meet, practicing generosity and compassion and proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ with hopeful words and selfless actions. We can share our stories of blessing and invite others to the Way of Love.

- What are the ways the Spirit is calling you to bless others?
- How will (or does) blessing others – through sharing your resources, faith, and story – become part of your daily life?
- Who will join you in committing to the practice of blessing others?

From Rev. Catharine: I hope at least some of you are familiar with Rachel Held Evans, the Christian writer who so lovingly and humorously chronicled her journey from discouragement in the stifling and paternalistic religious tradition of her childhood into an affirming and life-giving faith in her adulthood. (Coincidentally ending up in the Episcopal Church!). Her books, blogs, and speaking engagements encouraged and inspired many people, and her unexpected death last month at the age of 37 was a real loss for us all. *Searching for Sunday* and *A Year of Biblical Womanhood* were among her better-known books, with *Searching for Sunday* still on the New York Times bestseller list. If you subscribe to the Diocese of Washington's newsletter you might have seen Bishop Mariann's tribute to her published on May 9 (<https://www.edow.org/about/bishop-mariann/writings/2019/05/09/why-christian-why-episcopal-church>).

This week as we explore the practice of BLESSing, you might enjoy reflecting on the benediction, written and offered at her funeral by the Rev. Nadia Bolz-Webber:

“Blessed are the agnostics. Blessed are they who doubt. Blessed are those who have nothing to offer. Blessed are the preschoolers who cut in line at communion. Blessed are the poor in spirit. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

“Blessed are those whom no one else notices. The kids who sit alone at middle-school lunch tables. The laundry guys at the hospital. The sex workers and the night-shift street sweepers. The closeted. The teens who have to figure out ways to hide the new cuts on their arms. Blessed are the meek. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

“Blessed are they who have loved enough to know what loss feels like. Blessed are the mothers of the miscarried. Blessed are they who can’t fall apart because they have to keep it together for everyone else. Blessed are those who “still aren’t over it yet.” Blessed are those who mourn. You are of heaven and Jesus blesses you.

“I imagine Jesus standing here blessing us because that is our Lord’s nature. This Jesus cried at his friend’s tomb, turned the other cheek, and forgave those who hung him on a cross. He was God’s Beatitude— God’s blessing to the weak in a world that admires only the strong.

“Jesus invites us into a story bigger than ourselves and our imaginations, yet we all get to tell that story with the scandalous particularity of this moment and this place. We are storytelling creatures because we are fashioned in the image of a storytelling God. May we never neglect that gift. May we never lose our love for telling the story. Amen.”

‘Juneteenth’ and ‘Lift Every Voice and Sing’

Juneteenth. On January 1st, 1863, President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, ending slavery in the southern states that were in rebellion at the time. This event is celebrated on different dates in different jurisdictions, depending on when the news reached each place. Over the years, the biggest national celebration has been reserved for June 19th (“Juneteenth”), the date in 1865 when the news reached the last enslaved people in the nation. On that day Union General Gordon Granger read out ‘General Order Number 3’ in Galveston, Texas: *“The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor. The Freedmen are advised to remain at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts; and they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere.”*

Today “Juneteenth” is recognized as a state holiday or special day of observance in 46 states (the exceptions being North and South Dakota, Hawaii, and Montana).

We in The Episcopal Church mark this day, in the words of the Diocese of West Missouri, “not only as the end of the institution of American slavery, but also in the spirit of reconciliation and new life as we journey together towards togetherness and community.”

‘Lift Every Voice and Sing’

From *Discipleship Ministries* of the United Methodist Church

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/lift-every-voice-and-sing>

The Writers

Words: James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938); Music: J. Rosamond Johnson (1873-1954)
James Weldon Johnson and his brother, John Rosamond Johnson, were born in Jacksonville, Florida. James Weldon studied law and in 1897 became the first African American admitted to the Florida bar. He served under two American presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft, as consul in Venezuela and then in Nicaragua. He later became Field Secretary and Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1930 James Weldon became professor of creative literature at Fisk University in Nashville.

J. Rosamond taught music in the Jacksonville public schools, eventually becoming music supervisor for that city’s “colored” schools. He was also a Baptist church organist and choir director and taught music at the Baptist Academy in Jacksonville. It was during one of these school musical programs that “Lift Every Voice” received its first performance.

In 1901 the brothers went to New York and became active in vaudeville, producing a string of successful songs and musicals prior to World War I. They collaborated on and published over 200 songs for the Broadway musical theatre, as well as two books of American Negro spirituals in 1925 and 1926. In addition to his collaborations with his brother, James Weldon was a prolific author and poet, and his works include two volumes, *Fifty Years and Other Poems* (1917) and *God’s Trombones* (1927).

James Weldon was an important figure in the Harlem Renaissance movement, a group of African American writers and artists in New York City. J. Rosamond was also a professional actor and played a leading role in the original production of *Porgy and Bess* in 1935.

The Hymn

‘Lift Every Voice and Sing’ is regarded by many African Americans as a “national anthem” because of its profound association with the struggle for equality and civil rights in the USA. It is taught at an early age in African American homes, schools, and churches, and is often sung at civic, cultural, and patriotic gatherings.

There are three stanzas presented in a very intentional order. Stanza One is a call to freedom and rejoicing, if not born out of the actual experience of African Americans, then out of their joy of faith and the promise of hope they have in being faithful people of God. Stanza Two turns more serious, even somber, in its biographical depiction of slavery, with unpleasant and graphic description of the “bitter chastening rod,” a time when “hope unborn had died, “a way that with tears has been watered,” and the “path thru the blood of the slaughtered.” Stanza Three, although a prayer, is also a lament. Even the Psalmist rarely achieves such a sense of desolation and suffering.

The mood, then, moves from celebration through a gloomy description of circumstances into an intense expression of longing for God to remain ever present. God is there even in the “weary years” and “silent tears.” It is a prayer for God to “keep us forever in the path,” not the path of suffering and oppression, but the path of God's grace, mercy, promise, and love. It is a prayer that, no matter how harsh our circumstances, no matter how much we suffer, we remain in God’s embrace.

This spirit of ultimate optimism, even in the face of such suffering, is further reflected in the last two phrases of each stanza. As the mood of the stanzas becomes increasingly dark, increasingly intense, each stanza concludes with a positive affirmation of trust and hope.

It is significant that there is not even one appearance in this hymn of a singular pronoun — all are plural. The hymn is a shared expression of an entire people with common sufferings, common strivings, and common hopes. And this accounts for the importance of this hymn to African Americans of all faiths, and for its being regarded as a national anthem.

This hymn is both a biography and an expression of a race of people. Besides being a magnificent sacred hymn, it is an important historical document. It should be taught to, sung by, and remembered by all Americans.

MINISTERS IN TODAY’S SERVICE

Presider and Preacher: The Rev. Catharine T. Gibson; **Crucifer and Acolyte:** Carl Lockamy; **Readers:** Barbara Macri and Chris Dudley; **Intercessor:** Carl Lockamy; **Chalicists:** Jane Linton and Melinda Torreyson; **Altar Guild:** Mary Lou Clem. **Flower contact for June:** June Leyland.