
Zoom Meeting ID: **326 920 7504**

Call-in option: 1) Dial **646-568-7788** or **929-205-6099**, 2) Enter **326 920 7504 #** and 3) Press # for a participant's ID

Officiant When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world; the old order has gone, and a new order has already begun. *2 Corinthians 5:17*

Confession of Sins

Officiant Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

All **We repent the wrongs we have done:**

We have wounded your love.

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.

Officiant 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. **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips, *+(you may cross your lips with a right thumb)*

Celebrants **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

All **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.**

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting: Come let us adore him.

Life in the Spirit *based on Romans 8:2, 14–19*

All **In Christ the life-giving law of the Spirit:**

has set us free from the law of sin and death.

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God:

it is the Spirit that enables us to cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit confirms that we are God's children:

and if children then we are heirs.

We are heirs of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ:

if we share his suffering now,

in order to share his splendor hereafter.

The sufferings we now endure:

bear no comparison with the splendor to be shown to us.

The created universe itself waits with eager longing:

for the children of God to be revealed.

Officiant The mercy of the Lord is everlasting: Come let us adore him.

The Lesson

Reader

A Lesson from *Luke 21:5-19*

When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, Jesus said, "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down." They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them.

"When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

"But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls."

Reader

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Celebrants

Thanks be to God.

All

Isaiah 12:2-6 The First Song of Isaiah *Ecce Deus*

Surely, it is God who saves me; *

I will trust in him and not be afraid.

**For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, *
and he will be my Savior.**

**Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.**

And on that day you shall say, *

**Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;
Make his deeds known among the peoples; ***

see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

**Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, *
and this is known in all the world.**

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *

for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Hand to hold

JJ Heller

Reflection

Paul Yoon

At the beginning of 2020 as the number of the first Covid cases increased, the demand for high-end exercise bikes spiked. I imagine you've seen one of the Peloton commercials on TV or via social media. Every time I see that commercial of people on that high-end bike with sweats and satisfying smiles and hear the word "peloton" whose literal meaning in French, I learn, is a ball but is used as a group or cluster of bicyclists, I'm reminded of another word, "eschaton." I had two simple reasons for this Greek term to be evoked. Not only did these words rhyme but also witnessing countless deaths of people due to Covid triggered the thought of the end time. Perhaps my third reason would be that I watched too many end-time movies.

In today's gospel, Jesus talks about the end time. His friends always seem to raise the question we would like to ask: "When will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" We all want to know in advance if something bad will happen to the world. We want to be prepared. We can recall shortages of water bottles and toilet paper at the beginning of the pandemic. Money matters less than material things that are closely linked to our survival and quality of life. Jesus neither teaches us what items to stock up with nor informs us exactly when the end time will take place. His concern is that in the end time his followers will be hated by all because of his name.

While Jesus' description of warnings that might be signs of the end times resonates with our current political situations, the type of persecution due to his name doesn't sound too relevant to our North American context. This gospel lesson would've been read differently after Christianity became the state religion under the reign of Constantine in the 4th century. Those who took Jesus' teaching of living their lives worthy of his name sought spiritual persecution in the desert rather than religiopolitical persecution. Desert Mothers and Fathers in their spiritual writings talk much about how they win over temptations and persecutions from the devil.

For us living in the 21st century, Jesus' teaching and Desert Mothers and Fathers' commitment to his teaching regarding the end times challenge us to reimagine and contextualize how we willingly apply the teaching and their examples to our reality. As we see and hear signs of the end times too often, I would like us to focus on the world itself. What is the world that you're living in with your life? How do you make sense of the world you perceive with your five senses and reasoning? This question is crucial since this is the world that ends eventually. The end of the world at the most personal level is the end of our individual lives.

Then let's look into this process of making sense of our own world more specifically. We fabricate the world based on various information we receive through our senses. This can be easily demonstrated if we consider how differently we remember things even when we look at, say, the same painting. About seven years ago, there was a heated debate over the colors of the dress. For some, it was blue with black lace fringe whereas, for others like me, it definitely was white with gold lace fringe. What this debate reveals to us is how our perceptual boundaries differ. The reason for the difference is which side of the brain is more developed: for those who see it in blue and black, it's their right side of the brain is more developed while for those who perceive it in white and gold it's their left side of the brain.



We take all this information through our senses for granted and believe (or trick ourselves) without knowing what we're doing that the world we perceive is the world as it is. But the truth is that we don't have sense organs that can see the world as it is. For example, in our conversation with others, what we feel like hearing right now is already passed. Think about thunder. We can see lightning immediately but it takes the sound of thunder about 5 seconds to travel a mile. By the time we hear its sound, it's all gone in the past. There's a cognitive gap. This cognitive limitation that we don't usually pay attention to gives us a new insight into how we create our own world(s).

To see through this fabrication of the world we constantly take for granted as though it is the actual world out there is a way to end that world. No reason to be afraid of the end time. This cognitive and also spiritual recognition of how we create our worlds helps us see how our world begins and ends. We are then humbled to embrace that what we think the world is isn't everything. We may be very wrong about many things in the world we live in together as well as many issues we are fixated on. What this also allows us to do is to see things, people, and ourselves anew. If we hold onto living in our fixated version of the world, we will always have to make up our minds to prepare our defense. This isn't what Jesus tells us in the lesson. Instead, he directs us to "make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict."

The end time or the end of the world may be not something that we are to fear and prepare for the worst. Instead, practicing to end a world may be our Christian attitude to the world. Keeping in mind that we make sense of the world as we perceive and fabricate, we make ourselves constantly open to the vision of God who is ever present and is the very source of goodness itself. Our spiritual practice of ending a world is in other words our yes to the Kingdom of God in our hearts and our no to the world that is filled with suffering and pain.

The Apostles' Creed

All 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.

The Prayers

Officiant The Lord be with you.
Celebrants **And also with you.**
Officiant Let us pray, singing

**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 Supplication *Pray responsively.*

Let us pray with confidence, anticipating peace on earth,

V. The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,
R. God, forgive.

V. The covetous desires of humans and nations to possess that which is not their own,
R. God, forgive.

V. The greed which exploits human labor, and lays waste the earth,
R. God, forgive.

V. Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,
R. God, forgive.

V. Our indifference to the plight of the homeless and the refugee,
R. God, forgive.

V. The lust which uses for ignoble ends the bodies of all human beings,

R. God, forgive.

V. The pride which leads to trust in ourselves and not in God,

R. God, forgive.

V. In the midst of hunger and war,

R. We celebrate the promise of plenty and peace.

V. In the midst of oppression and tyranny,

R. We celebrate the promise of service and freedom.

V. In the midst of doubt and despair,

R. We celebrate the promise of faith and hope.

V. In the midst of fear and betrayal,

R. We celebrate the promise of joy and loyalty.

V. In the midst of hatred and death,

R. We celebrate the promise of love and life.

V. In the midst of sin and decay,

R. We celebrate the promise of salvation and renewal.

V. In the midst of terrorism, injury, suffering and death,

R. We celebrate the promise of the living God with us.

The Collect for Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

All **Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

A Collect for the Renewal of Life

Celebrant O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Social Justice

Celebrant 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; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For our Country

Celebrant Almighty God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For Courts of Justice

Celebrant Almighty God, who sittest in the throne judging right: We humbly beseech thee to bless the courts of justice and the magistrates in all this land; and give unto them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, that they may discern the truth, and impartially administer the law in the fear of thee alone; through him who shall come to be our Judge, thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

For Congress

Celebrant O God, the fountain of wisdom, whose will is good and gracious, and whose law is truth: We beseech thee so to guide and bless our Senators and Representatives in Congress assembled, that they may enact such laws as shall please thee, to the glory of thy Name and the welfare of this people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For all Christians in their vocation

Celebrant Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A General Thanksgiving

All **Giver of the present, hope for the future:
save us from the time of trial.
When prophets warn us of doom,
of catastrophe and of suffering beyond belief,
then, God, free us from our helplessness,
and deliver us from evil.
Save us from our arrogance and folly,
for you are God who created the world;
you have redeemed us and you are our salvation.**

**Almighty God,
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.**

**God of opportunity and change,
praise to you for giving us life at this critical time.
As our horizons extend, keep us loyal to our past;
as our dangers increase, help us to prepare the future;
keep us trusting and hopeful,
ready to recognize your kingdom as it comes. Amen.**

*Officiant
Celebrants* Grace and peace remain with us and keep us in the love of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Officiant Let nothing disturb you,
nothing frighten you,
all things are passing,
God is unchanging.
Patience gains all;
nothing is lacking to those who have God:
God alone is sufficient. **Amen.** (Saint Teresa of Avila)

Saint Agnes Church
65 Union Ave, Little Falls, NJ 07424
*Serving people of Little Falls and surrounding communities since 1896,
Saint Agnes Church is a part of the Episcopal/Anglican branch
of the Jesus Movement in the Diocese of Newark, striving to be a contemplative community.*