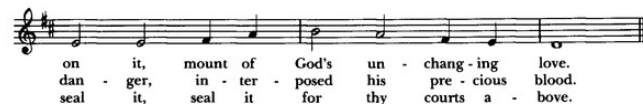
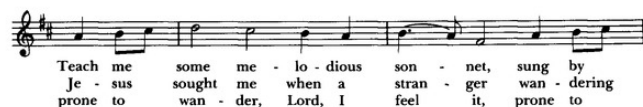
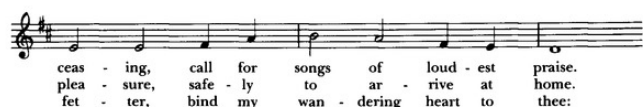
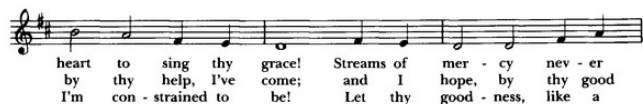
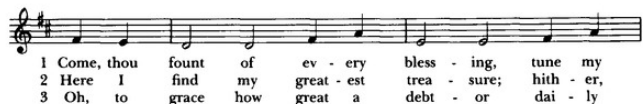


St. James Episcopal Church * Morning Prayer
Worship Leader Bruce Louwagie

Processional Hymn (H686) Come, thou fount of every blessing

686

The Christian Life



Words: Robert Robinson (1735-1790), alt.
Music: Nettleton, melody from *A Repository of Sacred Music, Part II*, 1813

87. 87. D

Opening Acclamation: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

Confession Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor BCP 79
**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word,
and deed, by what we have done, and be 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**

Absolution Prayer BCP 80

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.**

Lord, open our lips

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: Come let us adore him.

Jubilate

BCP 82

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.

Psalm 1

Beatus vir qui non abiit

1 Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, *

**nor lingered in the way of sinners,
nor sat in the seats of the scornful!**

2 Their delight is in the law of the LORD, *

and they meditate on his law day and night.

3 They are like trees planted by streams of water,

bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; *
everything they do shall prosper.

4 It is not so with the wicked; *

they are like chaff which the wind blows away.

5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, *

nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, *

but the way of the wicked is doomed.

First Lesson: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, "Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus-- for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us-- one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

Second Lesson: 1 John 5:9-13

If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Gradual Hymn: (H685) Rock of ages, cleft for me

1 Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my-self in thee;
 2 Should my tears for ev - er flow, should my zeal no lan - guor know,
 3 While I draw this fleet-ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,

let the wa - ter and the blood from thy wound - ed side that flowed,
 all for sin could not a - tone: thou must save, and thou a - lone;
 when I rise to worlds un - known and be - hold thee on thy throne,

be of sin the dou - ble cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.
 in my hand no price I bring, sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
 Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my-self in thee.

Words: Augustus Montague Toplady (1740-1778), alt.
 Music: *Toplady*, Thomas Hastings (1784-1872)

77. 77. 77

Third Lesson: John 17:6-19

Jesus prayed for his disciples, "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have

sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

The Sermon:

This morning, we hear that peculiar little story from Acts. It’s generally overlooked, but since it’s about anxiety, and these are anxious times all around, it can be a bit comforting.

Here’s what’s going on: The time is somewhere during the ten days between the Ascension and Pentecost. Luke’s Gospel—and remember, Luke wrote Acts, where this story is recorded—says, and Acts repeats, that Jesus’ very last words to the Apostles before his Ascension were that they were to remain in Jerusalem and wait for something special to happen—for them to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Well, the disciples didn’t know it then, but they had just over a week to wait—Pentecost was just around the corner. But, again, they didn’t know that. They just knew that Jesus had told them to stay in Jerusalem and to wait.

Don’t you just hate it when that happens? There they were, stuck in an in-between time, a time right after something important—the Resurrection *and* the Ascension—had happened, but before anything else had happened. And they didn’t have anything to *do*; they were just stuck there, waiting.

I suspect we can all relate to that. It’s no fun.

Well, as Luke tells this story, Peter, bless his heart, Peter just *couldn’t* stand it; Peter got anxious. This waiting stuff wasn’t for him, and besides, he probably hadn’t read Acts. So, Peter did what so many folks do when they have no idea what to do but feel like they have to do *something*: He called a meeting. In fact, he got the whole church together, every Christian in the world, all 120 or so of them. Then he did the next two things folks in his situation so often do. He gave a speech, and he formed a committee.

In his speech, Peter, who seemed to go from fisherman to management consultant in one fell swoop, sets out an action plan—a plan to fix his anxiety by making things the

way they were before—when everybody knew what to do, when there was no anxiety, no waiting, just normal life.

Peter started out with the fact that there had always been twelve main apostles. However, Judas and the Crucifixion and Resurrection had messed that up; now there were only eleven. So, Peter proposed that they make everything just like it was in the good old days—like last week—and get themselves another apostle—right away, at this very meeting.

It's important to notice that Jesus never said anything about twelve being a magic number for apostles after the Resurrection. In fact, Jesus never said a word about this sort of administrative tinkering or anything like it. But none of that bothered Peter, and they had to do *something*, didn't they?

Of course, the rest of the folks went along. Why not? After all, Peter at least had an idea and a plan, and the same couldn't be said about anyone else. Waiting, the way Jesus had asked, didn't seem to count as an idea. So, they doubtless formed a nominating committee, and the nominating committee did its research and had its preliminary interviews and dutifully reported back to the committee of the whole with an approved slate of candidates. Next thing you know, they flipped a coin or drew straws or rolled dice or *something* and Matthias won—or lost, depending on which of the later legends about Matthias you want to believe—and he was added to the eleven apostles. The organizational chart was complete!

So, there they were, happy as a fish with a new bicycle, back up to full strength in the apostle department—with Peter no doubt looking around for another organizational change he could make to keep everybody busy and give the appearance that real progress was being made.

Well, as to what happened to poor Matthias—who had the dubious honor of filling Judas' seat on the board—we have no idea. He was penciled into the tradition, but as

far as the life, structure, governance, and operation of the Early Church were concerned, he played no role at all.

But something did happen, and it happened within just a couple of days of Peter's big meeting. Pentecost happened—just like Jesus had promised. The spirit of God moved its quiet thunder over the Church, and everything was different; everything was new.

With Pentecost, God's plan for the future of the Church—rather than Peter's—began to unfold—and it was like nothing anyone could have predicted; it was like nothing that had ever happened before; it was far different and far bigger than anything even Peter could have ever imagined. The Spirit moved the Church with new power and new direction and new insight into completely new directions. The twelve, as a group, a body—including poor Matthias, who was only just learning the ropes—the twelve vanish from the records.

To be sure, a few of them remained important for the Church for a few years, and later legend—mostly without biblical or historical support—has them, and lots of other evangelists, going all over the ancient world founding churches and dying horrible deaths. Of the 12 apostles, it seems 14 are reputed to be buried in Spain. We don't know much about this part.

But we do know that the early Church in Jerusalem was organized and operated for the next generations without the twelve and pretty much without Peter. All of Peter's anxiety and all of his planning were swallowed up in the rush of the Spirit.

It was the Spirit of God—and human affection, relationships, and devotion to the Lord—not administration, structure, or how many folks were in what department—that would ultimately shape the Church and make it a living witness to the Word of God in Jesus Christ.

One hopes that, through all of this, good old Peter learned, at least for a little while, that, sometimes, anxiety notwithstanding, when it's time to wait and see what God's

going to be up to, then the best thing to do is, well, wait and see what God's going to be up to.

So, perhaps our lesson today is that an in-between time is not a bad thing at all. It just is what it is—it's a time to wait, a time to love one another, and a time to trust. It's a time to expect that God will be faithful and loving, and to look forward in confidence to whatever wonderful things God has in store for us.

So many of our times are in-between times, where we seem stuck in situations that just can't last, that must lead to something, and we just want that *something* to happen so we can *get on with it*. So, we get anxious, quite regardless of what Jesus says about anxiety, and we want to do something, anything to move things along. We might even have some pretty good ideas about the best thing there is to do.

At this point, things become a bit nuanced. To be sure, there are times when we do need to act, to change the situation—especially when it's something about ourselves. But other times, we just need to wait—especially when it's something we want or expect God to do. It's tricky, and a matter for discernment. Nonetheless, we need to listen to the wealth of spiritual masters from the Psalms through the Early Church through C. S. Lewis, who, in *Mere Christianity* summed it up nicely and continues to say to us, perhaps optimistically, perhaps reproachfully, "I'm sure that God keeps no one waiting unless he sees that it is good for him to wait."

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The Apostles Creed

BCP 96

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

Peace of the lord be with you

Announcements

Offertory Hymn: WLP 812 "Here I Am Lord"

Here I Am, Lord

Verses




1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my
2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my
3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the



peo - ple cry. All who dwell in dark and sin
peo - ple's pain. I have wept for love of them.
poor and lame. I will set a feast for them.



My hand will save. I who made the
They turn a - way. I will break their
My hand will save. Fin - est bread I



stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love a - lone.
will pro - vide Till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Officiant Let us pray.

The Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

BCP 97

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

Suffrage B

BCP98

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.

The Collect of the Day: O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

The Prayers of the People, Form *III 387*

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

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

Silence

The General Thanksgiving

101

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for your creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

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

Recessional Hymn **671** **Amazing Grace** hymnal

AMAZING GRACE

NEW BRITAIN



1. A - maz - ing grace! How sweet the sound That saved *a
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my
3. The Lord has prom - ised good to me, His word my
4. Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I have al -
5. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright shin - ing



1. wretch like me! I once was lost, but
2. fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
3. hope se - cures; He will my shield and
4. read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
5. as the sun, We've no less days to



1. now am found, Was blind but now I see.
2. grace ap - pear The hour I first be - lieved!
3. por - tion be As long as life en - dures.
4. safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.
5. sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.

*Alternate text: "and set me free!"

Text: CM; verses 1-4, John Newton, 1725-1807; verse 5, anon., fr. *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790.
Music: *Columbian Harmony*, 1829.

Go in Peace to love and service the Lord –

Thanks be to God –