

# The Light of Christ ANGLICAN CHURCH

*To know Christ fully, to make Christ fully known.*

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## **A Service of Lament** ***A Time to Weep!***

Words in **bold** are said by all together. Other parts (not in bold) are said by the leader. Words in italics are either headings or instructions, not meant to be said as part of the service.

### **The Gathering**

*Minister:* For everything there is a season,  
*People:* **a time for every matter under heaven**  
a time to laugh, and a time to weep  
**a time to dance, and a time to mourn.** (Eccl. 3:1,4)

*Silence*

Listen to my words, Lord, consider my lament.  
**Hear my cry for help, my King and my God.** (*Psalm 5:1-2a*)

### **Introduction**

People of God, we see in the Psalms and other passages of Scripture the outpouring of grief in times of deep anguish by our forefathers in the faith. In lament, we bring our deepest feelings of distress to God who is both personal and accessible.

We seek to use the handles of worship and liturgy to pour out our sincere and authentic feelings to the Almighty Father in whom we put our hope. Today we bring our lament to God on behalf of our land; over the violence and pain, the injustice and inequities, divisions and bitterness, racial tension and disunity that seek to rend apart the fabric of our social and economic life as a people.

## *Silence*

We meet in the presence of God

**Who knows our needs,  
hears our cries,  
feels our pain,  
and heals our wounds.**

## ***A Song of Lament***

### ***A Call to See the Brokenness***

All around us, we see brokenness in the human story. We come with broken hearts over the brokenness of this world.

A Reading from Lamentations (Lam. 2:11-13, 18-19, 3:19-24)

My eyes are spent with weeping; my stomach churns; my bile is poured out to the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, because infants and babies faint in the streets of the city. They cry to their mothers, "Where is bread and wine?" as they faint like a wounded man in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mothers' bosom. What can I say for you, to what compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is vast as the sea; who can heal you?

Their heart cried to the Lord. O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears stream down like a torrent day and night! Give yourself no rest, your eyes no respite! "Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the night watches! Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint for hunger at the head of every street."

Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

## **Prayer**

Let us pray.

The weight of grief bears heavily upon us, but it is a load we need not bear alone. Let us offer our burden to Jesus,

Lord of life and of death, of the present and of the future.

We bring before you, Lord, our confusion in the face of shock, our despair in the face of tragedy, our helplessness in the face of death.

Lift from us our burden,

**and in your power, renew us.**

We bring before you, Lord, the tears of sorrow, the cries for help, the vulnerability of pain.

Lift from us our burden,

**and in your power, renew us.**

We bring before you, Lord, our sense of frustration, our feeling of powerlessness, our fears for the future.

Lift from us our burden,

**and in your power, renew us.**

We bring before you, Lord, our frustrated hopes, our unfulfilled desires, our unfettered sadness.

Lift from us our burden,

**and in your power, renew us.**

*Minister:*

God of the desolate and despairing, your Son Jesus Christ was forced to carry the instrument of his own death — the cross that became for us the source of life and healing. Transform us in our suffering that *in the pain of this moment* you might be for us a fount of life and a spring of hope; through him who died for us, yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

*Silence*

***A Call to Grieve the Brokenness before God***

We acknowledge our helplessness in our own struggles to put things right. We come with empty hands being opened before God, to receive help from Him.

A Psalm

*(Psalms 102:1-22)*

- 1 LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry come before you; \*  
hide not your face from me in the day of my trouble.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; \*  
when I call, make haste to answer me,
- 3 For my days drift away like smoke, \*  
and my bones are hot as burning coals.
- 4 My heart is smitten like grass and withered, \*  
so that I forget to eat my bread.
- 5 Because of the voice of my groaning \*  
I am but skin and bones.
- 6 I have become like a vulture in the wilderness, \*  
like an owl among the ruins.
- 7 I lie awake and groan; \*  
I am like a sparrow, lonely on a house-top.
- 8 My enemies revile me all day long, \*  
and those who scoff at me have taken an oath against me.
- 9 For I have eaten ashes for bread \*  
and mingled my drink with weeping.
- 10 Because of your indignation and wrath \*  
you have lifted me up and thrown me away.
- 11 My days pass away like a shadow, \*  
and I wither like the grass.
- 12 But you, O LORD, endure for ever, \*  
and your Name from age to age.
- 13 You will arise and have compassion on Zion,  
for it is time to have mercy upon her; \*  
indeed, the appointed time has come.
- 14 For your servants love her very rubble, \*  
and are moved to pity even for her dust.
- 15 The nations shall fear your Name, O LORD, \*  
and all the kings of the earth your glory.
- 16 For the LORD will build up Zion, \*  
and his glory will appear.
- 17 He will look with favor on the prayer of the homeless; \*  
he will not despise their plea.

- 18 Let this be written for a future generation, \*  
so that a people yet unborn may praise the LORD.
- 19 For the LORD looked down from his holy place on high; \*  
from the heavens he beheld the earth;
- 20 That he might hear the groan of the captive \*  
and set free those condemned to die;
- 21 That they may declare in Zion the Name of the LORD, \*  
and his praise in Jerusalem;
- 22 When the peoples are gathered together, \*  
and the kingdoms also, to serve the LORD.

### ***A Prayer***

Lord, turn your ear to us; be swift to answer when we call.

**Turn your ear to us; be swift to answer when we call.**

Living God, deliver us from a world without justice and a future without mercy; in your mercy, establish justice, and in your justice, remember the mercy revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Lord God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, understood people's fear and pain before they spoke of them, we pray for those in anguish of soul; surround the frightened with your tenderness; give strength to those in pain; hold the weak in your arms of love, and give hope and patience to those who are despairing; we ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

O God, who brought us to birth, and in whose arms we die, in our grief and shock contain and comfort us; embrace each one of us with your love, give us hope in our confusion and grace to let go into the new life you offer us; through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

Father, you know our hearts and share our sorrows. We are hurt by the divisions, violence and injustice among us: when we are angry at the abuse of human dignity and the loss we sustain, when we long for words of comfort, yet find them hard to hear, turn our grief to truer living, our affliction to firmer hope in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Lord, your justice turns evil on itself: move us to examine our hearts and repent of all duplicity; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Judge and righteous Saviour.

**Amen.**

Gracious God, surround all who mourn this day with your continuing compassion. Do not let grief overwhelm your children, or turn them against you. When grief seems never-ending, take them one step at a time along your road of healing in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Give us honest hearts, O God, and send your kindly Spirit to help us confess our sins and bring us the peace of your forgiveness; in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new: transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

Lord, hear our prayer, and let our cry come before you:

**Be swift to answer when we call.**

*Silence*

### **A Call to Heed God's admonitions**

From time God has never hidden His good intentions and admonitions from us.

A reading from Amos

*(Amos 5:4-7, 13-15)*

For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel:

“Seek me and live; but do not seek Bethel, and do not enter into Gilgal or cross over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into exile, and Bethel shall come to nothing.”

Seek the Lord and live, lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, with none to quench it for Bethel, O you who turn justice to wormwood and cast down righteousness to the earth! Therefore he who is prudent will keep silent in such a time, for it is an evil time.

Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

***A prayer*** (adaptations from Psalm 119)

O Lord our God, *we are* laid low in the dust;

**Preserve us according to your word.**

Grant our hearts to understand your precepts,

So may we acknowledge your mighty acts.

O Lord, our soul is weary with sorrow;

**Come to our rescue in your mercy.** (25-28)

O Lord, remember your love for us

In your faithfulness give us hope

In our immense agony, we seek comfort

For we are only preserved by your promise

In the darkness of our night, we call upon your name

**For you are our only portion, God of Jacob** (49-57)

Our soul faints with longing for your salvation,

Yet our hope will be in your faithfulness.

Our eyes fail, looking for your promise; I say, "When will you comfort us?" Yet we do not forget that you are a merciful God

**In your unending love, send us salvation and comfort**

**According to your unending promise to your servant, David.** (81-84)

*Silence*

**A Call to Hope in God's Redemption**

*Minister:*

Hear these words of comfort which the Lord our God offers to all in trouble and distress:

The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

*(Exodus 2.23b-25)*

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. *(Isaiah 43.2-3a)*

Jesus said 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' *(Matthew 11.29,30)*

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." *(Rev. 21:1-5)*

*Silence in reflection*

***The Proclamation of Hope***

*A Candle is lighted by the minister.*



*Minister:*

We light this candle to remind us that when God the Father raised Jesus from the dead he defeated the power of death, and his light shines in the midst of the darkness of this world.

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, banish all darkness from our hearts and lives.

**Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have defeated death, and set your people free. You are the Saviour of the world.**

The Lord is my light and my salvation;

The Lord is the strength of my life.

**The Lord is my light and my salvation;**

**The Lord is the strength of my life.**

The light shines in the darkness

And the darkness has not overcome it.

**The Lord is the strength of my life.**

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

**The Lord is my light and my salvation; The Lord is the strength of my life.**

### ***A Song of Hope***

#### ***Collect***

Lighten our darkness, Lord, we pray, and in your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers [of this night/that we face in this hour], for the love of your only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

Let us pray that we may know life and hope in Jesus Christ as we 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,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**Blessing and Dismissal**

Neither death nor life can separate us from the love of God.  
**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

God the Father, by whose glory Christ was raised from the dead,  
strengthen *you* to walk with him in his risen life;  
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy  
Spirit be among *you* and remain with *you* always.  
**Amen.**

*Depart in silence*