

February 14, 2023
Absalom Jones, Priest, 1818

HYMN: *Born in bondage*



1. Born in bond-age, born in shack - les, Born stripped of all dig - ni - ty,
2. Seek - ing to ex - pand hor - i - zons, Bi - ble, pri - mer he did find;
3. When in Phi - la - del - phia set - tled, He sought per - sons in great need,
4. One fine morn - ing, while at wor - ship, Wrested from his knees in pray - er;



1. Abs' - lom Jones was bound, de - ter - mined, That he would one day be free.
2. To each word he was at - ten - tive, Learn - ing, lest he fall be - hind.
3. Ded - i - ca - ted to em - pow'r - ment, His own peo - ple did he lead.
4. He, his friends, were thus e - vic - ted: "You no more may praise God here."



1. Bless - ed Abs' - lom, leads us, guides us, In the bonds of u - ni - ty.
2. Bless - ed Abs' - lom, lib - er - ates us From the pri - son of our mind.
3. Bless - ed Abs' - lom, pray that we from All in - diff' - rence may be freed.
4. Bless - ed Abs' - lom, pray that we may Stand stead - fast and per - se - vere.



Bishop Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

Bishop Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Bishop Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One,
People **Have mercy upon us.**

Bishop The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Bishop Let us pray.

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear: that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LESSON *Isaiah 42: 5-9*

Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
I am the LORD, that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.
See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

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

PSALM 126

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

²Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

³Then they said among the nations, *
"The LORD has done great things for them."

⁴The LORD has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.

⁵Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.

⁶Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.

⁷Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

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

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

THE GOSPEL *John 15: 12-15*

Jesus said, 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.'

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

SERMON

THE NICENE CREED *Please stand as able.*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Adapted from the Reverend Jemonde Taylor and based on "A Thanksgiving Sermon" given by the Reverend Absalom Jones on January 1, 1808

Bishop

O God of freedom and justice: we celebrate this day your servant, Absalom Jones, the first person of African ancestry ordained in the Episcopal Church. Empower us to build a world where righteousness and justice are the foundations of your throne as we pray.

Leader

Let your Church continue the ministries of reconciliation and peace. Help us grow Absalom Jones' ministry of racial justice. Glory to God for your precious record of power and goodness; **Let all the nations of the earth praise you.**

God who hears, you put the tears of our forbearers into your bottle, recording them in your book: help the nations of the world hear their citizens' concerns by responding to injustice, war, and slavery with actions that lead to peace. Glory to God for your precious record of power and goodness; **Let all the nations of the earth praise you.**

God of our ancestors, Blessed Absalom reminded us that just as your chosen people acknowledged a Syrian, ready to perish, was their ancestor, we too must acknowledge that an enslaved African, ready to perish, was our ancestor: Endue our elders and leaders with wisdom and vision to reach back with the purpose of moving forward. Glory to God for your precious record of power and goodness; **Let all the nations of the earth praise you.**

God of compassion, you hear your people's cries and prayers in heaven: accept our intercessions and petitions as part of our worship of you. Help us remember that we stand on the prayers of our ancestors. As they prayed for current and future generations, so must we pray for our sisters and brothers today and for those to come. Glory to God for your precious record of power and goodness; **Let all the nations of the earth praise you.**

God who creates, Blessed Absalom reminded us that sacrifices must be accompanied with action: guide our feet to run the race without getting weary. Keep us focused on the fight for equality. Glory to God for your precious record of power and goodness; **Let all the nations of the earth praise you.**

O God, the omnipotent and benevolent, who knows our hearts and intentions in ways we have yet to understand: Thank you for the gift of prosperity and diversity. We ask that you bless the minds and hearts of those who join the pilgrimage to Alabama. Let the adversity and injustice of our past, and present, stimulate our hearts and encourage us to action, so that we might advocate for and be messengers of social justice and love. Thank you for hearing our prayer. Glory to God for your precious record of power and goodness; **Let all the nations of the earth praise you.**

You inspire our hearts with hope as we offer prayers of thanksgiving. I invite your prayers of thanksgiving, either silently or aloud.

Healing God, deliver those who call upon your name. I invite your prayers of intercession, either silently or aloud.

Continue to grow from strength to strength those who know you more fully, as we pray for all those we love but see no longer. *Silence*

Bishop

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear: that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servants Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE PEACE

Bishop The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING – Eucharistic Prayer A

Bishop The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

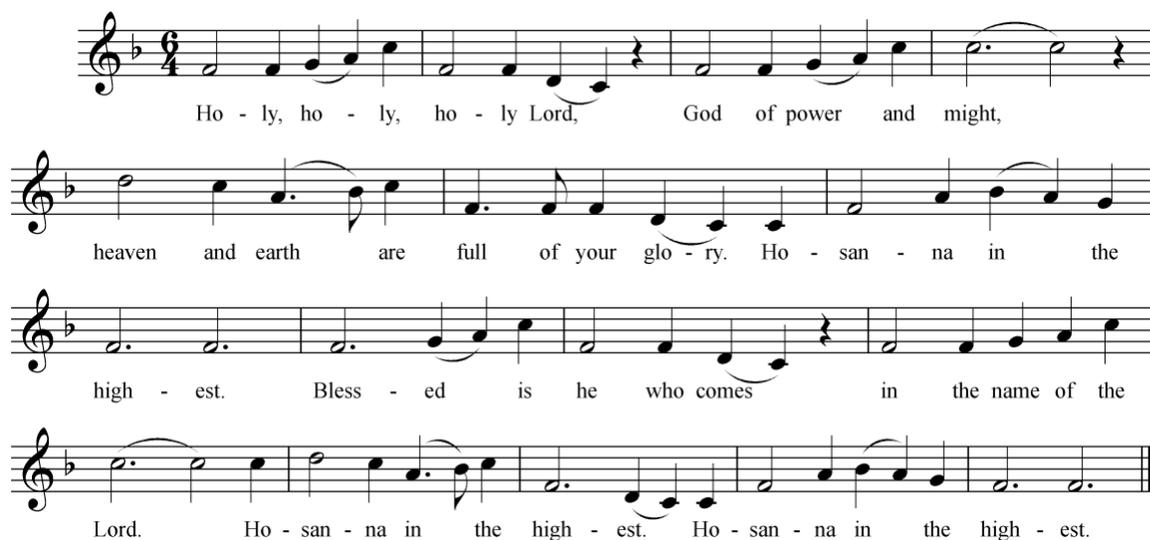
Bishop Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Bishop Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth: For the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all your saints, who have been the chosen vessels of your grace, and the lights of the world in their generations. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Bishop breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Bishop Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

All **My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Come spiritually into my heart, and help me embrace you and unite myself to you completely. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.**

HYMN 325 *Let us break bread together on our knees*

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Bishop Let us pray.

People **Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Bishop Our help is in the Name of the Lord;

People **The maker of heaven and earth.**

Bishop Blessed be the Name of the Lord;

People **From this time forth for evermore.**

Bishop The blessing, mercy, and grace of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you ever. **Amen.**

HYMN 599 *Lift every voice and sing*

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**