

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Western New York
96 Jewett Parkway • Buffalo, NY 14214

September 16, 2026
The Martyrs of Memphis
6:00 P.M.

Congregational responses are **in bold**.

Opening Hymn

You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but citizens together
with the saints and members of the household of God. *Ephesians 2:19*

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus
Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in
eternal life. Amen.

Officiant O God, be not far from us.

People **Come quickly to help us, O God.**

**Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Except in Lent add Alleluia.

Phos hilaron

1 O gra - cious Light, Lord Je - sus Christ, in
2 Now sun - set comes, but light shines forth, the
3 Wor - thy are you of end - less praise, O

you the Fa - ther's glo - ry shone. Im - mor - tal, ho - ly,
lamps are lit to pierce the night. Praise Fa - ther, Son, and
Son of God, Life - giv - ing Lord; where - fore you are through

blest is he, and blest are you, his ho - ly Son.
Spi - rit: God who dwells in the e - ter - nal light.
all the earth and in the high - est heaven a - dored.

This hymn may be sung unaccompanied as a four-part canon at a distance of one measure.

Words: Greek, 3rd cent.; tr. F. Bland Tucker (1895-1984); para. of *O Gracious Light*. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund.
Music: *The Eighth Tune*, Thomas Tallis (1505?-1585); adapt. *Hymnal* 1982.

Psalm 17:6-10(St. Helena Psalter)

said responsively by the half verse

6 I call upon you, O God, for you will answer me; *

incline your ear to me and hear my words.

7 Show me your marvelous loving-kindness, *

**O Savior of those who take refuge at your right hand
from those who rise up against them.**

8 Keep me as the apple of your eye; *

hide me under the shadow of your wings,

9 From the wicked who assault me, *

from my deadly enemies who surround me.

10 They have closed their heart to pity, *

and their mouth speaks proud things.

A Reading from the Second Letter to the Corinthians

(1:3-5)

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed! He is the compassionate Father and God of all comfort. He's the one who comforts us in all our trouble so that we can comfort other people who are in every kind of trouble. We offer the same

comfort that we ourselves received from God. That is because we receive so much comfort through Christ in the same way that we share so many of Christ's sufferings.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle of the Turning

Daigle/Cooley/Donohoo

Insert

The Memphis Martyrs

The **Martyrs of Memphis** were a group of courageous Episcopal nuns and priests who stayed behind to nurse the sick and dying during the devastating yellow fever epidemic in Memphis, Tennessee, in the late summer and fall of 1878.

- In August 1878, a severe yellow fever outbreak struck Memphis, causing nearly 25,000 residents to flee the city.
- Approximately 20,000 people remained, facing an infection rate where deaths averaged around 200 per day.
- Members of the [Community of St. Mary](#) (an Anglican religious order) and local clergy chose to remain at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral to provide food, medicine, and nursing care rather than escape to safety.

The Six Martyrs

Six members of this selfless group contracted and ultimately died from yellow fever during the crisis:

- **Sister Constance** (Superior of the order and headmistress of St. Mary's School for Girls) — died September 9, 1878
- **Sister Thecla** — died September 12, 1878
- **Sister Ruth** — died September 17, 1878
- **Sister Frances** — died October 4, 1878
- **The Rev. Charles Carroll Parsons** (Rector of Grace Episcopal Church)
- **The Rev. Louis S. Schuyler** (Assistant rector)
- Over 5,000 total residents died during the 1878 epidemic.
- The high altar at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Memphis was built as a memorial dedicated to the four sisters.

*Please remain seated for the singing of the
Nunc dimittis*

1 Lord let your servant now depart ~ into your promised rest,
Since my expecting eyes have been ~ with your salvation blest.

2 Which till this time your favoured saints ~ and prophets only knew:
Long since prepared but now set forth ~ in all your peoples' view.

3 A light to show the Gentile world ~ the way to saving grace;
But O, the light and glory both ~ of Israel's chosen race.

All glory to the Father, Son ~ and Spirit, One and Three,
As was, and is and shall be so ~ through all eternity

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to John

Glory to you, Lord Christ

I assure you that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it can only be a single seed. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their lives will lose them, and those who hate their lives in this world will keep them forever. Whoever serves me must follow me. Wherever I am, there my servant will also be. My Father will honor whoever serves me.

"Now I am deeply troubled. What should I say? 'Father, save me from this time'? No, for this is the reason I have come to this time. Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Homily

The Call and Response Apostles' Creed.

(from Church of England, Common Worship)

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe and trust in God's Son Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
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,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

**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

Presider: Hear our cry, O God.

And listen to our prayer.

Let us pray.

Leader: For the Church of God in every place, that it may persevere in faith and hope, we pray to you.

Christ, have mercy

For all who minister in your Church that they may have grace to build up your people in love, we pray to you.

Christ, have mercy.

For the leaders of the countries, that they will heed your call and persistently pursue peace, we pray to you,

Christ have mercy.

For the sick, the hopeless and those in danger, *especially those we now name [PAUSE]*

We pray to you,

Christ have mercy.

For the dying and the dead, that they will rest in peace, *especially those we now name [PAUSE]*

We pray to you,

Christ have mercy.

The Collect of the Day

We give you thanks and praise, O God of compassion, for the heroic witness of the Martyrs of Memphis, who, in a time of plague and pestilence, were steadfast in their care for the sick and dying, and loved not their own lives, even unto death; Inspire in us a like love and commitment to those in need, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you

The Eucharistic Prayer (Prayer 2, Enriching Our Worship)

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 our thanks and praise.

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God,
source of life abundant.

From before time you made ready the creation.

Your Spirit moved over the deep
and brought all things into being:

sun, moon, and stars;

earth, winds, and waters;

and every living thing.

You made us in your image,

and taught us to walk in your ways.

But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away;

and yet, as a mother cares for her children,
you would not forget us.

Time and again you called us

to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels

in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity,

lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing (say):

**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.

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God.

To deliver us from the power of sin and death

and to reveal the riches of your grace,

you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant,

that she might conceive and bear a son,
Jesus the holy child of God.

Living among us, Jesus loved us.
He broke bread with outcasts and sinners,
healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor.
He yearned to draw all the world to himself
yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love.

Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross
the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us,
Jesus was at table with his friends.
He took bread, gave thanks to you,
broke it, and gave it to them, and said:
"Take, eat:
This is my Body, which is given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine.
Again, he gave thanks to you,
gave it to them, and said:
"Drink this, all of you:
This is my Blood of the new Covenant,
which is poured out for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation,
and remembering Christ, crucified and risen,
who was and is and is to come,
we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine,
and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts
that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ.
Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth
and make us your new creation,
the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.
In the fullness of time bring us,

with [*the Memphis Martyrs* and] all your saints,
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
to feast at the banquet prepared
from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
to you be honor, glory, and praise,
for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior
Christ has taught us,
we are bold to sing,
Our Father
Which 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 debts
As we forgive our debtors
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For Thine is the kingdom
And the power
And the glory
Forever
Amen

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast, Alleluia

The Gifts of God given for us, the beloved of God: Come and be fed.

Communion Hymn

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

**God of abundance,
you have fed us
with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
you have united us
with Christ and one another;
and you have made us one
with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth
in the power of your Spirit,
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue for ever
in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

The Blessing

Life is short, And we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who make the journey with us. So... be swift to love, and make haste to be kind. And the blessing of God, + who made us, who loves us, and who travels with us be with you now and forever.

AMEN

The Dismissal

Our worship has ended, our service continues:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.