



SAINT ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

306 N. Division Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104 • (734) 663-0518 • www.standrewsaa.org

Sunday, August 9, 2020

Morning Prayer • Proper 14

Dear friends:

*It is a cheap generosity which promises
the future in compensation for the present.*

- J.A. Spender

This may sound crazy, but I almost wish the news media and public health officials would stop reporting on the efforts to find a vaccine for Covid-19: "By the end of the year." "Early in 2021." "Next Summer." It's all speculation, enough already! Of course, like everyone, I want to be rid of this virus. I deeply appreciate all the work being done to find effective treatments and vaccines so that we can reenter the world safely. A great deal rides on these efforts and that's what causes me to not want to hear about them, at least until there is something definitive to report.

There is much that we miss about our pre-Covid lives; there is much to which we long to return. But living in this moment, now, is what we have; really, it is all we have.

Before the pandemic how much of what is truly important did we put off for another time – when things weren't so busy at the office, when summer gets here, when the kids are grown, for retirement? How many opportunities to do something that would truly feed our soul did we miss because there was one more mundane task to complete, one more lesser thing to attend to? Life is always about compromise; that is especially true when it comes to time. There are never enough hours in the day to do everything we want, even though we often act (or acted) like there are. So, it is up to each of us to prioritize. If we don't, outside forces will do it for us.

The pandemic has left some people with more time on their hands than they ever thought they would have. For others, they are busier than ever trying to do familiar things in very unfamiliar ways. What we all have in common is this moment, which is of far more value than what might, or might not be; how will we spend it. At the very least, let us never forget to be thankful for this day.

God bless, *Fr. Alan*

Watch this service on YouTube:

Sunday, August 9 at 10:00 am

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UcKk2EnnuhP_EECpxvvjO_zw

Then join us for Coffee Hour on Zoom:

Sunday, August 9 at 10:45 am

Log-in information for this Zoom meeting can be found in the Saturday 'Service Links' email or you can send an email to Fr. Alan: agibson@standrewsaa.org.

We look forward to seeing you online!

 standrewsaa.org

 [@standrewsaa](https://www.instagram.com/@standrewsaa)

 St. Andrew's YouTube Channel

Announcements

The August-October edition of the "Forward Day by Day" devotional booklets are now available.



If you would like one sent to you, please send an email with your mailing address to: agibson@standrewsaa.org, or leave a message on the church voicemail at 734-663-0518, ext. 201.

If you requested the last edition you do not need to send another message. The current edition will be mailed to you.

Give Online with WeShare

Did you know you can pay your pledge or give a general offering to St. Andrew's online? Visit <https://standrewsaa.weshareonline.org> to set up recurring or one-time donations!

Breakfast Donation Changes

Friends: *Please investigate a different place to donate your pop cans, clothing, shoes, blankets, calendars, stationary etc.* We kindly ask that you do not bring any unsolicited items to the building at this time.

Due to the limited volunteer presence and current take-out environment of the Breakfast, *we do not have the space or ability to distribute them to guests at this time.*

Thank you!

Morgan Battle and Kathy McPherson

Navigating this Service

A "full text" pdf of St. Andrew's Morning Prayer is available [HERE](#) or you can follow along with the service using the Book of Common Prayer, starting with page 75.

Opening Hymn: *O Worship the King*

Hymnal, no. 388

1 O wor - ship the King, all glo - rious a - bove!
 2 O tell of his might! O sing of his grace!
 3 The earth, with its store of won - ders un - told,
 4 Thy boun - ti - ful care, what tongue can re - cite?
 5 Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail,

1 O grate - ful - ly sing his power and his love!
 2 Whose robe is the light, whose can - o - py space.
 3 Al - might - y, thy power hath found - ed of old,
 4 It breathes in the air; it shines in the light;
 5 in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail;

1 Our shield and de - fend - er, the An - cient of Days,
 2 His char - iots of wrath the deep thun - der - clouds form,
 3 hath stab - lished it fast by a change - less de - cree,
 4 it streams from the hills, it de - scends to the plain,
 5 thy mer - cies, how ten - der! how firm to the end!

1 pa - vil - ioned in splen - dor, and gird - ed with praise.
 2 and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.
 3 and round it hath cast, like a man - tle, the sea.
 4 and sweet - ly dis - tills in the dew and the rain.
 5 Our Ma - ker, De - fend - er, Re - deem - er, and Friend!

Opening Sentences

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 78

Confession

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 79

Preces

Hymnal, no. S-33
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80

Invitatory

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80

Venite

Hymnal, no. S-34
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 82

Psalm 85:8-13

- 8 I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.
- 9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.
- 10 Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
- 11 Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
- 12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, *
and our land will yield its increase.
- 13 Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

Old Testament: I Kings 19:9-18

At Horeb, the mount of God, Elijah came to a cave, and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant,

thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.” Then the Lord said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

Canticle: *A Song of Creation*

Hymnal, no. S-228
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 88

The Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”

Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

Sermon

Fr. Alan Gibson

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

It’s campaign season. What better time for a story of scandal and treachery? This story has all the usual elements: a thirst for power, vast riches, murder, even heavy make-up. It’s the story of Queen Jezebel whose taste for ostentation was only surpassed by her love of ruthlessly disposing of her rivals, which marked her as THE notorious woman of her day. She

was the wife of King Ahab of Israel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon and the source of trouble for every man who crossed her path, including one righteous Jewish prophet, Elijah. For all her notoriety, Jezebel barely registers in the scriptures. We hear little from her directly. She is not even mentioned in this morning's readings, yet she is the cause of Israel's rejection of the Lord which creates the crisis of faith that drives Elijah to hide out in a cave.

Jezebel lived in the mid-ninth century BC. Her father had been a priest of the goddess Asherah before coming to the throne. When Jezebel married into the royal family of neighboring Israel, she brought her religion with her, establishing Baal as the new royal deity. For her to impose a national religious conversion, Jezebel first had to suppress the worship of the God of Israel. To do that she slaughtered several hundred Jewish prophets, throwing the religious life of Israel into turmoil. From this chaos, Elijah steps forward and challenges the prophets of Baal, and by extension Jezebel, to a test on Mt. Carmel.

Two altars are constructed. Four-hundred fifty prophets of Baal pray to their god to send fire from heaven to consume their offering. After several hours of praying, crying, dancing and even some self-mutilation, Baal remains silent. The offering sits there on the altar in the midday sun. Elijah places a slaughtered bull on his altar, douses it with water three times, utters a two-sentence prayer and, Bingo! Fire streams down from heaven consuming the bull, the wood, the stones and all the water that had collected around the base of the altar. The ecstatic crowd takes up Elijah's call to turn on the priests of Baal. All 450 of them were wiped out that day. When Jezebel learns of these events she is enraged and sends her forces to seize this prophet who has thwarted her schemes and bring him to face her wrath.

It is at this point that we meet Elijah in today's reading. All his efforts appear to have come to nothing. His victory over the prophets of Baal failed to ignite a popular revolution against the foreign queen who still holds sway over her husband and the court. Elijah is a hunted man. When we see him this morning he has given up and fled to the hills where he hides out in a cave at Mount Horeb.

In the cave, Elijah encounters God who asks, "What are you doing here?" The prophet's answer is full of defeat and self-pity, "I alone am left, and they are seeking my life to take it away." What happened to the prophet who called down fire from heaven? With the God of Israel on his side why was Elijah afraid of a woman with a nasty temper and her worthless god? In response to Elijah's crisis of faith, God puts on another display,

this time adding wind and an earthquake to the fire. And while Elijah eagerly searches for God in these eruptions of nature, God is not to be found in any of them. It's just a lot of noise, something that could appease a fickle crowd, but does not reveal the true power of God. For that, Elijah would be subjected to sheer silence, which is much more terrifying. In the stillness, Elijah peers out of the cave and God again asks, "What are you doing here?"

If God had been in the wind or the fire, Elijah would have been satisfied. God would be behaving as would be expected, like God did on Mt. Carmel, which made Elijah look pretty good as God's prophet. Instead, when God needed to make a point, God chose silence. Not very powerful, at least by the standards of royal spectacle. Nor very God-like, if God is understood as a distant deity pulling strings from on high; but certainly, very effective. Elijah had to face himself; he listened and learned that God does not behave like us, nor should we expect that of God. How limiting it would be for God, and us, if God did.

God does not have to make a lot of noise in order to be heard. God does not have to put on a show in order to make things happen. A word packed with meaning, a simple question that searches the depth of the soul, a still small voice that can turn around a hopeless situation, even a despotic ruler whose actions force people of integrity to stand up for what is right — all of these can be instruments of God's revelation. We can spend a lot of time wanting God to do something huge to solve our problems, and fail to see God working in quiet moments, responding to two-sentence prayers, bringing calm and strength by being present with us even when we feel all alone, as Elijah did. That's the God Elijah met when he stopped feeling sorry for himself and opened himself to God as God truly is.

If we read on in Elijah's story we would see that he was led down the mountain to those who had not lost faith and would go on to defeat Jezebel who came to a grizzly end despite all her self-assurance. She is remembered as the symbol of how perverse ambition, coupled with spiritual corruption, can destroy a person, even someone sheltered in the highest of offices.

From there, the people of Israel began the long process of renewing their relationship with their God. And Elijah? He played a major role in that process, continuing to challenge the crown and the country to live in accordance with God's will. Yet Elijah never quite lost his yearning for a good, old-fashioned spectacle, with which God eventually satisfied him. But that, is a story for another day.

The Prayers

Collect of the Day

Grant to us, Lord, we pray, the spirit to think and do always those things that are right, that we, who cannot exist without you, may by you be enabled to live according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Voluntary: *Grenzet der Menschheit*

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

*When the ancient of days, the holy father with a serene hand
From rolling clouds scatters beneficent lightning over the earth,
I kiss the extreme hem of his garment, childlike awe deep in my breast.
For no man should measure himself against the gods.
If he reaches up and touches the stars with his head,
His uncertain feet lose their hold, and clouds and winds make sport of him.
If he stands with firm, sturdy limbs on the solid enduring earth,
He cannot even reach up to compare himself with the oak or vine.
What distinguishes Gods from men?
Before thee, many waves roll onwards, an eternal river:
We are tossed by the wave, engulfed by the wave, and we founder.
A little ring bounds our life, and many generations
Constantly succeed each other like links in the endless chain of existence.*

General Thanksgiving

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 101

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Concluding Versicle

Hymnal, no. S-54

Closing Hymn: *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*

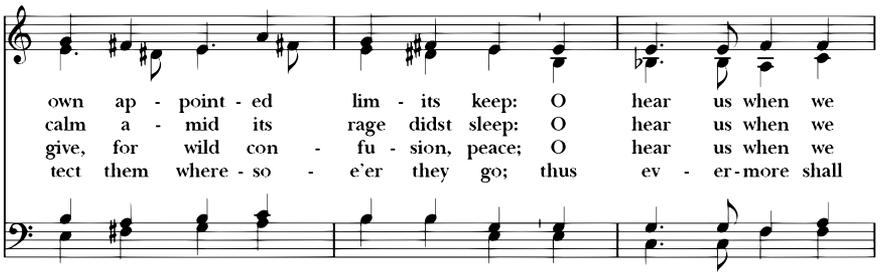
Hymnal, no. 608



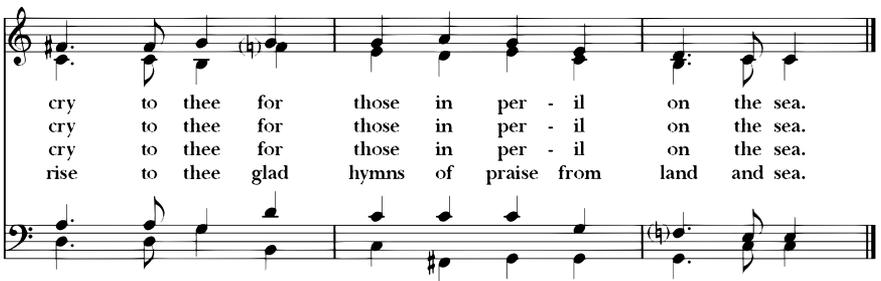
1 E - ter - nal Fa - ther, strong to save, whose arm hath bound the
2 O Christ, whose voice the wa - ters heard and lushed their ra - ging
3 Most Ho - ly Spi - rit, who didst brood up - on the cha - os
4 O Trin - i - ty of love and power, thy chil - dren shield in



rest - less wave, who bidd'st the might - y o - cean deep its
at thy word, who walk - edst on the foam - ing deep, and
dark and rude, and bid its an - gry tu - mult cease, and
dan - ger's hour; from rock and tem - pest, fire and foe, pro -



own ap - point - ed lim - its keep: O hear us when we
calm a - mid its rage didst sleep: O hear us when we
give, for wild con - fu - sion, peace; O hear us when we
tect them where - so - e'er they go; thus ev - er - more shall



cry to thee for those in per - il on the sea.
cry to thee for those in per - il on the sea.
cry to thee for those in per - il on the sea.
rise to thee glad hymns of praise from land and sea.

Postlude: *Song Without Words, Op. 30 no. 3*

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809-1847)