

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation



Night Prayer

From the New Zealand Prayer Book

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*We love and serve the Lord
by loving and serving others.*

The offering of prayer late in the evening, by laity, religious orders or clergy, often called Compline, has sometimes been described as the 'goodnight prayer of the Church'. It rounds off the day and prepares us for a quiet night. As the psalmist wrote:

*I lie down in peace and take rest my rest
for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.*

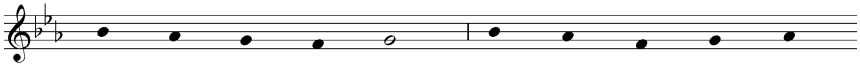
Night Prayer derives its content from the wisdom of the centuries in Scripture and above all in the psalms, but also from contemporary Christian experience of God. It celebrates the awareness that each of us who tries to pray is a part of the human whole. So we are taken over the threshold from daytime, not in a mood of self-centered spirituality, but as representatives of humanity, acknowledging our creaturehood before God.

Opening Hymn

[H] 26



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



Fa - ther's glo - ry shone. Im - mor - tal, ho - ly,
lit to pierce the night. Praise Fa - ther, Son, and
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 melody may be sung in rhythmic form: ♩ ♪ ♪ ♪

Words: Greek, 3rd cent.; tr. F. Bland Tucker (1895-1984); para. of *O Gracious Light*. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund.
Music: *Conditor alme siderum*, plainsong, Mode 4; acc. Bruce Neswick (b. 1956).

Approach

The Priest says

The angels of God guard us through the night,
People And quieten the powers of darkness.

Priest The Spirit of God be our guide
People To lead us to peace and glory.

The Priest alone continues

It is but lost labor that we haste to rise up early,
And so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.
For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.

Silence

Priest My brothers and sisters,
our help is in the name of the eternal God,
People Who is making the heavens and the earth.

The Priest alone continues

Dear God,
thank you for all that is good,
for our creation and our humanity,
for the stewardship you have given us of the planet earth,
for the gifts of life and one another,
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.

O thou, most holy and beloved,
my Companion, my Guide upon the way,
my bright evening star.

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

Priest We have wounded your love.

People O God, heal us.

Priest We stumble in the darkness.

People Light of the world transfigure us.

Priest We forget that we are your home.

People Spirit of God, dwell in us.

The Priest alone continues

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.

Invocation

Priest Eternal Spirit,
 flow through our being and open our lips,
People that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Priest Let us worship the God of love.
People Amen, Amen.

Psalm

Psalm 121

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains,
 but where shall I find help?

From you alone, O God, does my help come,
 creator of the ever changing hills.

You will not let me stumble on the rough pathways,
 you care for me and watch over me without ceasing.

I am sure that the Guardian of my people
neither slumbers nor sleeps.
 The God of all nations keeps watch,
 like a shadow spread over me.

So the sun will not strike me by day,
 nor the moon by night.

You will defend me in the presence of evil,

you will guard my life.

You will defend my going out and my coming in,
this night and always.

Reading and Poem with Comments

Prayers

Priest Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,
People for you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.

Priest Keep me, O God, as the apple of an eye;
People hide me under the shadow of your wings.

Song of Simeon

Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep we may rest in your peace.

Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.

At last you have given me peace,
for I have seen with my own eyes
the salvation you have prepared for all nations –
a light to the world in its darkness,
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory be to God, sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,

as in the beginning, so now, and for ever.
Amen.

Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep we may rest in your peace.

Priest Lord, have mercy.

People Christ, have mercy.

Priest Lord, have mercy.

The Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
the way of your justice be followed
by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and
come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.

The people are invited to add their prayers of Intercession or Thanksgiving into the Comments so we can pray for them together.

Intercessory Hymn

[H] 712

1
Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem. Do - na no - bis
2
pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.
3
Do - na no - bis pa - cem. Do - na
no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

Words: Traditional Latin. Music: *Dona nobis pacem*, traditional canon.

Priest I will lie down in peace and take my rest,
People for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.

Priest Let us bless the Earth-maker, the Pain-bearer,
the Life-giver;
People let us praise and exalt God above all for ever.

Priest May God's name be praised beyond the furthest star,
People glorified and exalted above all for ever.

The Priest and People pray together

A General Thanksgiving

Eternal God, compassionate and merciful,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving kindness
to us and to all people.

We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your boundless love
in the redemption of the world by our Saviour Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us that due sense of all your mercies,
that our hearts may be truly thankful,
and that we praise you, not only with our lips but in our lives,
by giving ourselves to your service
and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness
all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Lord,
it is night.

The night is for stillness.
Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.
What has been done has been done;
what has not been done has not been done;
let it be.

The night is dark.
Let our fears of the darkness of the world

and of our own lives rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us,
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day,
new joys,
new possibilities.

In your name we pray.

Amen.

Sentence of the Day

O God,
strengthen your servants with your heavenly grace,
that we may continue yours for ever,
and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more,
until we come to your everlasting kingdom.

Final Versicle

Priest The divine Spirit dwells in us.

People Thanks be to God.

Closing Hymn

[H] 24

1 The day thou gav - est, Lord, is end - ed, the dark - ness
2 We thank thee that thy Church, un - sleep - ing while earth rolls
3 As o'er each con - ti - nent and is - land the dawn leads
4 So be it, Lord; thy throne shall nev - er, like earth's proud

falls at thy be - hest; to thee our morn - ing hymns a -
on - ward in - to light, through all the world her watch is
on an - oth - er day, the voice of prayer is nev - er
em - pires, pass a - way; thy king - dom stands, and grows for

scend - ed, thy praise shall sanc - ti - fy our rest.
keep - ing, and rests not now by day or night.
si - lent, nor dies the strain of praise a - way.
ev - er, till all thy crea - tures own thy sway.

Words: John Ellerton (1826-1893). Music: *St. Clement*, Clement Cottevill Scholefield (1839-1904).

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