

Grace Episcopal Church
The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
January 31, 2021
Holy Eucharist, Rite 2

A Service for the Ending of a Pastoral Relationship and Leave-taking from a Congregation

GREETING

Tommy Black – Senior Warden
Pamela Harvey – Junior Warden

PRELUDE

Immortal, Invisible - Welsh folk melody

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**

Celebrant: There is one Body and one Spirit;

People: **There is one hope in God's call to us;**

Celebrant: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

People: **One God and Father of all.**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Moses said: The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak – that prophet shall die."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to all people: **Thanks be to God**

PSALM 111 (*responsively by whole verse*)

¹ Hallelujah!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

**² Great are the deeds of the LORD!
they are studied by all who delight in them.**

³ His work is full of majesty and splendor, and his righteousness endures for ever.

⁴ He makes his marvelous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.

⁵ He gives food to those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.

⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works in giving them the lands of the nations.

⁷ The works of his hands are faithfulness and justice; all his commandments are sure.

**⁸ They stand fast for ever and ever,
because they are done in truth and equity.**

⁹ He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant for ever; holy and awesome is his Name.

**¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; those who act accordingly have a good understanding;
his praise endures for ever.**

MUSICAL MEDITATION

Now Thank We All Our God - J. C. Oley

THE SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him.

Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as in fact there are many gods and many lords – yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church: **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark 1:21-28

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus and his disciples went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to you Lord Christ.**

HOMILY

The Reverend M. Alton Plummer

THE NICENE CREED *(In unison)*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit**

he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE ENDING OF A PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP

Just before the Peace, the Minister addresses the Bishop (or the Bishop's Deputy) and the congregation with these or similar words

On the 14th day of January 2016, I was inducted by Bishop Diocesan pro tempore, Anne Hodges-Copple, as rector of Grace Episcopal Church, Lexington, NC. I have, with God's help and to the best of my abilities, exercised this trust, accepting its privileges and responsibilities.

After prayer and careful consideration, it now seems to me that I should leave this charge, and I publicly state that my tenure as rector of Grace Church ends this day, as I take leave to follow God's continual call on my life as a priest, retired.

The Minister, Bishop, or Bishop's Deputy says:

Do you, the people of Grace Church recognize and accept the conclusion of this pastoral relationship?

People: We do.

The Minister may present to the warden(s) the keys of the parish, the parish register, or other symbols fitting to the occasion.

PRESENTATION BY CONGREGATION

The Wardens and Vestry may offer words and other expressions of thanks and of Godspeed to the departing minister.

Then the departing Minister and the congregation then say together the following prayer:

Minister: Let us pray.

O God, you have bound us together for a time as priest and people to work for the advancement of your kingdom in this place: We give you humble and hearty thanks for the ministry which we have shared in these years now past.

Silence

We thank you for your patience with us despite our blindness and slowness of heart. We thank you for your forgiveness and mercy in the face of our many failures.

Silence

Especially we thank you for your never-failing presence with us through these years, and for the deeper knowledge of you and of each other which we have attained.

Silence

We thank you for those who have been joined to this part of Christ's family through baptism. We thank you for opening our hearts and minds again and again to your Word, and for feeding us abundantly with the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of your Son.

Silence

Now, we pray, be with those who leave and with us who stay; and grant that all of us, by drawing ever nearer to you, may always be close to each other in the communion of your saints. All this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you
People: **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (*Eucharistic Prayer A*)

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**
Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

**And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those
who trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY

Soul, Adorn Thyself - C. F. Glazer

POST COMMUNION PRAYER (In Unison)

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

This blessing may be pronounced either by the minister, or by the bishop, or by the Bishop's Deputy.

May God, who has led us in the paths of justice and truth, lead us still, and keep us in his ways. Amen.

May God, whose Son has loved us and given himself for us, love us still, and establish us in peace. Amen.

May God, whose Spirit unites us and fills our hearts with joy, illumine us still, and strengthen us for the years to come. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

People: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Tell Out, My Soul - P. Manz

*The Altar Plants are given to the glory of God and in thanksgiving
for the ministry of our Rector, The Reverend M. Alton Plummer
by the Congregation on this day of his retirement.*

*The mission of Grace Episcopal Church is to be a welcoming community of faith
guided by the life and teachings of Jesus.*

In light of this mission we strive:

- *to promote spiritual growth and healing through worship, study, and fellowship.*
- *to sustain a mutually supportive community*
- *to invite and include all who would seek and serve God with us.*
- *to serve those beyond our parish.*
- *to advocate social, environmental, and economic justice.*



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The Most Reverend Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop
The Right Reverend Samuel Rodman, Diocesan Bishop
The Right Reverend Anne Hodges-Copple, Bishop Suffragan
The Reverend M. Alton Plummer, Rector
Joan Clodfelter, Organist & Choir Director
Carrie Ingram, Christian Education & Communications Director
Maureen Tincher, Parish Administrator

THE VESTRY

2021
Tommy Black – Sr. Warden
Miles Cleckley - Treasurer
Linda Cox – Clerk
Belinda MacKinstry

2022
Pam Harvey – Jr. Warden
Mark Petruzzi

2023
Walter Beeker
David Jones
Robin Sink