

Morning Prayer

Wednesday, September 17



Opening Statement

Leader

Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. *Psalm 43:3*

Confession of Sin

Leader

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Everyone together, all kneeling:

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.

Leader

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

The Invitatory

All stand.

Leader

Lord, open our lips.

Response

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Everyone

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.
The mercy of the Lord is everlasting:
Come let us adore him.

Jubilate

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.
Know this: the Lord himself is God;
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.
For the Lord is good;
his mercy is everlasting;
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

Antiphon

The mercy of the Lord is everlasting:
Come let us adore him.

Psalm 72 *Deus, judicium*

¹Give the King your justice, O God, *
and your righteousness to the King's son;
²That he may rule your people righteously *
and the poor with justice.
³That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *
and the little hills bring righteousness.
⁴He shall defend the needy among the people; *
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
⁵He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *
from one generation to another.
⁶He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *
like showers that water the earth.
⁷In his time shall the righteous flourish; *
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall
be no more.
⁸He shall rule from sea to sea, *
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
⁹His foes shall bow down before him, *
and his enemies lick the dust.
¹⁰The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute, *
and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.
¹¹All kings shall bow down before him, *
and all the nations do him service.
¹²For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress, *
and the oppressed who has no helper.
¹³He shall have pity on the lowly and poor; *
he shall preserve the lives of the needy.
¹⁴He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence, *
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.
¹⁵Long may he live!
and may there be given to him gold from Arabia; *

may prayer be made for him always,
and may they bless him all the day long.
¹⁶May there be abundance of grain on the earth,
growing thick even on the hilltops; *
may its fruit flourish like Lebanon,
and its grain like grass upon the earth.
¹⁷May his Name remain for ever
and be established as long as the sun endures; *
may all the nations bless themselves in him and
call him blessed.
¹⁸Blessed be the Lord GOD, the God of Israel, *
who alone does wondrous deeds!
¹⁹And blessed be his glorious Name for ever! *
and may all the earth be filled with his glory.
Amen. Amen.

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost:
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be.
World without end. *Amen. Amen.*

The Old Testament Lesson

Reader

A reading from the book of 1 Kings 22:1-28

¹For three years Aram and Israel continued without war. ²But in the third year King Jehoshaphat of Judah came down to the king of Israel. ³The king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth-Gilead belongs to us, yet we are doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?" ⁴He said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-Gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am as you are; my people are your people, my horses are your horses." ⁵But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the Lord." ⁶Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred of them, and said to them, "Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-Gilead, or shall I refrain?" They said, "Go up; for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." ⁷But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no other prophet of the Lord here of whom we may inquire?" ⁸The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one other by whom we may inquire of the Lord, Micaiah son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies anything favorable about me, but only disaster." Jehoshaphat said, "Let the king not say such a thing." ⁹Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah." ¹⁰Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹¹Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the Lord: With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are destroyed." ¹²All the prophets were prophesying the same and saying, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and triumph; the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." ¹³The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably." ¹⁴But Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, whatever the Lord says to me, that I will speak."

¹⁵When he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?" He answered him, "Go up and triumph; the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." ¹⁶But the king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?" ¹⁷Then Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep that have no shepherd; and the Lord said, 'These have no master; let each one go home in peace.'" ¹⁸The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything favorable about me, but only disaster?" ¹⁹Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him to the right and to the left of him. ²⁰And the Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?' Then one said one thing, and another said another, ²¹until a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, 'I will entice him.' ²²'How?' the Lord asked him. He replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then the Lord said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.' ²³So you see, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the Lord has decreed disaster for you." ²⁴Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up to Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the spirit of the Lord pass from me to speak to you?" ²⁵Micaiah replied, "You will find out on that day when you go in to hide in an inner chamber." ²⁶The king of Israel then ordered, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son, ²⁷and say, 'Thus says the king: Put this fellow in prison, and feed him on reduced rations of bread and water until I come in peace.'" ²⁸Micaiah said, "If you return in peace, the Lord has not spoken by me." And he said, "Hear, you peoples, all of you!"

The Word of the Lord.

Everyone

Thanks be to God.

Silence may be kept after the reading.

Canticle 11 The Third Song of Isaiah

Isaiah 60:1-3, 11a, 14c, 18-19

Surge, illuminare

Arise, shine, for your light has come, *
and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.
For behold, darkness covers the land; *
deep gloom enshrouds the peoples.
But over you the Lord will rise, *
and his glory will appear upon you.
Nations will stream to your light, *
and kings to the brightness of your dawning.
Your gates will always be open; *
by day or night they will never be shut.
They will call you, The City of the Lord, *
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.
Violence will no more be heard in your land, *
ruin or destruction within your borders.
You will call your walls, Salvation, *
and all your portals, Praise.
The sun will no more be your light by day; *
by night you will not need the brightness of the moon.
The Lord will be your everlasting light, *
and your God will be your glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.*

The New Testament Lesson

Reader

A reading from the book of 1 Corinthians 2:1-13

¹When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. ²For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. ⁷But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" ¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. ¹²Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. ¹³And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

The Word of the Lord.

Everyone

Thanks be to God.

Silence may be kept after the reading.

Canticle 16 The Song of Zechariah

Benedictus Dominus Deus

The Gospel according to Luke 1:68-79

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *

he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,

that he would save us from our enemies, *

from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers *

and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *

to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear, *

holy and righteous in his sight

all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *

for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation *

by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.*

The Gospel

Reader

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew 4:18-25

¹⁸As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. ¹⁹And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." ²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him. ²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. ²⁴So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. ²⁵And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

The Word of the Lord.

Everyone

Thanks be to God.

Silence may be kept after the reading.

The Apostles' Creed

All stand

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.*

The 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.*

Suffrages

Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;
Govern and uphold them, now and always.

Day by day we bless you;
We praise your Name for ever.

Lord, keep us from all sin today;
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

Lord, show us your love and mercy;
For we put our trust in you.

In you, Lord, is our hope;
And we shall never hope in vain.

Collect of the Day

Leader

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

For Mission

O God and Father of all, whom the whole heavens adore: Let the whole earth also worship you, all nations obey you, all tongues confess and bless you, and men and women everywhere love you and serve you in peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Collect of Commemoration

God of all times and seasons: Give us grace that we, after the example of your servant Hildegard, may both know and make known the joy and jubilation of being part of your creation, and show forth your glory in the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Trinity Cycle of Prayer

Heather and Annette Owens

Let us pray now for our own needs and those of others.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

Benediction

Leader

Let us bless the Lord.

Everyone

Thanks be to God.

Leader

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *Amen. 2 Corinthians 13:14*

The Commemoration

"Listen: there was once a king sitting on his throne. Around him stood great and wonderfully beautiful columns ornamented with ivory, bearing the banners of the king with great honor. Then it pleased the king to raise a small feather from the ground, and he commanded it to fly. The feather flew, not because of anything in itself but because the air bore it along. Thus am I, a feather on the breath of God."

Hildegard of Bingen has been called by her admirers "one of the most important figures in the history of the Middle Ages," and "the greatest woman of her time." Her time was the 1100's (she was born in 1098), the century of Eleanor of Aquitaine, of Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux, of the rise of the great universities and the building of Chartres cathedral. She was the daughter of a knight, and when she was eight years old she went to the Benedictine monastery at Mount St Disibode to be educated.

The monastery was in the Celtic tradition, and housed both men and women (in separate quarters). When Hildegard was eighteen, she became a nun. Twenty years later, she was made the head of the female community at the monastery. Within the next four years, she had a series of visions, and devoted the ten years from 1140 to 1150 to writing them down, describing them (this included drawing pictures of what she had seen), and commenting on their interpretation and significance.

During this period, Pope Eugenius III sent a commission to inquire into her work. The commission found her teaching orthodox and her insights authentic, and reported so to the Pope, who sent her a letter of approval. (He was probably encouraged to do so by his friend and former teacher, Bernard of Clairvaux.) She wrote back urging the Pope to work harder for reform of the Church.

The community of nuns at Mount St. Disibode was growing rapidly, and they did not have adequate room. Hildegard accordingly moved her nuns to a location near Bingen, and founded a monastery for them completely independent of the double monastery they had left. She oversaw its construction, which included such features (not routine in her day) as water

pumped in through pipes. The abbot they had left opposed their departure, and the resulting tensions took a long time to heal.

Hildegard travelled throughout southern Germany and into Switzerland and as far as Paris, preaching. Her sermons deeply moved the hearers, and she was asked to provide written copies. In the last year of her life, she was briefly in trouble because she provided Christian burial for a young man who had been excommunicated. Her defense was that he had repented on his deathbed, and received the sacraments. Her convent was subjected to an interdict, but she protested eloquently, and the interdict was revoked. She died on 17 September 1179. Her surviving works include more than a hundred letters to emperors and popes, bishops, nuns, and nobility. (Many persons of all classes wrote to her, asking for advice, and one biographer calls her "the Dear Abby of the twelfth century.") She wrote 72 songs including a play set to music. Musical notation had only shortly before developed to the point where her music was recorded in a way that we can read today. Accordingly, some of her work is now available on compact disk, and presumably sounds the way she intended.

My former room-mate, a non-Christian and a professional musician, is an enthusiastic admirer of her work and considers her a musical genius. Certainly her compositional style is like nothing else we have from the twelfth century. The play set to music is called the [*Ordo Virtutum*](#) and show us a human soul who listens to the Virtues, turns aside to follow the Devil, and finally returns to the Virtues, having found that following the Devil does not make one happy.

She left us about seventy poems and nine books. Two of them are books of medical and pharmaceutical advice, dealing with the workings of the human body and the properties of various herbs. (These books are based on her observations and those of others, not on her visions.) I am told that some modern researchers are now checking her statements in the hope of finding some medicinal properties of some plant that has been overlooked till now by modern medicine.

She also wrote a commentary on the Gospels and another on the Athanasian Creed. Much of her work has recently been translated into English, part in series like *Classics of Western Spirituality*, and part in other collections or separately. If your university library or bookstore cannot help you, try a Christian bookstore. If they do not have it, try a trendy (feminist, New Age, ecology) bookstore. But her major works are three books on theology: *Scivias* ("Know the paths!"), *Liber Vitae Meritorum* (on ethics), and *De Operatione Dei*. They deal (or at least the first and third do) with the material of her visions. The visions, as she describes them, are often enigmatic but deeply moving, and many who have studied them believe that they have learned something from the visions that is not easily put into words.

On the other hand, we have the recent best-seller, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, by Oliver Sacks, Professor of Clinical Neurology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and author of *Migraine* and various other books. Professor Sacks is concerned with the relation of the brain to the mind, and ways in which the physical state of the nervous system can affect our ways of perceiving reality. He views the pictures in Hildegard's books of what she saw in her visions, and says, "The style of the pictures is a clear indication that the seer suffered regularly from migraine attacks. Migraine sufferers tend to see things in this manner." And indeed, it is true that Hildegard suffered throughout her life from painful attacks of what may have been migraine. Professor Sacks hastens to add that this has nothing to do with whether her visions are authentic insights into the nature of God and His relation to the Universe.

Hildegard has undergone a remarkable rise in popularity in the last thirty years, since many readers have found in her visions, or read into them, themes that seem to speak to many modern concerns. For example:

Although she would have rejected much of the rhetoric of women's liberation, she never hesitated to say what she thought needed to be said, or to do what she thought needed to be

done, simply because she was a woman. When Pope or Emperor needed a rebuke, she rebuked them.

Her writings bring science, art, and religion together. She is deeply involved in all three, and looks to each for insights that will enrich her understanding of the others.

Her use of parable and metaphor, of symbols, visual imagery, and non-verbal means to communicate makes her work reach out to many who are totally deaf to more standard approaches. In particular, non-Western peoples are often accustomed to expressing their views of the world in visionary language, and find that Hildegard's use of similar language to express a Christian view of reality produces instant rapport, if not necessarily instant agreement.

Hildegard wrote and spoke extensively about social justice, about freeing the downtrodden, about the duty of seeing to it that every human being, made in the image of God, has the opportunity to develop and use the talents that God has given him, and to realize his God-given potential. This strikes a chord today.

Hildegard wrote explicitly about the natural world as God's creation, charged through and through with His beauty and His energy; entrusted to our care, to be used by us for our benefit, but not to be mangled or destroyed.