

Compline: Wednesday, May 5, 2021

A Night Service for Healing

Episcopal Church of St. John's by the Campus in Ames

Dame Julian of Norwich (c.1417, May 6th)

All we know of Julian's early life is the probable date of her birth (1342). Her own writings in the Revelations of Divine Love were concerned only with her visions ("showings") that she experienced at age 30. She had been gravely ill and was given the last rites – and the pain left her suddenly on the 7th day, and she had 15 visions of the Passion, which brought her peace and joy. She wanted to learn the meaning of these visions, and 15 years later she wrote:

"Wouldst thou learn the Lord's meaning in this thing? Learn it well. Love was his meaning. Who showed it thee? Love. What showed he thee? Love. Wherefore showed it he? For Love. Hold thee therein and thou shalt learn and know more in the same." Julian had long desired 3 gifts from God: "the mind of his passion, bodily sickness in youth, and 3 wounds – of contrition, of compassion, of will-full longing toward God."

She received the first two early in life, and the last one (divinely-inspired longing) never left her. She became a recluse (anchoress) at Norwich and lived in a small dwelling attached to the Church of St. Julian, living there as a mystic and spiritual counselor for many clergy and lay persons, including the mystic Marjorie Kempe.

Many have found strength in the words the Lord gave to Julian: "I can make all things well; I will make all things well; I shall make all things well; and thou canst see for thyself that all manner of things shall be well." (from Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints)

(Julian lived with a cat, and a contemporary icon of Julian was commissioned by a professor at Seabury-Western Seminary and Northwestern University that included her cat: modeled by the professor's cat. God lives in our ordinary lives and loves. – note by Jean McCarthy)

Pray with Julian to look for hope in these days to come in our country and our world. See the hope to which we are called that Julian sets before us and challenges us to become those words today.

The Approach

Reader 1: The angels of God guard us through the night,
Reader 2: ***and quieten the powers of darkness.***

The Spirit of God be our guide
to lead us to peace and to glory.

It is but lost labor that we haste to rise up early,

and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.
For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.
 Silence

My brothers and sisters, our help is in the name of the eternal God.
 who is making the heavens and the earth.

Dear God, thank you for all that is good,
 for our creation and for our humanity,
 for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,
 for the gifts of life and of one another,
 for your love which is unbounded and eternal.
O thou, most holy and beloved,
 my Companion, my Guide upon the way, my bright evening star.

Reader 3: We repent the wrongs we have done:
 Silence

We have wounded your love.

Reader 4: ***O God, heal us.***

We stumble in the darkness.
 Light of the world transfigure us.

We forget that we are your home.
 Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Eternal Spirit, living God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts and all that rises to trouble us.

Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.

The Invocation

Reader 1: Like the first disciples before the coming of God's power at Pentecost,
 We wait in faith, and pray.

Silence

Reader 1: Be with us, Holy Spirit;

Reader 2: ***nothing can separate us from your love.***

 Be with us as of old, fill us with your power,
 direct all our thoughts to your goodness.

 Be present, Holy Spirit;

Bring faith and healing and peace.

Silence

 The Lord is here.

God's Spirit is with us.

The Psalmody

Psalm 27 (Dame Julian of Norwich)

Reader 5: The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear?:

Reader 6: the Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid?

When the wicked close in on me to devour me:

it is they, my enemies and my foes who stumble and fall.

If an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid:

if war should arise against me, even then I will not be dismayed.

One thing I have asked of the Lord, which I long for":

that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,

To gaze on your beauty O Lord:

and to seek you in your temple.

For in the time of trouble you will give me shelter:

**you will hide me under the cover of your tent,
and set me high above a rock.**

And now you have raised my head:

above my enemies round about me.

Reader 7: Therefore I will offer in your dwelling a sacrifice with great gladness:

Reader 8: I will sing and give praise to you O Lord.

Hear my voice O Lord when I call:

have mercy on me and answer me.

Of you my heart has said, "Seek God's face":

your face Lord I will seek.

Do not hide your face from me:

or reject your servant in anger.

You have been my helper:

do not cast me off, or forsake me, O God my savior.

Though my father and my mother forsake me:

the Lord will take me up.

Teach me your way O Lord:
and lead me by a level path, safe from those who lie in wait for me.

Do not give me up to the will of my enemies:
**for liars, and those who breathe out malice,
have risen up to witness against me.**

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord:
in the land of the living.

Wait for the Lord, be strong and let your heart take courage:
yes, wait, I say, for the Lord.

Psalm 131

Reader 1: O Lord, my heart is not proud:

Reader 2: **my eyes are not raised too high.**

I do not occupy myself with matters too great for me:
or with marvels that are beyond me.

But I have stilled and made quiet my soul,
like a weaned child nestling to its mother:
so like a child, my soul is quieted within me.

O trust in the Lord:
from this time forth and forever.

The Holy Scripture

Hebrews 10:19-24

Reader 9:

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

(silence for reflection)

Reader 10:

Jesus said to his disciples, "The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The Samaritan woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

(silence for reflection)

Reader 1:

Lord God, who in your compassion you granted to the Lady Julian many revelations of your nurturing and sustaining love: Move our hearts, like hers, to seek you above all things, for in giving us yourself you give us all; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Prayers

Reader 11: God, you are working still, breaking down and building up;
open our eyes to discern your hands
so that we make take our place as laborers together with you.
(p. 614, NZ Book of Common Prayer)

Reader 3: Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,
Reader 4: **For you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.**

Keep me, O God, as the apple of an eye;
Hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)

Reader 11: Preserve us, O God, while waking, and guard us while sleeping,
That awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep may rest in your peace.

Reader 12: Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.
At last you have given me peace, for I have seen with my own eyes
the salvation you have prepared for all nations –
a light to the world in its darkness, and the glory of your people Israel.
Glory be to God, sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,
as in the beginning, so now, and for ever. Amen.

Reader 11: Preserve us, O God, while waking, and guard us while sleeping,
That awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep may rest in your peace.

Reader 12: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.

The Prayers of the People
We pray this night for the healing of our nation and our world.

Reader 13: Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart
and especially the hearts of the people of this land, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed we may live in justice and peace.
Lord, in your Mercy:

Reader 14: Hear our prayer.

Reader 14: O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our
struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect.

Lord, in your Mercy:

Reader 13: Hear our prayer.

Reader 13: Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy.

Lord, in your Mercy:

Reader 14: Hear our prayer.

Reader 14: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.

Lord, in your Mercy:
Reader 13: Hear our prayer.

Reader 3:

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Reader 4: God of the present moment,
God who in Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart;
Bring hope and courage to us as we wait in uncertainty.
Bring hope that you will make us the equal of whatever lies ahead.
Bring courage to endure what cannot be avoided,
for your will is health and wholeness;
You are God, and we need You. Amen. (p. 747, NZ Book of Common Prayer)

Reader 11: Lord, it is night.
The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
what has not been done has not been done;
let it be.

The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives
rest in you.

The night is quiet.
Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us,
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.
Let us look expectantly to a new day,
new joys,
new possibilities.
In your name we pray. Amen.

Reader 2: God be in my head, and in my understanding.

Reader 3: God be in my eyes, and in my looking;

Reader 4: God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;

Reader 5: God be in my heart, and in my thinking.

Reader 6: God be at my end, and at my departing.

Reader 1: To God the Creator,
 who loved us first and gave this world to be our home,
To God the Redeemer,
 who loves us and by dying and rising pioneered the way of freedom.
To God the Sanctifier,
 who spreads the divine love in our hearts,
Be praise and glory for time and for eternity.

ALL: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!