

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

↓ **FIRST READING: Ephesians 5:8-14**

A A READING FROM EPHESIANS THE FIFTH CHAPTER

⁸Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

A THE WORD OF THE LORD.

C Thanks be to God

↑ **GOSPEL: John 9:1-41**

P THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN THE 9th CHAPTER

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him,

C “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask,

C “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?”

⁹Some were saying,

C “It is he.”

Others were saying,

C “No, but it is someone like him.”

He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰But they kept asking him,

C “Then how were your eyes opened?”

¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him,

C “Where is he?”

He said, “I do not know.”

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said,

C “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.”

Others said,

C “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?”

And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man,

C “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.”

He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them,

C “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him,

C “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.”

²⁵He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶They said to him,

C “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

²⁷He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying,

C “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”

³⁰The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him,

C “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?”
And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him,

C “Surely we are not blind, are we?”
⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

P THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD. **C** Praise to you, O Christ.

↑ HYMN OF THE DAY “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness” ELW #843

THE PRAYERS

A Sustained by God’s abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.
A brief silence.

A Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God,
C receive our prayer.

A Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God,
C receive our prayer.

A Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Merciful God,
C receive our prayer.

A Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve *especially*. You are a hiding place for all in distress. Draw near to exiles, and accompany all refugees and immigrants, especially children who travel alone. In times of trouble, trauma, or illness, surround your people with your steadfast love *especially* **Russell Dawson, Kathy Ferrise, Emily Freely, Lauren Kahn, Dick Peterson, Nisha Ribardo, Carl Swenson, Anna Swing, Frank “Duke” Talcott, Lois Taylor** and those we name aloud, and in our hearts (*pause*). We also pray today, Lord, for our homebound members, military personnel and those struggling with mental health issues. Merciful God,
C receive our prayer.

A God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Equip the feeding ministries of Calvary, Holy Cross, and the Cranford community. Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God,
C receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P God of history, with thanksgiving we remember our ancestors in faith who cared for your people. We praise you for the ways they formed the faith of others and continue to inspire us. Merciful God,
C receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **C** Amen.

↑ SENDING HYMN "Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow" ELW #327