

COLLECT: (*Remain Standing*)

O God, the font of resurrected life, draw us into the wilderness and speak tenderly to us, so that we might love and worship you as your servant James Solomon Russell did, in assurance of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jeremiah 25:8-17 (*Please be seated*)

Reader: A reading from the book of Jeremiah.

Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, I am going to send for all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, even for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations around; I will utterly destroy them, and make them an object of horror and of hissing, and an everlasting disgrace.* And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and the sound of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste. I will bring upon that

land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.

For thus the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. They shall drink and stagger and go out of their minds because of the sword that I am sending among them.

So I took the cup from the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it:

Reader: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 121, 122, and 123

Reader: Let us pray together the words of **Psalm 121, 122, and 123.**

121: 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills; *
from where is my help to come?
2 My help comes from the Lord, *
the maker of heaven and earth.
3 He will not let your foot be moved *
and he who watches over you will not fall
asleep.
4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel *
shall neither slumber nor sleep;
5 The Lord himself watches over you; *
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,
6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day, *
nor the moon by night.
7 The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; *
it is he who shall keep you safe.
8 The Lord shall watch over your going out and
your coming in, *
from this time forth for evermore.

122: 1 I was glad when they said to me, *
"Let us go to the house of the Lord."
2 Now our feet are standing *
within your gates, O Jerusalem.
3 Jerusalem is built as a city *
that is at unity with itself;
4 To which the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord, *

the assembly of Israel,
to praise the Name of the Lord.
5 For there are the thrones of judgment, *
the thrones of the house of David.
6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: *
"May they prosper who love you.
7 Peace be within your walls *
and quietness within your towers.
8 For my brethren and companions' sake, *
I pray for your prosperity.
9 Because of the house of the Lord our God, *
I will seek to do you good."
123:1 To you I lift up my eyes, *
to you enthroned in the heavens.
2 As the eyes of servants look to the hand of
their masters, *
and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her
mistress,
3 So our eyes look to the Lord our God, *
until he show us his mercy.
4 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy, *
for we have had more than enough of
contempt,
5 Too much of the scorn of the indolent rich, *
and of the derision of the proud.

Romans 10:1-13 (*Please be seated*)

Reader: A reading from the book of Hebrews.

Brothers and sisters, ^{*} my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. I can testify that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that 'the person who does these things will live by them.' But the righteousness that comes from faith says, 'Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" ' (that is, to bring Christ down) 'or "Who will descend into the abyss?" ' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say?

'The word is near you,

on your lips and in your heart'

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because* if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

John 9:18-41 (*Please stand as you are able*)

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?' His parents answered, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.' His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus* to be the Messiah* would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, 'Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.' He answered, 'I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?' Then they reviled him, saying, 'You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man answered, 'Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.' They answered him, 'You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?' And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?*' He answered, 'And who is he, sir?*' Tell me, so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.' He said, 'Lord,* I believe.' And he worshipped him. Jesus said, 'I came into this world for judgement so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.' Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, 'Surely we are not blind, are we?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, "We see", your sin remains.

Deacon or Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Christ