

Evening Prayer: Rite Two

Thursday, September 17, 2026

Opening Sentence (BCP 116)

Officiant: 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*

Confession of Sin (BCP 116)

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

Silence may be kept.

All: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by 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.

Priest: 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.

All: **Amen.**

The Invitatory and Psalter (BCP 117)

Officiant: O God, make speed to save us.

People: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

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 for ever. Amen.**

O Gracious Light Phos hilaron (BCP 118)

All: **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 Psalm Appointed (Psalm 8, BCP 592)

- 1 O Lord our Governor, *
 how exalted is your Name in all the world!
- 2 Out of the mouths of infants and children *
 your majesty is praised above the heavens.
- 3 You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries, *
 to quell the enemy and the avenger.
- 4 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, *
 the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,
- 5 What is man that you should be mindful of him? *
 the son of man that you should seek him out?
- 6 You have made him but little lower than the angels; *
 you adorn him with glory and honor;
- 7 You give him mastery over the works of your hands; *
 you put all things under his feet:
- 8 All sheep and oxen, *
 even the wild beasts of the field,
- 9 The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, *
 and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.
- 10 O Lord our Governor, *
 how exalted is your Name in all the world!

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 for ever. Amen.**

The Lessons

Reader: A reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians. (3:14-17)

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Song of Mary *Magnificat* (BCP 119)

All: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
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.

The Gospel

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to John. (3:16-21)

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

‘Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.’

Homily The Rev. Dr. Mark W. Frazier

The Apostles’ Creed (BCP 120)

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 (BCP 121)

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

All: **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.**

Suffrages A (BCP 121)

Officiant: Show us your mercy, O Lord;

All: **And grant us your salvation.**

Officiant: Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

All: **Let your people sing with joy.**

Officiant: Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

All: **For only in you can we live in safety.**

Officiant: Lord, keep this nation under your care;

All: **And guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

Officiant: Let your way be known upon earth;

All: **Your saving health among all nations.**

Officiant: Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

All: **Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Officiant: Create in us clean hearts, O God;

All: **And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

The Collects

The Collect for Hildegard

Officiant: God of all times and seasons: Give us grace that we, after the example of your servant Hildegard, may both know and make known the joy and jubilation of being part of your creation, and show forth your glory in the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

A Collect for the Presence of Christ (BCP 124)

Officiant: Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love.

All: **Amen.**

A Prayer for Mission (BCP 125)

Officiant: O God, you manifest in your servants the signs of your presence: Send forth upon us the Spirit of love, that in companionship with one another your abounding grace may increase among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Announcements

The General Thanksgiving (BCP 125)

All: **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 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 (BCP 126)

Officiant: 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.

All: **Amen.**

Dismissal

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Grace

Officiant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *2 Corinthians 13:14*

All: **Amen.**

Hagiography

Hildegard of Bingen, Visionary..... *James Kiefer*

"Listen: there was once a king sitting on his throne. Around him stood great and wonderfully beautiful columns ornamented with ivory, bearing the banners of the king with great honor. Then it pleased the king to raise a small feather from the ground, and he commanded it to fly. The feather flew, not because of anything in itself but because the air bore it along. Thus am I, a feather on the breath of God."

Hildegard of Bingen has been called by her admirers "one of the most important figures in the history of the Middle Ages," and "the greatest woman of her time." Her time was the 1100's (she was born in 1098), the century of Eleanor of Aquitaine, of Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux, of the rise of the great universities and the building of

Chartres cathedral. She was the daughter of a knight, and when she was eight years old, she went to the Benedictine monastery at Mount St Disibode to be educated. The monastery was in the Celtic tradition, and housed both men and women (in separate quarters). When Hildegard was eighteen, she became a nun. Twenty years later, she was made the head of the female community at the monastery. Within the next four years, she had a series of visions and devoted the ten years from 1140 to 1150 to writing them down, describing them (this included drawing pictures of what she had seen), and commenting on their interpretation and significance. During this period, Pope Eugenius III sent a commission to inquire into her work. The commission found her teaching orthodox and her insights authentic, and reported so to the Pope, who sent her a letter of approval. (He was probably encouraged to do so by his friend and former teacher, Bernard of Clairvaux.) She wrote back urging the Pope to work harder for reform of the Church. The community of nuns at Mount St. Disibode was growing rapidly, and they did not have adequate room. Hildegard accordingly moved her nuns to a location near Bingen and founded a monastery for them completely independent of the double monastery they had left. She oversaw its construction, which included such features (not routine in her day) as water pumped in through pipes. The abbot they had left opposed their departure, and the resulting tensions took a long time to heal.

Hildegard travelled throughout southern Germany and into Switzerland and as far as Paris, preaching. Her sermons deeply moved the hearers, and she was asked to provide written copies. In the last year of her life, she was briefly in trouble because she provided Christian burial for a young man who had been excommunicated. Her defense was that he had repented on his deathbed, and received the sacraments. Her convent was subjected to an interdict, but she protested eloquently, and the interdict was revoked. She died on 17 September 1179. Her surviving works include more than a hundred letters to emperors and popes, bishops, nuns, and nobility. (Many persons of all classes wrote to her, asking for advice, and one biographer calls her "the Dear Abby of the twelfth century.") She wrote 72 songs including a play set to music. Musical notation had only shortly before developed to the point where her music was recorded in a way that we can read today. Accordingly, some of her work is now available on compact disk and presumably sounds the way she intended. My former room-mate, a non-Christian and a professional musician, is an enthusiastic admirer of her work and considers her a musical genius. Certainly her

compositional style is like nothing else we have from the twelfth century. The play set to music is called the *Ordo Virtutum* and show us a human soul who listens to the Virtues, turns aside to follow the Devil, and finally returns to the Virtues, having found that following the Devil does not make one happy.

She left us about seventy poems and nine books. Two of them are books of medical and pharmaceutical advice, dealing with the workings of the human body and the properties of various herbs. (These books are based on her observations and those of others, not on her visions.) I am told that some modern researchers are now checking her statements in the hope of finding some medicinal properties of some plant that has been overlooked till now by modern medicine. She also wrote a commentary on the Gospels and another on the Athanasian Creed. Much of her work has recently been translated into English, part in series like *Classics of Western Spirituality*, and part in other collections or separately. If your university library or bookstore cannot help you, try a Christian bookstore. If they do not have it, try a trendy (feminist, New Age, ecology) bookstore.

But her major works are three books on theology: *Scivias* ("Know the paths!"), *Liber Vitae Meritorum* (on ethics), and *De Operatione Dei*. They deal (or at least the first and third do) with the material of her visions. The visions, as she describes them, are often enigmatic but deeply moving, and many who have studied them believe that they have learned something from the visions that is not easily put into words. On the other hand, we have the recent best-seller, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, by Oliver Sacks, Professor of Clinical Neurology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and author of *Migraine* and various other books. Professor Sacks is concerned with the relation of the brain to the mind, and ways in which the physical state of the nervous system can affect our ways of perceiving reality. He views the pictures in Hildegard's books of what she saw in her visions, and says, "The style of the pictures is a clear indication that the seer suffered regularly from migraine attacks. Migraine sufferers tend to see things in this manner." And indeed, it is true that Hildegard suffered throughout her life from painful attacks of what may have been migraine. Professor Sacks hastens to add that this has nothing to do with whether her visions are authentic insights into the nature of God and His relation to the Universe.

Hildegard has undergone a remarkable rise in popularity in the last thirty years, since many readers have found in her visions, or read into them, themes that seem to speak to many modern concerns. For example:

Although she would have rejected much of the rhetoric of women's liberation, she never hesitated to say what she thought needed to be said, or to do what she thought needed to be done, simply because she was a woman. When Pope or Emperor needed a rebuke, she rebuked them.

Her writings bring science, art, and religion together. She is deeply involved in all three and looks to each for insights that will enrich her understanding of the others.

Her use of parable and metaphor, of symbols, visual imagery, and non-verbal means to communicate makes her work reach out to many who are totally deaf to more standard approaches. In particular, non-Western peoples are often accustomed to expressing their views of the world in visionary language and find that Hildegard's use of similar language to express a Christian view of reality produces instant rapport, if not necessarily instant agreement.

Hildegard wrote and spoke extensively about social justice, about freeing the downtrodden, about the duty of seeing to it that every human being, made in the image of God, has the opportunity to develop and use the talents that God has given him, and to realize his God-given potential. This strikes a chord today.

Hildegard wrote explicitly about the natural world as God's creation, charged through and through with His beauty and His energy; entrusted to our care, to be used by us for our benefit, but not to be mangled or destroyed.

Much of her work is musical, and has been recorded by many, notably by the group Sequentia.