

Morning Prayer – Wednesday, November 18, 2020

Celtic Daily Prayer – The Northumbria Community \*modifications made for inclusive language.

### **Opening Words**

O God, you are my God, eagerly I seek you.

As a new day begins

breathe your peace into my soul, and

call out in me again a willingness to love and serve.

### **Psalm 40:1-9 – St. Helena Psalter**

I waited patiently for you, O God; \*  
you stooped to me and heard my cry.

You lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the mire and clay; \*  
you set my feet upon a high cliff and made my footing sure.

You put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God; \*  
many shall see, and stand in awe,  
and put their trust in you.

Happy are they who trust in you; \*  
they do not resort to evil spirits or turn to false gods.

Great things are they that you have done, O God,  
how great your wonders and your plans for us; \*  
there is none who can be compared with you.

Oh, that I could make them known and tell them, \*  
but they are more than I can count.

In sacrifice and offering you take no pleasure \*  
(you have given me ears to hear you);

Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required, \*  
and so I said, "Behold, I come.

In the roll of the book it is written concerning me: \*  
'I love to do your will, O my God;  
your law is deep in my heart.' "

### ***A moment of silence to reflect on the reading***

#### **Canticle**

In peace and in truth I put on Christ this day;

I will walk with Christ and Christ will walk with me.

Whatever joys or sorrows the day may bring

Christ will bear all things with me.

Whatever joys or sorrows the day may bring

Christ will guide me through

### **Scripture - Nehemiah 5:1-13 (CEV)**

Some of the men and their wives complained about those in power and said, "We have large families, and it takes a lot of grain merely to keep them alive."

Others said, "During the famine we even had to mortgage our fields, vineyards, and homes to them in order to buy grain."

Then others said, "We had to borrow money from those in power to pay the government tax on our fields and vineyards. We are Jews just as they are, and our children are as good as theirs. But we still have to sell our children as slaves. We are completely helpless; our fields and vineyards have even been taken from us." When I heard their complaints and their charges, I became very angry. So I thought it over and said to the leaders and officials, "How can you charge your own people interest?"

Then I called a public meeting and accused the leaders by saying, "We have tried to buy back all of our people who were sold into exile. But here you are, selling more of them for us to buy back!" The officials and leaders did not say a word, because they knew this was true.

I continued, "What you have done is wrong! We must honor our God by the way we live, so the Gentiles can't find fault with us. My relatives, my friends, and I are also lending money and grain, but we must no longer demand payment in return. Now give back the fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses you have taken and also the interest you have been paid."

The leaders answered, "We will do whatever you say and return their property, without asking to be repaid."

So I made the leaders promise in front of the priests to give back the property. Then I emptied my pockets and said, "If you don't keep your promise, that's what God will do to you. He will empty out everything you own, even taking away your houses." The people answered, "We will keep our promise." Then they praised the LORD and did as they had promised.

### ***A moment of silence to reflect on the reading***

#### **Poem – "Praise the Rain" by Joy Harjo**

Praise the rain; the seagull dive  
The curl of plant, the raven talk—  
Praise the hurt, the house slack  
The stand of trees, the dignity—  
Praise the dark, the moon cradle  
The sky fall, the bear sleep—  
Praise the mist, the warrior name  
The earth eclipse, the fired leap—  
Praise the backwards, upward sky  
The baby cry, the spirit food—  
Praise canoe, the fish rush  
The hole for frog, the upside-down—  
Praise the day, the cloud cup  
The mind flat, forget it all—

Praise crazy. Praise sad.  
Praise the path on which we're led.  
Praise the roads on earth and water.  
Praise the eater and the eaten.  
Praise beginnings; praise the end.  
Praise the song and praise the singer.

Praise the rain; it brings more rain.  
Praise the rain; it brings more rain.

#### PRAYERS FOR OTHERS, THE WORLD, AND ONESELF

##### **Closing Prayer**

We stretch out our hand and throw,  
and many, many seeds we sow.  
In truth we do not know  
where they will go,  
which will take root  
or when the unlikeliest ground  
will return glimpses of gold.  
Sowing at times in tears,  
persisting through the years,  
blessed again and again  
by your harvest of love.  
Let us embody your ready kindness  
this day  
for things will not be  
as they were before.  
But whatever may be  
May we walk in your way of love.

##### Sources:

Prayers and Buechner reading are from: *Celtic Daily Prayer: Book Two, Farther Up and Farther In*, Northumbria Community, London: William Collins Books, 2015.

Poem: Joy Harjo, "Praise the Rain" from *Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings* (W W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2015).