

Mid-Day Prayer – Great Fifty Days
April 27, 2023

Call to Worship

In the middle of the day we become weary
We come to you, O Lord

We come for rest and refreshment
Come to us, O Lord

Restore us as we serve you and your people
Be with us, O Lord

Invocation

Dialogue

O God, come to my assistance.

**O Lord, make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

O God, our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Commemoration Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, 373

In the early church, there was a movement led by Arias that denied that Jesus was “one Being with the Father.” Athanasius was a champion of Christian orthodoxy against the Arians. The teaching was officially condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325 at which the Nicene Creed was written. He was confirmed as Bishop in 328, though he was opposed by the Arians. The opposition continued for many years and led to Athanasius being exiled and coming under formal condemnation in 355. He escaped and went into hiding in the Libyan desert. This was followed by continued intrigue with times of acceptance followed by condemnation and exile. He was a bishop for 45 years, 17 of which were spent in exile or in hiding away from Alexandria. In 367, Athanasius produced the oldest surviving list of the 27 books now in the New Testament and declared them to be the New Covenant. He is recognized as one of the great Church Fathers.

Psalm 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

²The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.

³You restore my soul, O LORD,

and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalm 8

¹O Lord our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

²you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children; you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe and avenger.

³When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

⁴what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them, human beings that you should care for them?

⁵Yet you have made them little less than divine; with glory and honor you crown them.

⁶You have made them rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet:

⁷all flocks and cattle, even the wild beasts of the field,

⁸the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

⁹O Lord our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Gloria Patri

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Reading 1 Peter 2:19-25

¹⁹It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²²"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Reflection

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers

Mighty God of mercy, we give you thanks that at midday you give us a time of rest; may we accept it gratefully and be strengthened by it, to serve you and our neighbor. And we thank you...

for the sustaining goodness of your creation...
for the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness...
for the gifts of relationship with others...
for the communion of faith in your church...

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord. We pray ...

for those who govern nations of the world...
for the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare...
for all who work for peace and international harmony...
for all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction...
for the church of Jesus Christ in every land...

God of heaven and earth, help us to live in this world faithfully guided by your love, which manifests itself in our love toward one another. Prepare us for that great morning when your new world is fully revealed. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you : wherever he may send you;

May he guide you through the wilderness : protect you through the storm;

May he bring you home rejoicing : at the wonders he has shown you;

May he bring you home rejoicing : once again into our doors.

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.