

LENTEN VESPERS

Practicing makes possible...

March 20, 2024 4:00 p.m.

As we turn on lamps at dusk, we greet the evening by welcoming God to abide with us anew.

Hymn 641 Lord Jesus, think on me (*see page 3*)

Opening

Create in me a clean heart O God:

and renew a right spirit within me. *Psalm 51:10*

Prayer

Holy God, in love you created us and called our being “good.” With open hearts, we praise you for your unfailing love. With open hands, we offer you our labors. Bless and guide us now as our day turns toward evening; through your grace, may we share with others the love we receive from you. In the name of God our Creator, Jesus our brother, and the Spirit who lights our way. **Amen.**

Reading:

Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

-- Matthew 7:7,8

There is no denying that prayer is a mystery, not a mysterious ploy, but a mysterious truth. In prayer, something is going on in us that God has initiated, enveloping us into the heart of God. Our prayer is always a response to God. The fact that God already knows what we need before we ask is beside the point, according to Jesus. Pray your heart out.

Something will come of our prayer. The scriptures record numerous occasions where, because of prayer, God changes course, and something different happens. But there is no formula for how, or when, or if this happens. More often it is we who will change because of our prayer.

-- Br. Curtis Almquist, SSJE, adapted

Music Interlude

Reflection

Diane Greenlaw

Prayers

As we practice prayer during this season of Lent, may we discover the stillness that will make room for God's voice.

We invite God's presence into our hearts.

As we practice fasting during this season of Lent, may it be fasting from those activities that keep us from our truest and most faithful self.

We invite God's wisdom into our hearts.

As we practice Almsgiving during this season of Lent, may our gifts bring peace, justice, and comfort to others on the journey.

We invite God's generous compassion into our hearts.

Here, the people may add particular intercessions or thanksgivings.

With God's grace, whatever discipline we choose to practice in this season of Lent

May it open our hearts more deeply to the Spirit of God's Love.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

And the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Prayer

May the blessing of God whose love embraces all that we do and are, whose love endures all that we don't do and aren't, be with us as we seek the courage to offer our wounds to receive the blessing that you have for each one of us. This is the love that gave birth to all that is life, trees, stars, mountains, ocean, birds and bears. This is the love that will burn through our darkness to show us the way to healing and wholeness.

This is the love who creates life out of death.

Grant us peace, in the name of your son, Jesus the Christ.

Amen.

The Rev. Emily Blair Stribling

Hymn 125 from *My Heart Sings Out*: In love you summon (*see page 4*)

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Hymn 641 Lord Jesus, think on me

1 Lord Je - sus, think on me, and purge a - way my sin;
2 Lord Je - sus, think on me, with care and woe op-pressed;
3 Lord Je - sus, think on me, nor let me go a - stray;
4 Lord Je - sus, think on me, that, when the flood is passed,
from harm - ful pas-sions set me free, and make me pure with - in.
let me thy lov - ing ser - vant be, and taste thy prom - ised rest.
through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty point thou the heav - en - ly way.
I may the e - ter - nal bright - ness see, and share thy joy at last.

Hymn 125 from *My Heart Sings Out*: In love you summon



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