

The Service of Light: *Lent*

The table or gathering place is dark, or partially so. A central candle may be used with any other number of candles. When the candles are lit, the Candlelighter greets the people.

Greeting

Candlelighter: Light and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Candlelighter reads one of the following short lessons.

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

Or

Jesus said: "While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become children of light."

John 12:36

Prayer for Light

Candlelighter: Let us pray.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee *O Lord*, and by your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of your only Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

BCP

Or

O Lord God Almighty, as you have taught us to call the evening, the morning and the noonday one day, and have made the sun to know its going down, dispel the darkness of our hearts that by your brightness we may know you to be the true God and eternal light, living and reigning for ever and ever. *Amen.*

BCP

The Decalogue

*When clergy is present, they may read the **Service Leader**.
If not, a deacon or anyone in the family group may lead.*

Service Leader: Our God is full of compassion and mercy.
People: **O come, let us worship.**

Service Leader: God spoke these words and said:

- I.** I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, and delivered you from slavery. You shall have no other gods but me.

After each commandment, the people respond:

Lord, have mercy on us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.

- II.** You shall not make for yourself a graven image; you shall not make into an idol the likeness of any *thing* that is of heaven above, or on the earth below, or in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to it, or worship it.
- III.** You shall not use the Name of the Lord your God deceptively, or in vain.
- IV.** Remember to rest on the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
- V.** Honor your father and your mother, so the days of your life may be long and that it may go well with you.
- VI.** You shall not commit murder.
- VII.** You shall not commit adultery.
- VIII.** You shall not steal anything.
- IX.** You shall not lie, or participate in a false testimony against anyone.
- X.** You shall not covet or scheme to possess any of your neighbors' belongings.

Service Leader: Lord, have mercy on us.

People: **And write your laws in our hearts, we pray. Amen.**

The evening service continues in any of the following ways:

If a meal is to be shared, a favorite prayer, a family or children's grace, may serve as the blessing.

In the place of a meal, a meditation or reading could take place. If nothing, the Vespers simply continue.

Grace at Meals

Give us grateful hearts, our Father, for all your mercies, and make us mindful of the needs of others, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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Blessed are you, O Lord God, King of the Universe, for you give us food to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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Dear God, the eyes of all creation look to you and you give to us our food in due season. Open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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For these and all his mercies, God's holy Name be blessed and praised, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Vespers: *Kyrie Eleison*

At the conclusion of the meal. Or, if there has been no break.

Service Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

O Gracious Light

Together:

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

The Evening Psalm

Psalm Reader: *O God, make speed to save us.*
People: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Gloria Patri (*together*):

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.*

Psalm

The Lenten psalm from the coming Sunday lectionary is concluded with the Gloria Patri.

First Sunday in Lent	(March 10)	Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
2nd Sunday in Lent	(March 17)	Psalm 27
3rd Sunday in Lent	(March 24)	Psalm 63:1-8
4th Sunday in Lent	(March 31)	Psalm 32
5th Sunday in Lent	(April 7)	Psalm 126
Passion Sunday	(April 14)	Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Gloria Patri (*together*):

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 Prayers

Prayer Leader: Let us pray.

The Prayer Leader chooses the traditional or the modern version and begins.

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.*

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. *Amen.*

Versicle and Response

Service Leader: Create in us clean hearts, O God.

People: **And put a new and right spirit within us.**

Collects for the Evening

The **Service Leader** may assign readers to choose from the following, two collects for the evening. The collect for the current week in Lent should be prayed first.

Collect: Lent 1

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan; Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect: Lent 2

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Collect: Lent 3

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Collect: Lent 4

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect: Lent 5

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect: Palm Sunday

Almighty and ever living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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Prayer in the Evening

O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. **Amen.**

Almighty and most merciful God, kindle within us the fire of love, that by its cleansing flame we may be purged of all our sins and made worthy to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, the life of all who live, the light of the faithful, the strength of those who labor, and the repose of the dead: We thank you for the blessings of the day that is past, and humbly ask for your protection through the coming night. Bring us in safety to the morning hours; through him who died and rose again for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

St. Augustine's Prayer for the Night

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. **Amen.**

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Closing

*The Vespers concludes by reading the Great Thanksgiving in unison.
Followed by the final scripture passage. If clergy, a Benediction may be added.*

The General Thanksgiving

(Unison)

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 our 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 ourselves 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.*

Dismissal

Service Leader: Let us bless the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God.

We give you thanks, O God, we give you thanks, calling upon your Name and declaring all your wonderful deeds. *Amen.*

Psalm 75:1

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