

Monday, October 26  
Morning Prayer  
Alfred the Great

Opening Sentence: Pentecost

The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him. Habakkuk 2:20

Confession

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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.

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

Invitatory

Lord, open our lips.

And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.  
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.

Alleluia. The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

Venite Psalm 95:1-7

Come let us sing to the Lord; \*  
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving \*  
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, \*  
and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth, \*  
and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, \*  
and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, \*  
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. \*  
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Antiphon

Alleluia. The earth is the Lord's for he made it: Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

Psalm 41 *Beatus qui intelligit*

1  
Happy are they who consider the poor and needy! \*  
the LORD will deliver them in the time of trouble.

2  
The LORD preserves them and keeps them alive,  
so that they may be happy in the land; \*  
he does not hand them over to the will of their enemies.

3  
The LORD sustains them on their sickbed \*  
and ministers to them in their illness.

4  
I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; \*  
heal me, for I have sinned against you."

5  
My enemies are saying wicked things about me: \*  
"When will he die, and his name perish?"

6  
Even if they come to see me, they speak empty words; \*  
their heart collects false rumors;  
they go outside and spread them.

7  
All my enemies whisper together about me \*  
and devise evil against me.

8

"A deadly thing," they say, "has fastened on him; \*  
he has taken to his bed and will never get up again."

9

Even my best friend, whom I trusted,  
who broke bread with me, \*  
has lifted up his heel and turned against me.

10

But you, O LORD, be merciful to me and raise me up, \*  
and I shall repay them.

11

By this I know you are pleased with me, \*  
that my enemy does not triumph over me.

12

In my integrity you hold me fast, \*  
and shall set me before your face for ever.

13

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, \*  
from age to age. Amen. Amen.

Psalm 52 *Quid gloriaris?*

1

You tyrant, why do you boast of wickedness \*  
against the godly all day long?

2

You plot ruin;  
your tongue is like a sharpened razor, \*  
O worker of deception.

3

You love evil more than good \*  
and lying more than speaking the truth.

4

You love all words that hurt, \*  
O you deceitful tongue.

5

Oh, that God would demolish you utterly, \*  
topple you, and snatch you from your dwelling,  
and root you out of the land of the living!

6

The righteous shall see and tremble, \*  
and they shall laugh at him, saying,

7

"This is the one who did not take God for a refuge, \*  
but trusted in great wealth  
and relied upon wickedness."

8

But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; \*  
I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

9

I will give you thanks for what you have done \*  
and declare the goodness of your Name in the presence of the godly.

### Gloria Patri

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.

### Old Testament Lesson

#### Zechariah 1:7-17 (NRSV)

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo; and Zechariah said, 8 In the night I saw a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. 9 Then I said, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." 10 So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "They are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth." 11 Then they spoke to the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace." 12 Then the angel of the LORD said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?" 13 Then the LORD replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. 14 So the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim this message: Thus says the LORD of hosts; I am very jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. 15 And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they made the disaster worse. 16 Therefore, thus says the LORD, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it, says the LORD of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. 17 Proclaim further: Thus says the LORD of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

### Canticle 9 The First Song of Isaiah

Ecce, Deus Isaiah 12:2-6

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.

New Testament Lesson

Revelation 1:4-20 (NRSV)

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits  
who are before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the  
ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, 6 and made us to be a kingdom, priests  
serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7 Look! He is coming with the clouds;  
every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him;  
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the

Almighty. 9 I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." 12 Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. 14 His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. 19 Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. 20 As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Matthew 12:43-50 (NRSV)

43 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So will it be also with this evil generation." 46 While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers were standing outside, wanting to speak to him. 47 Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." 48 But to the one who had told him this, Jesus replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 19 The Song of the Redeemed  
Magna et mirabilia Revelation 15:3-4

O ruler of the universe, Lord God,  
great deeds are they that you have done, \*  
surpassing human understanding.  
Your ways are ways of righteousness and truth, \*

O King of all the ages  
Who can fail to do you homage, Lord  
and sing the praises of your Name  
for you only are the Holy One.

All nations will draw near and fall down before you  
because your just and holy works have been revealed.

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.

*Alfred the Great 26 October 899*

When the Gospel was first preached in Britain, the island was inhabited by Celtic peoples. In the 400's, pagan Germanic tribes, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, invaded Britain and drove the Christian Celts out of what is now England into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The new arrivals (called collectively the Anglo-Saxons) were then converted by Celtic missionaries moving in from the one side and Roman missionaries moving in from the other. (They then sent missionaries of their own, such as Boniface, to their pagan relatives on the Continent.)

In the 800's the cycle partly repeated itself, as the Christian Anglo-Saxons were invaded by the Danes, pagan raiders, who rapidly conquered the northeast portion of England. They seemed about to conquer the entire country and eliminate all resistance when they were turned back by Alfred, King of the West Saxons.

Alfred was born in 849 at Wantage, Berkshire, youngest of five sons of King Aethelwulf. He wished to become a monk, but after the deaths (all in battle, I think) of his father and his four older brothers, he was made king in 871. He proved to be skilled at military tactics, and devised a defensive formation which the Danish charge was unable to break. After a decisive victory at Edington in 878, he reached an agreement with the Danish leader Guthrum, by which the Danes would retain a portion of northeastern England and be given other concessions in return for their agreement to accept baptism and Christian instruction. From a later point of view, it seems obvious that such a promise could not involve a genuine change of heart, and was therefore meaningless (and indeed, one Dane complained that the white robe that he was given after his baptism was not nearly so fine as the two that he had received after the two previous times that he had been defeated and baptized). However, Alfred's judgement proved sound. Guthrum, from his point of view, agreed to become a vassal of Christ. His nobles and chief warriors,

being his vassals, were thereby obligated to give their feudal allegiance to Christ as well. They accepted baptism and the presence among them of Christian priests and missionaries to instruct them. The door was opened for conversions on a more personal level in that and succeeding generations.

In his later years, having secured a large degree of military security for his people, Alfred devoted his energies to repairing the damage that war had done to the cultural life of his people. He translated Boethius's *Consolations of Philosophy* into Old English, and brought in scholars from Wales and the Continent with whose help various writings of Bede, Augustine of Canterbury, and Gregory the Great were likewise translated. He was much impressed by the provisions in the Law of Moses for the protection of the rights of ordinary citizens, and gave order that similar provisions should be made part of English law. He promoted the education of the parish clergy. In one of his treatises, he wrote:

"He seems to me a very foolish man, and very wretched, who will not increase his understanding while he is in the world, and ever wish and long to reach that endless life where all shall be made clear."

He died on 26 October 899, and was buried in the Old Minster at Winchester. Alone among English monarchs, he is known as "the Great."

The writer G.K.Chesterton has written a long narrative poem about Alfred, called, "The Ballad of the White Horse." In my view, it would be improved by abridgement (I would, for example, terminate the prologue after the line "And laid peace on the sea"), but I think it well worth reading as it stands, both for the history and (with minor reservations) for the theology.

written by James Kiefer

Prayer

O Sovereign Lord, who brought your servant Alfred to a troubled throne that he might establish peace in a ravaged land and revive learning and the arts among the people: Awake in us also a keen desire to increase our understanding while we are in this world, and an eager longing to reach that endless life where all will be made clear; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

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 Lord's Prayer

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

Show us your mercy, O Lord;

And grant us your salvation.

Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

Let your people sing with joy.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

For only in you can we live in safety.

Lord, keep this nation under your care;

And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let your way be known upon earth;

Your saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us clean hearts, O God;

And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Collect of the Day: Pentecost, proper 25

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Collect for Peace

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Mission

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.

## World Cycle of Prayer

We pray for the people of Niger.

### All Africa: Niger

## Ecumenical Cycle of Prayer

We pray for our sisters and brothers, members of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

### The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

## For All Sorts and Conditions

O God, the creator and preserver of all, we humbly beseech you for all sorts and conditions of people; that you would be pleased to make your ways known unto them, your saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for your holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by your good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to your fatherly goodness all those who are in any ways afflicted or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; that it may please you to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

## For the Poor and Neglected

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## For Those Who Live Alone

Almighty God, whose Son had nowhere to lay his head: Grant that those who live alone may not be lonely in their solitude, but that, following in his steps, they may find fulfillment in loving you and their neighbors; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## A Prayer Attributed to St. Francis

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury,

pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

### General Thanksgiving

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

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. Amen.

### Benediction

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen. *Romans 15:13*