

7

DAILY PRAYER

Prayer nurtures our relationship with God, in whom “we live and move and have our being.”¹ Prayer is therefore at the heart of all religion, and St. Paul could admonish the Thessalonian church to “pray without ceasing.”²

HISTORY

Orderly efforts to enable Christians to enter the strange and demanding world of prayer appeared early in the church’s history. These efforts to facilitate communion with God, which were based on ancient Jewish models, came to be known collectively as the Divine Office (from the Latin *officium*, meaning “service”). The service of God in the Office is, therefore, a way of cultivating a sense of the constant presence of God and of fostering that uninterrupted relationship of which St. Paul writes.

The New Testament indicates that the apostles continued the Jewish practice of prayer at the principal hours of the day: midnight (Psalm 119:62; Acts 16:25); the third hour (Acts 2:1, 15); noon (Acts 10:9); the ninth hour (Acts 3:1; see also Daniel 6:10; Psalm 55:17; 119:164; 34:1). In the ancient world, the time between dawn and sunset was divided at recognized points—the third, sixth, and ninth hours—and Christians found it natural to commemorate the events of the faith at these regular divisions of the day.³ These daytime prayers were chiefly private prayer. By the middle of the third century, the hours of prayer had become commemorations of the work of Christ: daybreak celebrated the resur-

rection; the third hour the descent of the Spirit or the condemnation of Christ; the sixth hour the crucifixion; the ninth hour the death of Christ; the evening the light of Christ in the darkness of the world.⁴

The principal times of public prayer were evening and morning, “the last hour of the day at dusk when the lamps were lighted” and “the first hour of the day when the rising sun dispelled the last shadow of night.”⁵ Thus the times of transition between darkness and light, with their archetypal associations and evocations, were natural times for Christians to come together for prayer in common. Quite early certain elements had become recognized as essential parts of morning and evening prayer: in the morning, the *Laudate* Psalms (148-150) and the Gloria in Excelsis; in the evening, the hymn *phos hilaron* (“Joyous light of glory”) Psalm 141, intercessions, Our Father. These two offices were the daily public prayer of the church.

As the years passed, the Office became more and more the property of monastic communities and thus more and more elaborate, since the monks’ principal occupation was prayer. In the Western church the seven-part Office evolved (cock-crow, dawn, terce, sext, none, lamp-lighting, midnight).⁶ All one hundred-fifty Psalms were sung within a relatively brief period (usually one week); readings attempted to cover the whole of the Bible in a year. Antiphons, responsories, and other seasonal variants proliferated. Later, hymns as well as additional readings from the writings of the saints were added.

By the time of the Reformation, the Office had become an enormously complex work, and for those who prayed it (almost exclusively the clergy) it was often a burden rather than a joy. Several efforts at reform had been made before the Reformation, but the Lutheran Reformers and the Anglicans not only greatly simplified the Office but also restored it to congregational use. Matins, Lauds, and Prime were combined into a single morning service of prayer (called Matins or Morning Prayer); Vespers and Compline were blended into the evening prayer service (called Vespers or Evensong).

In essence, however, the two traditions took rather different approaches. Under Anglican reform, the offices retained an essentially monastic character: all one hundred fifty Psalms were appointed to be read in the course of a month; nearly the entire Bible was read through each year. Priests in the Church of England were required to read Morning and Evening Prayer daily, in their parish churches if possible.

The Lutheran reformers, on the other hand, understood Matins and Vespers as public services emphasizing preaching and instruction. Luther-

ans have seldom felt compelled to use all one hundred fifty Psalms (their service books have included only a selected Psalter), nor to read the whole Bible in course (at least in connection with these services). Moreover, Lutheran piety is generally more attuned to hymns than to Psalms, and although the custom is no longer common in North America, European Lutherans continue to use hymns privately for devotional meditation. Among Lutherans, appointed readings for Matins and Vespers have generally been taken less seriously than the eucharistic lectionary, the eucharistic readings often serving for both the Service and also for Matins and Vespers. *The Lutheran Hymnal* and the text editions of the *Common Service Book* and the *Service Book and Hymnal* provide a simple daily lectionary—two readings per day—but the tables appear in inconspicuous places. (In the *Book of Common Prayer* the tables of daily lessons and Psalms appeared as the first item in the book.)

Moreover, among Lutherans the value of Matins and Vespers was much less certain than it was among the Anglicans. After the Reformation, the offices (with a few notable exceptions, such as Leipzig in Bach's time) were largely lost until the nineteenth century, when schools and deaconess communities assisted in their recovery. A form of Vespers became a popular Sunday evening service in early twentieth-century America. But very seldom have Matins and Vespers been the basis for the daily prayer of clergy and laypeople.

Matins is not in most congregations the usual substitute for the Eucharist (as it is for most Anglicans), nor are Matins and Vespers the basis for private prayer (as they have been for Roman Catholic clergy). Matins and Vespers have retained their place among Lutherans by virtue of their use in schools, colleges, and seminaries, mid-week Lenten services in parishes, and an occasional congregational celebration (such as the installation of a pastor). Vespers is thus generally better known than Matins. (Among Anglicans the opposite is the case.) Basically for Lutheran congregations, Matins and Vespers have been used as additional preaching services, supplementing ante-communion for the sake of variety, rather than as vehicles of prayer and devotion.

The Roman Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council moved in the direction of a Lutheran and Anglican understanding of the Office and identified "Lauds as morning prayer and Vespers as evening prayer" as "the two hinges upon which the daily office turns; hence they are to be considered the chief hours and are to be celebrated as such."⁷ The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, moreover, speaks of the Office as the property of the whole church laity and clergy.⁸ Recent Roman Catholic

reforms of the Office, however, have struck an uncertain balance between a monastic and a congregational Office.

THE SANCTIFICATION OF TIME

These venerable but often ignored forms of prayer go to the heart of Christianity and help teach the church the meaning and the practice of prayer, not only by supplying words and forms, but by investing the hours of morning and evening with devotional significance, teaching of sunset and dawn, recollection and resurrection. The Office sanctifies or redeems time by transforming our experience of it. "In the celebration of the Office, our time, fraught as it is with absurdities and frustrations, is revealed as a time of redemption and restored as a time of communion with God."⁹ The Office as "the sacrament of time" strips away the veil that conceals the importance of time and reveals an unsuspected depth of association and meaning. Time becomes alive and we become a part of it.

Appointed times of prayer, therefore, are not to be understood as isolated periods of devotion, as if only those times are sanctified when we are praying. Rather, times of prayer are parts of life in which our entire vocation and service are intensified and seen in a larger context.

One obvious and important value of the daily prayer of the church is to provide for the regular and orderly reading of the Bible. The systematic and inclusive reading, thus done in the context of devotion, encourages the participant to be receptive to the message of the Word of God in its fullness.

Beyond this, the goal of the Office is to invest each part of the day with symbolic importance and to suggest its value for devotional meditation. The Divine Office thus creates an atmosphere of praise and reflection, and it opens to the participant new dimensions of existence which may not otherwise be apparent. The whole church on earth participates in the service of praise. In the course of the rotation of the earth,

While earth rolls onward into light . . .
The voice of prayer is never silent
Nor dies the strain of praise away.¹⁰

New congregations of God's people take up the unending song when others find their day's work done. So prayer goes on around the world in an unbroken cycle of praise.

There are yet further dimensions of regular daily prayer. As Rabbi Heschel teaches:

We never pray as individuals, set apart from the rest of the world. . . . Every act of praise is an act of participating in an eternal service, in the service of all souls of all ages. Every act of adoration is done in union with all history, and with all beings above and below. . . .¹¹

The act of prayer is a sacramental activity, as God, who works in history, is present and active in the gathered church. Prayer is not merely the remembrance of God by individuals or by an assembly. Nor is it simply their address to the Father. It is the occasion and opportunity for God to be present with his gifts as the church participates in the prayer of Christ.

The participant in the Office is enabled to see how the day and the night share in the ceaseless praise of God which is rendered by all creation and may perhaps catch a glimpse of the total harmony which the universe will embody at the consummation when all creation reaches its fulfillment in the praise of God. So, properly understood, a traditional description of the Divine Office as the “work of God” is not an exaggeration. The hours of the Office each culminate in the praying of the Lord’s Prayer, and that custom suggests that the Office is part of the larger prayer of Christ the High Priest which he addresses continually to the Father. The Divine Office is, therefore, a way of maintaining the unity between the praise which the church renders on earth and the unending song of heaven. It is further a way of joining the present praise in heaven and on earth with a sign of the fullness of the praise of all creation.¹²

The Eucharist and the Office are together parts of a whole liturgy that enables those who share in these services to have an effective part in the work of Christ by receiving gifts and offering praise. The presence of Christ, which is the gift of the Holy Communion, is continued and expounded and enjoyed in the words, gestures, and songs of the Divine Office.

Traditionally, Vespers marked the beginning of a festival, following the Jewish practice of considering sunset as both the end and the beginning of a day.¹³ The view is worth preserving still. For, while the evening has been considered a time of recollection as the day ends (although Compline, not Vespers, is the going-to-bed prayer of the church), in modern times the alternation of day and night as work and rest is no longer as strong as it once was. The evening is considered by many as the beginning of real living when work is done and when people are free to do what they enjoy. Moreover, many people work at night, and while evening brings rest to some, it brings work to others.

Vespers, therefore, becomes the key to an understanding of the whole

Office, and it should be seen as the beginning as well as the end of the daily cycle. (Compline is a more private and additional time of prayer.) Thus night serves as the preparation for the following day. If on the other hand, the day is understood to begin in the morning with Matins, it naturally follows that the day ends in the evening with Vespers (or with Compline), and so night falls out of the pattern altogether. The purpose of the Office, however, is to enclose all of the hours of the day and night in a round of praise, and taking Vespers as the beginning, leading to Morning Praise and the day's work, helps make this clear. So rest and relaxation are preparatory to work, as Sunday is preparatory to the week's work. Vespers as the beginning also has meaning for those who must go to work at night.

Understanding darkness as the beginning of the light is, moreover, a way of recalling the creation, when light came into the darkness, and the resurrection, when life came forth from death. The Great Sabbath of Holy Saturday, following the crucifixion, was the end of the week but it was also the preparation for the Eighth Day, the beginning of the new creation. Thus Matins (Morning Prayer) celebrates the new life that has been brought by the hours of darkness with which the cycle began. The end of the cycle (insofar as it can be said to have an end) is not darkness but the full light of day. The Office, then, like all of the liturgy, has finally an eschatological emphasis.

The basic theme of the Office is light. In the evening as night comes on, the church watches for signs of the parousia opening the New Day. In the morning, Matins is the culmination of the night of vigil as the light returns and the resurrection is proclaimed. The Easter Vigil is thus the prototype not only of the Office for every Sunday, but of the Office for every day of the year. So a thanksgiving for light begins Vespers and an act of praise for the resurrection may conclude Morning Prayer.

TOWARD A WIDER USE OF DAILY PRAYER

The core of the Office is the praise of God in psalms and hymns, the proclamation of the Word of God in scriptural readings, and (especially in the evening) intercessory prayer. The structure and form of the Office are simple and relatively fixed. This basically unchanging pattern should enable people to use the daily prayer of the church as the basis for their daily "private devotion"—which is not really private at all, even though it is prayed alone. When all the people of God can be taught to pray according to the same basic outline they will also be

taught that they pray not only individually but with the whole church on earth and in heaven.

When Christian people order their devotional life according to the ancient pattern developed through centuries of trial, experiment, and testing, they are, in effect, taking an advanced course in biblical and systematic theology taught by the masters of the Christian tradition. They are having their spirits stretched by some of the greatest minds of Christendom as they take their place in the earthly choir which joins the celestial praise of the citizens of heaven. These two purposes—praise and edification—are blended in that “work of God” which builds up the body of Christ.

This need not, however, require people to use an elaborate form of prayer each day. Following the daily lectionary (perhaps only one of the three appointed lessons) and a few traditional texts is all that is required. Just as the Lord’s Prayer has by its constant use become part of Christian thinking and being, so in the use of the Office people should be encouraged to learn a few basic acts of praise and devotion (such as the Magnificat and the Benedictus, singing with Mary and Zechariah, with the church and with Israel). These canticles, used daily, can become a part of people’s thinking and praying and so their life in Christ will be enriched. A few texts well known thus become part of the individual and reveal new meanings through constant and repeated use.

No form of words and actions can by itself give life to Christian worship and devotion. The noblest forms must be supported by personal prayer and by an intimate relationship with the word of God. It is hoped, therefore, that the use of these forms of daily prayer will be encouraged as a basis for daily “private” prayer, so that congregational prayer will be a flowering of what is done daily in private. When Christians gather, they can pray together—enriched by song and ceremony—what they, when scattered, would do alone or in families. So the individual prayer and the public prayer of the church will nourish each other.

Encouraging the use of daily prayer by the congregation, moreover, can establish a solid base of devotion on which the renewal and revitalization of the church can be built. As new forms of worship are introduced and mastered, the life of the church will not be enriched without a solid foundation of deepening devotion. And this cannot be established and maintained only by Sunday worship in the congregation. The intimate relationship between the Sunday Eucharist and the daily prayer of the church needs to be explored, experienced, and encouraged. Pastors must

lead the way by becoming increasingly people of prayer and by shaping their prayer life on tested traditional models. It needs to become known that the pastor follows a plan of daily prayer. If pastors do not do this, they cannot ask anyone else to do it. But if they are willing to discipline themselves, they are in a position to ask others to join them in the daily round. It requires patience and persistence and a regularly renewed intention.

The *Lutheran Book of Worship* understands the Office as capable of being done on several levels. The basic form is the congregational level for groups of Christians. Families and individuals are encouraged to use a simple form of the Office. An augmented form is suggested for festive congregational use. Thus the congregational form can be dressed up for festivals with the addition of certain elements (additional psalms and canticles, responses, music) and can be dressed down for family and private use by paring the Office to its essential elements. This plan may be illustrated by the following tables:

EVENING PRAYER

HOUSEHOLD	CONGREGATION	FESTIVALS
Lucernarium verses	Lucernarium verses	Lucernarium verses
	“Joyous light of Glory”	“Joyous light of Glory”
	Thanksgiving for light (brief)	Thanksgiving for light (extended)
Psalm 141	Psalm 141	Psalm 141 (with incense)
	Psalm	Psalms
		N.T. Canticle
	The Hymn	The Hymn
Reading	Readings	Readings
		Response
Magnificat	Magnificat	Magnificat
	Litany	Litany
Our Father	Our Father	Our Father
Blessing	Blessing	Blessing

MORNING PRAYER

HOUSEHOLD	CONGREGATION	FESTIVALS
Verses	Verses	Verses
	Invitatory	Invitatory
Psalm 95	Psalm 95	Psalm 95
	Psalm	Psalm
		O.T. Canticle
		Psalm
	The Hymn	The Hymn
Reading	Readings	Readings
		Response
Benedictus	Benedictus	Benedictus
	Prayers	Prayers
Our Father	Our Father	Our Father
		Paschal Blessing
Blessing	Blessing	Blessing

In the household form, the structure is exactly the same in the morning and in the evening: verses, fixed Psalm, a reading, the Gospel Canticle, the Lord's Prayer, the benediction. The line between these forms and levels is not firmly fixed, and users of the Office are free to move to elements of another level as is appropriate. Thus the daily prayer of the church can serve all of the people of God—clergy and laity—in public and in private.

PRAYING THE OFFICE

The services of daily prayer do not center around the altar. The focus is interior and meditative. They are therefore not limited to use in a church building, and the daily prayer of the church exists in households and in personal prayer as well as in public assemblies.

The services of daily prayer do not require a pastor to lead them, and it is

appropriate for congregations that desire to introduce daily prayer in the church (perhaps beginning for a season such as Lent or Easter) to arrange for lay leadership much of the time.

The primary relationship of the daily prayer of the church is to the hours of the day, sunset and sunrise. The progress of the church year does influence the daily services, but this emphasis remains secondary to the cycle of the day. Seasonal propers are provided for festival use and for the use of those groups which use the services daily.

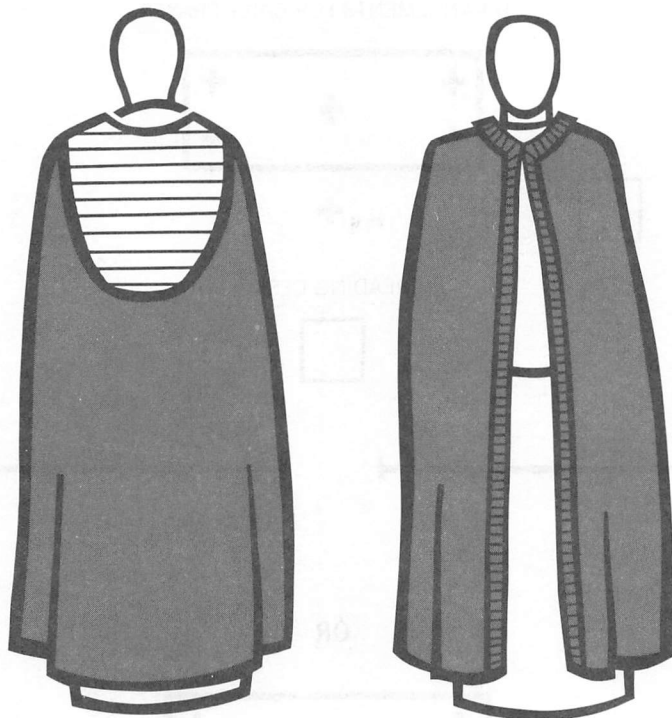
On some occasions, such as retreats, a full observance of the traditional hours of prayer may be desired. At these times, Morning Prayer would be prayed at the beginning of the day; Responsive Prayer 1 at mid-morning (about 9 a.m.); Responsive Prayer 2 at noon; Responsive Prayer 2 or the Litany at mid-afternoon (about 3 p.m.); Evening Prayer at sunset; Compline at the close of the day just before going to bed.

On Sundays and festivals the Office may be prayed in its augmented form. That is accomplished by employing the full range of options (two psalms with antiphons, a canticle, several readings, a response to the readings, extended prayers). The augmented form may also include more involved ceremony and musical settings, incense, the use of a cope, the traditional vestment for festive daily services. The cope, an elaborate cape, usually is made in the color of the season (although sometimes it is made in a neutral shade), with at least a vestigial hood. It is worn by the principal leaders of the service, whether ordained or not. It is worn over the alb or surplice. The stole is not worn for daily prayer (unless there is a sermon).

Since readings from the Scriptures form a major part of the services of daily prayer, when the services are celebrated in the church, especially on festive occasions, a focal point may be created by placing tall, free-standing candlesticks on either side of a lectern or reading desk (as in the Service of the Word). The lectern may be set in the middle of the chancel for these services. When the chairs of the congregation are movable, they may be arranged in rows facing each other across a center aisle. (Diagrams, pages 274-275.)

EVENING PRAYER (VESPERS)

The themes of Evening Prayer are light, repentance and recollection, quiet waiting for the Lord, meditation on the Scriptures, praise and thanksgiving, and intercessory prayer.

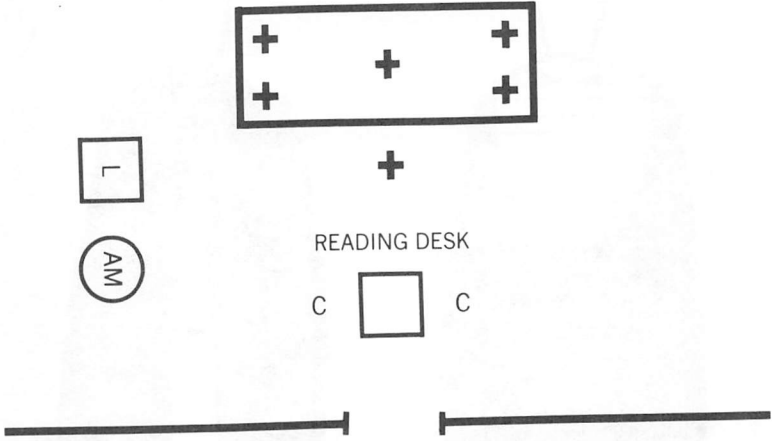


THE COPE

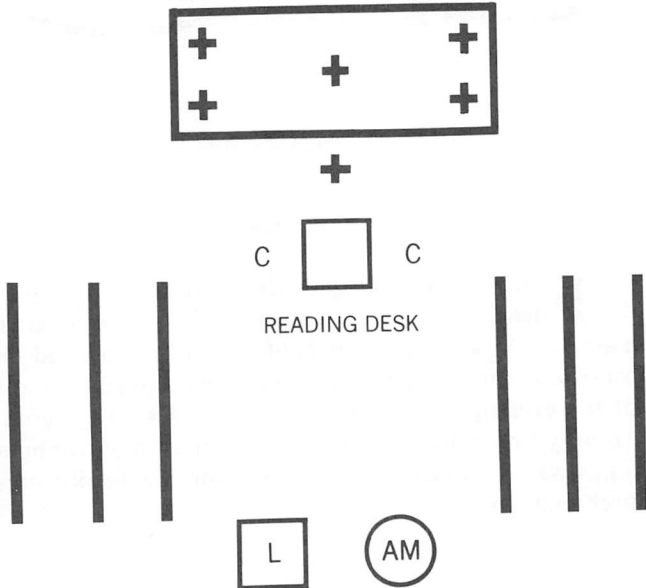
EVENING PRAYER: SERVICE OF LIGHT

From the beginning of the human race, people kindled lights as darkness approached. It was never a merely utilitarian act, for the ancient symbols of darkness, light, and fire called forth a host of associations and suggestions. Jewish practice continues the blessing of the evening light, especially as the Sabbath begins. As the Christian liturgy began to develop, the utilitarian and symbolic act of lighting lamps was continued,¹⁴ being taken from the family dinner table to the church building.

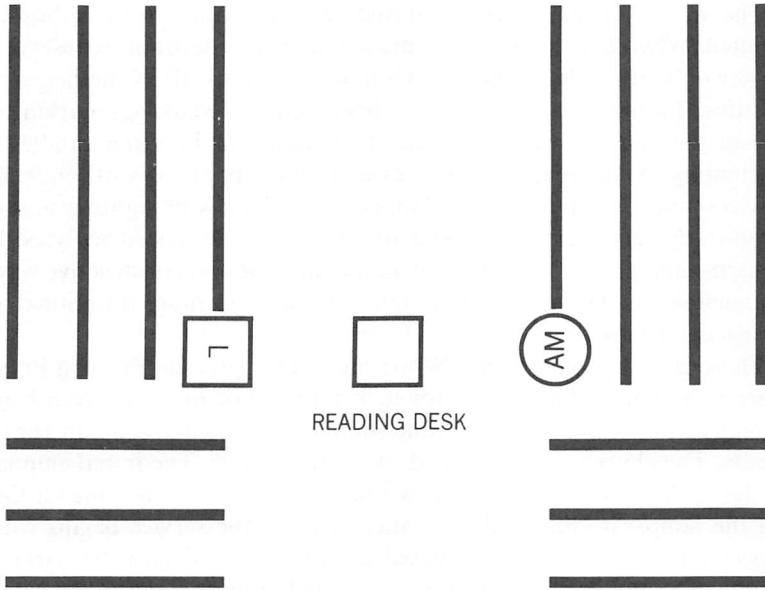
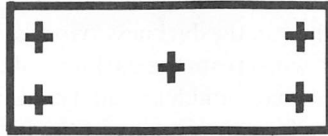
ARRANGEMENTS FOR DAILY PRAYER



OR



OR



A service of light, called the *Lucernarium* (pronounced Loo-chair-NAR-ee-um) is the core of Vespers in the Eastern Orthodox churches, and it was for a long time used in cathedrals and parish churches in the West, principally on Saturday evenings, to mark the beginning of Sunday¹⁵ and the eves of feasts.¹⁶ Although in the West, daily prayer became increasingly monastic and less tied to the hours of the day, the service of light was preserved once a year in the Easter Vigil in the elaborate blessing of the Paschal candle, and there is evidence that the blessing of candles has continued in some places throughout Christian history. The use of the Advent wreath is a conspicuous example.

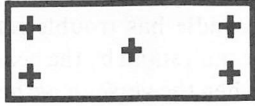
The heart of the Christian gospel is the death and resurrection of Christ, which is celebrated every Sunday. The service of light is a dramatic portrayal of creation, when in the darkness "God said, 'Let there be light,'" and of the new creation, when from the darkness of death God called forth his Son. The darkness of chaos and fear and defeat, while strong and ever-threatening, is driven back by the coming of the light. The lighting of the lamps is a re-enactment of creation and also of the resurrection. Thus death and resurrection are brought together by the powerful symbols of darkness and light.

The service of light is optional and may, according to the rubrics, be omitted. When Evening Prayer is prayed daily, it is desirable to reserve the service of light for the beginning of Sundays and festivals. Nonetheless, it is a fitting, impressive, and evocative beginning of Evensong, marking the end of the day and the beginning of the morrow. Fire and candles are fascinating to congregations, as is evident in the popularity of candlelight services and the often overly-elaborate ceremonies of lighting and extinguishing the candles before and after the service by vested acolytes. The Lucernarium gives a congregation a more historic and constructive way of channeling this fascination with light and fire into more traditional and instructive paths.

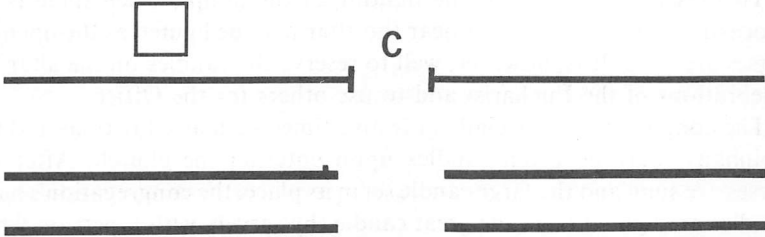
There is no opening hymn. While music may precede Evening Prayer, there is no compelling reason for it. If a recital of music is given before Evening Prayer, an interval of time should be allowed to separate the two events. The church should be as dark as practicable. The initial emphasis on Jesus Christ as the light of the world, connected with the time for lighting the lamps, is enhanced dramatically when the service begins with a procession in which a large lighted candle is carried into the darkened church. The candle should be the size of the Paschal Candle (although the Paschal Candle should not be used for the service of light so that the symbolism is not confused). A stand should be prepared for it in the center of the chancel or in the center of the assembly. (Diagrams, next page.)

The candle is the principal focus of attention in Evening Prayer for it represents Christ. At the entrance procession the processional cross is not used. The assisting minister who carries the candle goes first, followed by the leader of the service. The verses are sung by the one who bears the candle to underscore the relationship between the candle, which is the light of the church, and Christ, the light of the world. The verses are properly sung during the procession: "Jesus Christ is the light of the world; *the light no darkness can overcome*¹⁷ when the procession enters the church; "Stay

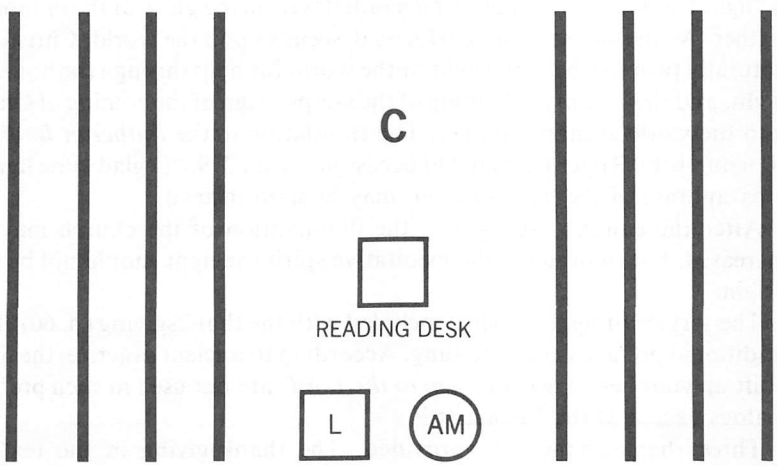
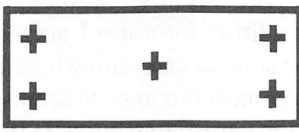
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LUCERNARIUM



READING DESK



OR



with us, Lord, for it is evening; *and the day is almost over*"¹⁸ when the procession is half-way to its destination; "Let your light scatter the darkness, *and illumine your church*"¹⁹ when the candle is set in its stand. If the one who carries the candle has trouble remembering the verses, the verses may be sung at the candlestand by the bearer of the candle, who faces the congregation. Then, when the verses have been sung, the candle is set in the stand. The appropriate seasonal verses (Ministers Edition, pp. 92-95) may replace these general verses, especially when the augmented form of the service is used. But the general verses are appropriate at any time.

To preserve the spirit of the lighting of the lamps, when there is no procession, the candles on or near the altar may be lighted as the opening verses are sung. It is, however, well to reserve the candles on the altar for celebrations of the Eucharist and to use others for the Office.

The congregation, especially at festive times such as Christmas and the Epiphany, may be given candles upon entering the church. After the verses are sung and the large candle set in its place, the congregation's hand candles are lighted from the great candle (by servers with tapers or, when the congregation is small, by each person in turn from the large candle). Other candles in the church are also lighted at this time.

While the light spreads through the church, the ancient Greek hymn *phos hilaron*, "Joyous light of glory," is sung. This is the oldest extant hymn provided in the tradition for use at Lucernarium and has continued down the centuries to be sung as an evening hymn.²⁰ St. Basil the Great (c. 330-379) spoke of the singing of this ancient anonymous hymn as one of the cherished traditions of the Christian Church.²¹ It is a hymn to Christ, who is "light from light," the light which radiates from the glory of the immortal Father. As the sun sets and darkness descends upon the world, Christians naturally turn to Christ the light of the world for help through the hours of night, and they see in the lighting of the lamps a sign of the coming of Christ into the world from the Father. The translation in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* is by Roger Petrich. On occasion, hymn 279, "O gladsome light," a paraphrase of the *phos hilaron*, may be used instead.

After the candles are lighted, the illumination of the church may be increased, but to preserve the meditative spirit the light should not be too bright.

The service of light is then concluded with the thanksgiving (p. 60). The traditional preface verses are sung. According to ancient practice, the lines "Lift up your hearts; *we lift them to the Lord*" are not used in such preface dialogs except at the Eucharist.²²

Three thanksgivings are provided. The thanksgiving in the text of

Evening Prayer is a modern creation, adapted from *Morning Praise and Evensong*.²³ It is cast in the form of the Jewish *Berekah* which thanks God for his goodness. The first alternate prayer (Thanksgiving for Light I, p. 95) is from the *Apostolic Constitutions* (ca. 380); the second alternate prayer (Thanksgiving for Light II) is from the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus (ca. 215). The translation of both is from *Morning Praise and Evensong* (pp. 2, 26), and music may be found in that book for both of these prayers. Leaders should be encouraged to use each of these forms of thanksgiving from time to time to preserve the ancient forms and to expand the congregation's motives for thanksgiving.

EVENING PRAYER: PSALMODY

When the service of Light is omitted, Evening Prayer begins directly with the Psalmody.

The use of a Psalm at this point in Evening Prayer is rooted in the long tradition of the church's prayer as a means of expressing the motif of reflection and repentance. Psalm 141 is the traditional evening psalm. In Evening Prayer certain verses have been omitted as too imprecatory for modern sensitivities. A chant setting of Psalm 141 is at Canticle 5 (p. 449). Other musical settings, even those which use other versions of the text, may be used instead. Choral versions of the text may be substituted occasionally.

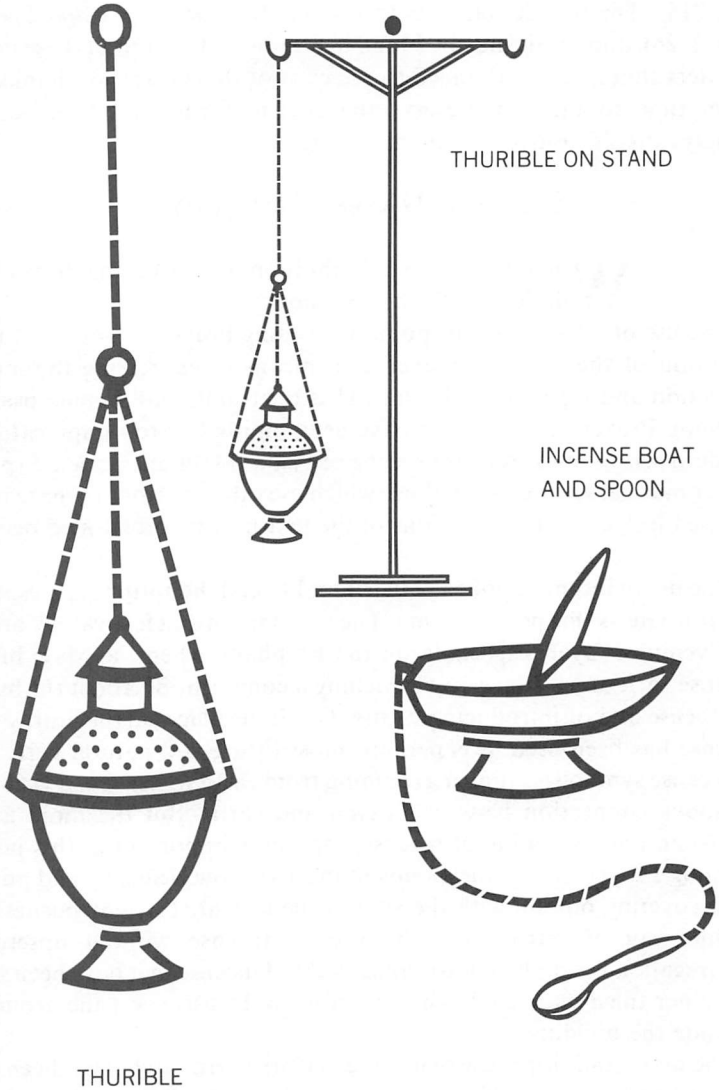
The use of incense, spoken of in Psalm 141 and the antiphon, is especially appropriate as this psalm is sung. The use of incense at festival celebrations of Evening Prayer (especially on the Epiphany when the Magi brought incense to Jesus) is one way of teaching a congregation about the burning of incense and of introducing its use. Of all the places in the liturgy where incense has been used, it is perhaps most fitting and natural here.

Incense symbolizes prayer ascending from earth to heaven, a visible and sensuous connection between heaven and earth. But the more ancient Christian understanding of incense, especially important at this point in Evening Prayer, is that the clouds of incense show cleansing and purification, covering our sin with the sweet robe of Christ's righteousness.

One way of introducing the use of incense without upsetting a congregation is simply to burn some sticks of incense that have been set in a container filled with sand. The action is unobtrusive, yet the aroma will pervade the building.

The more traditional use of incense in Christian churches has been to put one or two pieces of self-starting charcoal in a thurible and light them in

advance of the service so that the coal is red-hot. At the time of the incensation, when Psalm 141 is begun, some grains of incense from the incense boat are sprinkled on the charcoal. To keep the coals burning, the thurible must be kept swinging lightly, except when more incense is being added.



Traditionally the incensation is done by the leader, but an assisting minister might perform the function. The minister holds the end of the chain in the left hand and grasps the chain about twelve inches above the thurible with the right hand. The minister first honors the candle with incense, swinging the thurible toward it several times (three is the traditional number). Then the Bible on the lectern and the altar are honored with incense as the minister walks around them swinging the thurible toward them. The other ministers and the congregation are also honored, the minister bowing to them and they to the minister before and after the thurible is swung in their direction.

When the incensation is finished, the thurible may be hung from a bracket on the wall or on a stand made for that purpose.

Each Psalm in Evening Prayer is treated in the same way—the Psalm is sung; it is followed by silence, after which the appropriate psalm prayer is said. The effective use of this procedure is the key to the intelligent use of the Office. It is designed to give the Psalms meaning so that they will in fact be the heart of the Office. The Psalms in Morning and Evening Prayer are not so much hymns of praise as they are the basis for meditation and devotional reflection upon their meaning. The silence gives time to do that. The silence therefore must be *long* and must never be omitted. (If time is short, one should choose a short Psalm and shorten the reading to a few verses, but the silences are essential to these services and must be given their due attention.) The worshipers must not be deprived of this time to open themselves to the voice of the Lord and to appropriate the message and make it their own. Several minutes of silence are intended and indeed are necessary for this to happen. The leader must not be made nervous by the restlessness of the congregation (which is to be expected until the congregation becomes familiar with the use of silence) and rush on to the prayer. The leader must wait for the restlessness to subside and then consider that the useful silence has just then begun. When a congregation becomes accustomed to using silence in worship, the silence will be understood not only as a time of intense private devotion but as a corporate act which all can use together. In silence can be found a reservoir of great spiritual strength. It takes work and instruction and patience. But it is absolutely necessary to persist.

When the leader senses that the silence should come to an end (practiced congregations come to know almost instinctively how long the silence should last), the psalm prayer, printed following each Psalm, is said. "Let us pray" is printed in the text of the service mostly to show that it is the leader who says the prayer, and "let us pray" need not be said. These

prayers draw out the Christian implications of the Psalm. The Gloria Patri is therefore unnecessary and is omitted.

When the Psalm is sung, it is appropriate to intone the psalm prayer, especially on festive occasions. (Instructions for intoning prayers are given on pages 18-20 of the Ministers Edition and above, pages 215-217.)

When the augmented form of the service is used, a New Testament canticle from the Epistles or Revelation (see canticles 13, 17, 20, 21) and a third Psalm are sung. A psalm prayer is not used with the canticles. Variation in the method of singing the psalms and canticles is recommended.

Psalms for daily prayer are arranged in seasonal tables (Ministers Edition, p. 96), except for those appointed for the calendar days from December 24 through January 6. The four general tables are used, beginning with January 7 throughout the remainder of the Epiphany season and beginning with Monday in Whitsun week throughout the season after Pentecost.

Especially when incense is used with Psalm 141, the congregation should stand for that Psalm while the church is honored with incense. Then the people sit for the rest of the Psalmody, the silence, and psalm prayers. Sitting during the Psalms is more conducive to meditation than standing, especially when more than one Psalm is used.

The Office Hymn, (from the Latin *officium*, service) is sung following the Psalms. It is the principal hymn of the service, comparable to the Hymn of the Day in the Eucharist. It should reflect the time of the day and be in harmony with the season of the year. The traditional office hymns for weekdays dealt with the several acts of creation. The Ministers Edition of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* provides a list of traditional office hymns (pp. 499-500).

The Psalmody section thus moves from the Old Testament Psalms to a New Testament canticle, to a post-biblical song.

EVENING PRAYER: THE LESSON

The Daily Lectionary (Ministers Edition, pp. 97-104) is a slight revision of the lectionary in the *Proposed Book of Common Prayer*. Thus the Lutheran Church and the Episcopal Church are in harmony not only with the lectionary for the Eucharist (although in the time after Pentecost there are dislocations) but in the daily readings as well.²⁴ Year One begins with the First Sunday in Advent preceding odd-

numbered years; Year Two begins with the First Sunday in Advent preceding even-numbered years.

The heart of daily prayer is praise, not the reading of Scripture, but nonetheless the reading of the Bible in regular order has long been a feature of daily prayer, especially in the morning. The Daily Lectionary provides three readings for each day, but all three are not to be read at one service (unless it is a Eucharist). Normally two lessons are read in the morning and one in the evening. If two readings are desired in the morning and also in the evening, in the evening the Old Testament reading for the alternate year may be used. When more than one reading is used, the first lesson should be from the Old Testament. When a festival or commemoration interrupts the sequence of readings, they may be reordered by lengthening, combining, or omitting some of them to secure continuity or to avoid repetition.

Selections from the Old Testament are provided as alternates to those readings drawn from the Apocrypha. (This is useful when a Bible is used which does not contain the Apocrypha.) The reading of the selections from the Apocrypha should be encouraged, however. Luther placed the Apocrypha between the Old and New Testaments, regarding those books as instructive to read but not on a par with canonical Scripture for purposes of doctrine. On the basis of the Confessions, theology, and history, the use of the Apocrypha is not excluded for Lutherans. Reading these few selections in the Daily Lectionary each year is a useful way of introducing congregations to these books and of expanding their knowledge of Scripture.

All the members of the church should be encouraged to use the Daily Lectionary in their family and private devotion. It provides a comprehensive reading of the important passages of Scripture and gives a unity to the reading. Thus when people come to church for daily prayer, they will hear in public what they would read that day at home, and the sense of community would be fostered.

Each reading is followed by silence. Again, this silence should be extended to provide time for meditation and reflection.

An additional reading from a non-biblical source, from an ancient or modern devotional work, may also be read following the Scripture lesson. Especially on saints' days a reading from the writing by or about that saint commemorated is appropriate and instructive.

Occasionally, when no sermon is preached, a brief exposition (two to three minutes) may accompany the readings, following the silence.

The silence after each reading may be followed by a response—one of the seasonal canticles (7-12) or, although these are traditionally part of Morn-

ing Prayer, a responsory (cf. e.g. *Worship Supplement*, pp. 95-99), or such other responses as dance or an instrumental piece. Whatever form it takes, the response should draw attention to the reading and not to itself.

After the final reading and the silence (and response), the verse drawn from Hebrews 1:1-2a is said by the leader and the congregation.

EVENING PRAYER: GOSPEL CANTICLE

Three items of biblical song are included in the fullest form of Evening Prayer—Psalms, a New Testament Canticle from the Epistles or Revelation, and the Gospel Canticle. Thus the traditional arrangement of the readings in the Eucharist is reflected in the psalmody of Evening Prayer: first the Old Testament, then the Apostle, and finally the proclamation of the Gospel.

The use of the Magnificat is practically universal in the evening Office at least in the churches of the West. The Song of Mary becomes the song of the church as the darkness deepens and the lamps are lit and as Mary, who represents the church, waits quietly for the fulfillment of the word of promise. Her song of revolutionary import should be learned and pondered by all the people of God as one of the essential items of devotion, along with such traditional forms as the Lord's Prayer. Daily use in public and in private makes this song a part of those who use it.

A chant setting of Magnificat is at Canticle 6. Seasonal antiphons (Ministers Edition pp. 92-95) for the Gospel Canticle may be used with it, especially for the days before Christmas when the splendid jewels of liturgical prayer—the "O Antiphons"—are appointed²⁵. Those antiphons, the basis for the Advent hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel," make good Advent prayers by themselves as well as in conjunction with the Magnificat.

Hymn 180, "My soul now magnifies the Lord," a paraphrase of the Magnificat, may on occasion be used instead of the biblical song, but regular substitution of a hymn version is not desirable. Occasional use of choral settings is also appropriate; they need not employ the same version of the text.

The Lutheran Hymnal and the *Service Book and Hymnal*, following earlier books, allowed either the Magnificat or the Nunc Dimittis as the Gospel Canticle in Vespers. (Unfortunately, since the Nunc Dimittis was better known because of its use in the Holy Communion it was often chosen, and many congregations never learned the Magnificat.) Now that Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline), is provided in the *Lutheran*

Book of Worship, the Nunc Dimittis, the Gospel Canticle for the Prayer at the Close of the Day, is reserved for that hour and is not used in Evening Prayer.

EVENING PRAYER: INTERCESSIONS

The text of the Eastern Litany, the deacon's "Litany of Peace," is a conflation originally made by Brian Helge of the "litany of peace" and the ecumenic litany in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.²⁶ In a greatly abbreviated form, the Litany of Peace was introduced to the Lutheran Church in the *Service Book and Hymnal* and proved remarkably popular.

Two musical forms for chanting the prayer are provided (p. 65). The alternate form in the example boxed on the right side of the page may be used throughout this litany. The congregation should be encouraged to sing it in parts and should begin its response, "Lord . . .," simultaneously with the ending of the leader's bid, ". . . Lord," so that the two overlap. The people should sustain the last note of their response during the singing of the next bid by the leader.

The Christian names of church and district/synod presidents should be used in the fifth paragraph.

In Lent, to avoid the use of "Alleluia," the response to the line "For the faithful who have gone before us and are at rest, let us give thanks to the Lord," may be "To you, O Lord."

The silence after the line "Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord," is a bridge between the prayers and the commendation which follows. The congregation should silently offer its own prayers, petitions, and intercessions during this silence, but spoken congregational prayers at this point interrupt the spirit of the litany.

Especially on feast days, the commendation could be expanded to include the names of the saint remembered on that day, the person for whom the church is named, and other principal saints of the church as well: "Rejoicing in the fellowship of St. Luke, of Peter and Paul, of John the Baptist, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our Lord."

Other forms of prayer may be used instead of the Eastern Litany. The classical Western Litany (p. 86) may be used, especially during Advent and Lent, since it is more penitential. Responsive Prayer 2 (p. 82) or a series of collects or prayers from the congregation may be used instead. The

intercessory nature of the prayers should not be lost sight of, whatever form is used.

The intercessions are then concluded with the prayer for peace. This fifth-century prayer has been treasured by the church and since the middle of the nineteenth century has become traditional in Lutheran forms of Vespers.

Evening Prayer culminates in the praying of the Our Father. The introduction to the Lord's Prayer is based on a line in the "Great Entrance" in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom²⁷ and ultimately on Luke 23:42 and 11:1.

The services of morning and evening prayer are services of praise and prayer and were not designed to include preaching. A sermon, therefore, inserted into the order following the readings destroys the integrity, purpose, and flow of the quiet services. The purpose is not proclamation but meditation and prayer. For occasions when it is desired to keep the readings and a sermon in close association, the Service of the Word should be used. Nonetheless, there are occasions (such as Sunday morning or midweek in Lent) when a sermon is desired at Morning or Evening Prayer, and the rubrics provide a way of adding both an offering and a sermon to Morning and Evening Prayer. Thus the office retains its integrity and its basic spirit, and a sermon is provided for.

After the sermon, one of three prayers is said. The first prayer ("Almighty God, grant to your church") is the collect for the church from "The Order of Morning Service without Communion" from *The Lutheran Hymnal*²⁸ The second prayer ("Lord God, you have called your servants") is from Eric Milner-White, *Daily Prayer* and is in the *Service Book and Hymnal* as collect 96.²⁹ The third prayer ("Lord, we thank you") is the closing prayer from the *Lutheran Hymnary* of the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC).³⁰

When a layperson leads the service and preaches, the blessing (13) should be used after the sermon and prayer: "The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us."

PRAYER AT THE CLOSE OF THE DAY (COMPLINE)

This service is designed to bring the day to a quiet close. The form is relatively fixed and unchanging. The unadorned traditional Gregorian melodies provided for Prayer at the Close of the Day reflect the spirit of the hour and should be sung without elaboration or embellishment. It is contrary to the spirit of this service to have processions

and other festive ceremonies. All that is done should convey the spirit of serenity. The leader may vest in alb or surplice (without stole, without cope) or may simply wear street clothing. Assisting ministers are unnecessary in this service; one leader (ordained or not) is sufficient.

COMPLINE: CONFESSION

The opening verse draws a parallel between sleep at night and sleep in death (and is echoed in the second prayer at the end of the service). Yet, in the face of the dying of the day and of human life, the note of praise is sounded in the next verses.

The hymn (2) is a night hymn and is to be distinguished from the principal hymn which follows the lesson and the responsory. This night hymn is parallel to the Venite in Morning Prayer and to “Joyous light of Glory” in Vespers. Accompaniment should be simple and may be omitted altogether.

The congregation kneels for confession. Silence for self-examination is kept. If self-examination is indeed to be made, the silence must be more than a brief pause.

Two forms of confession are provided. In the simple form the leader and the congregation make their confession together, and then the leader stands and indicates God’s forgiveness in Christ. The other form is the historic, reciprocal form, which is interesting and instructive, showing the “priesthood of all believers.” It is the only time in the liturgy that the leader makes confession before the people, who then declare God’s forgiveness. The congregation then makes confession and the leader announces God’s forgiveness to them. This form of the confession is especially appropriate in penitential seasons.

COMPLINE: PSALMODY

The people sit for the Psalms. The traditional Compline Psalms are 4, 91, and 134. Other appropriate psalms are also suggested by the rubric on page 72 of the Ministers Edition. Each Psalm is sung or said, and silence follows to provide time for meditation. The silence should be extended, and the whole pace of the service should be unhurried. After the silence, the leader says the appropriate psalm prayer, printed following the psalm. When the psalm is sung, it is appropriate, especially at festivals, to intone the prayer. Canticles are not used at this point in this service.

COMPLINE: BRIEF LESSON

Prayer at the Close of the Day has not been the occasion for long readings from the Scriptures. The brief lessons (sometimes called “the little chapter”) serve as concise statements of the spirit of the service and the close of the day.

The traditional reading is from Jeremiah. The reading from I Peter is often associated with the beginning of Compline. Usually one lesson is sufficient. It is a useful change from the longer readings at other services. The lesson should be read slowly and deliberately. A brief silence should follow to allow time for the words of Scripture to take hold of the congregation, but this silence is not comparable to that which follows the reading at Morning and Evening Prayer.

A sermon, homily, or exposition of the reading(s) is not desirable at this service. It is even less a service of proclamation than the other offices are. It is rather the occasion for quiet meditation and praise.

The Responsory is sung (or said) after the reading. The ancient form of the Responsory is preserved in text and music.

COMPLINE: THE HYMN

This hymn is the Office Hymn, the principal hymn of the service.³¹ It should reflect the time of day and perhaps the season of the year. It may be sung without accompaniment. The list of traditional Office Hymns in the Ministers Edition of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (pp. 499-500) is helpful in selecting this hymn. The hymn is sung standing.

COMPLINE: THE PRAYERS

The congregation kneels for the prayers. The verses are from Psalm 17 (17:1, 8, 15); the central pair of verses—“Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings”—are traditional for Compline.

The first prayer (“Be present, merciful God”) is an adaptation of a prayer in the *Proposed Book of Common Prayer*. The second prayer (“O Lord support us all the day long”) is by John Henry Newman.³² The third prayer (“Be our light in the darkness”) is from the *Proposed Book of Common Prayer*.³³ The fourth prayer (“Visit our dwellings, O Lord”) is the

traditional prayer of Compline. The fifth prayer (“Eternal God, the hours of both day and night are yours”), which recognizes that while many go to sleep at the close of the day, others must wake and work, is based on a prayer from the Episcopal *Authorized Services*.³⁴ The sixth prayer (“Gracious Lord, we give you thanks for the day”) is by Edward Roe. The Our Father concludes the prayers.

The substitution of another form of prayers in this service is not desirable for that would disturb the basically unchanging text that by its simplicity and repetition endears itself to those who pray it.

COMPLINE: GOSPEL CANTICLE

The traditional Gospel Canticle for Compline is the *Nunc Dimittis*, the Song of Simeon. Simeon had watched long for the coming of Christ and at last held the Savior in his arms and knew that the old promises had now been fulfilled. This canticle, unlike the canticles in Morning and Evening Prayer, does not follow the reading and precede the prayers. The *Lutheran Book of Worship* and the *Proposed Book of Common Prayer* both have Prayer at the Close of the Day conclude with the singing of the Song of Simeon as the departure song of the people of God. With this song and the *Gloria Patri* their praise is concluded for the day.

The antiphon, “Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace,” itself a splendid prayer of trust, is always used with the Gospel Canticle, even when the service is said rather than sung. The use of seasonal antiphons at this point is not desirable.

Hymn 349, “I leave as you have promised, Lord,” a paraphrase of the *Nunc Dimittis*, may on occasion be used instead. But regular substitution of the hymn version is not desirable. The congregation should be taught to know and love the scriptural song. Occasional use of choral settings which are compatible with the quiet spirit of this service is appropriate; they need not employ the same version of the text.

Even when a pastor leads the service, the form of the benediction need not change: “The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.”

A hymn may follow the benediction, but the quiet dispersal of the congregation is more in the spirit of this service. Two night hymns have already been sung; a third seems redundant. A more spirited hymn is out of place.

MORNING PRAYER (MATINS)

The principal theme of Morning Prayer is the resurrection, shown by the rising sun and the light of the new day. As the spirit of Evening Prayer (Evensong) was quiet recollection, so the spirit of Morning Prayer is praise for the new life which emerges from the darkness of night.

MORNING PRAYER: PSALMODY

Morning Prayer begins with a fixed introductory section of praise. There is no entrance procession. The ministers simply enter and take their places. In order for the first verses,

O Lord, open my lips,

And my mouth shall declare your praise,

to make sense, there must be no opening hymn. Otherwise, the lips and mouth having already been opened in song, it is unnecessary and pointless to pray, "O Lord, open my lips." Nor should there be any prelude. (If there is a prelude, it should be separated from Morning Prayer by an interval of silence). It is most effective if the service begins out of silence, with the prayer that God would inspire the congregation's service of praise. It is especially effective if the participants in the service have said nothing from the time they get up until the opening verses of Morning Prayer are sung. This may be possible on retreats or in the private devotion of families on certain occasions.

The praise which our mouths declare is first the "Lesser Gloria," the Gloria Patri. The first line of this doxology is the more ancient and appears to have been originally, "Glory to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit." But in the fourth century the more familiar form began to be used to oppose those who taught that the Son was subordinate to the Father. The second line developed from the simple response "forever" and became "now and forever" and then (but only in the West) "as it was in the beginning" as a protest against those who denied the pre-existence of the Son.³⁵

The Easter song, Alleluia, is added to the Gloria Patri, except in Lent, as a sign of the resurrection joy which is the theme of Morning Prayer.

The opening verse of Morning Prayer leads beyond the Gloria Patri to the Venite, Psalm 95. "Oh, come, let us sing to the Lord" is always used in the augmented form of the service. A chant setting is at Canticle 4. Alternate seasonal invitatories are provided (Ministers Edition, pp. 92-94),

although the general invitatory (“Give glory to God, our light and our life”) is always appropriate. The invitatory was traditionally sung following each section of the psalm:

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Oh, 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.

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

For the Lord is a great God

and a great king above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth;

the heights of the hills are also his.

The sea is his, for he made it;

and his hands have molded the dry land.

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

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.

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

Amen.

Give glory to God, our light and our life.

Oh, come, let us worship him.

Instead of Psalm 95, Psalm 67 (the most ancient morning psalm), Psalm 24 (a psalm of entrance into the sanctuary), or Psalm 100 (an invitation to praise God) may be sung. An appropriate canticle (7-21), may be used occasionally to replace the Venite. But canticles otherwise appointed for Morning or Evening Prayer—Benedictus, Te Deum, Magnificat—are not appropriate alternatives and should not be chosen. On weekdays a hymn which reflects the theme of resurrection, light, and morning may replace the Venite.³⁶

The congregation then sits and the Psalms are sung. This Psalmody is the variable section of praise. (See the tables, Ministers Edition, p. 96). The Psalms are not only hymns of praise but are also the basis for devotional reflection, and sitting is more conducive to meditation than standing, especially when more than one Psalm is used. Each Psalm is followed by silence, after which the appropriate psalm prayer is said. When the Psalm is sung, it is appropriate to intone the psalm prayer.

When the augmented form of the service is used, an Old Testament canticle (see canticles 14, 15, 18, 19) and a second Psalm are sung. No psalm prayer is used with the canticle. The order is thus: Venite, Psalm, Old Testament Canticle, Psalm. Variation in the method of singing these pieces is recommended.

The congregation stands for the Office Hymn, which is the principal hymn of the service, like the Hymn of the Day in the Eucharist. It should reflect the time of the day and the season of the church year. (See the index, Ministers Edition, pp. 499-500).

MORNING PRAYER: THE LESSONS

The third part of Morning Prayer, after the fixed and the variable sections of praise, is the lessons. Matins was traditionally the office of readings, when extended passages of the Bible (as opposed to one or two verses in other offices) were read. The three readings for each day in the Daily Lectionary may all be used at Morning Prayer or two may be used in the morning and the third reserved for the evening. When more than one reading is used, the first should always be from the Old Testament.

A brief exposition of the readings (two or three minutes maximum) may accompany the readings when no sermon is preached.

Each reading is followed by silence for meditation. After the silence after each lesson or after the silence after the last lesson, a response may follow. This response may be one of the seasonal canticles (canticles 7-12) or a classic responsory (originally a part of Matins, see *Worship Supplement*, pp. 95-99) or any other appropriate response, such as an instrumental piece or dance. Whatever form it takes, the response should draw attention to the reading and not to itself.

After the final lesson and silence (and response), the verse drawn from Hebrews 1:1-2a is said by the leader and the congregation.

MORNING PRAYER: THE GOSPEL CANTICLE

The fourth part of morning prayer, following the two sections of praise and the readings, is the Gospel Canticle. At one time all the songs of St. Luke's gospel found their way into the Office: Magnificat at Vespers, Nunc Dimittis at Compline, Gloria in Excelsis and Benedictus at Lauds (Morning Prayer). Gloria in Excelsis eventually was moved to the entrance rite of the Eucharist, but Benedictus has remained fixed as the Gospel song for the morning. The last lines make it especially appropriate: "the dawn from on high shall break upon us." In this song of Zechariah, the father sings of the fulfillment of God's promise and speaks to his son John the Baptist, "You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High." The song is oriented toward the future, to the dawn of salvation, and beyond that to the full light of the kingdom of God.

Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis are called Gospel Canticles not only because they come from a Gospel but because they are a statement of the Gospel. They thus should be accorded the same attention as is usual in listening to the Holy Gospel, and correspond to the reading of the Gospel in the Eucharist.

A chant setting of Benedictus is at canticle 2. Seasonal antiphons may be used with the Gospel Canticle³⁷. A hymn paraphrase of Benedictus may be used instead, but the regular use of a hymn substitute is not desirable. Occasional use of choral settings is also appropriate; they need not employ the same version of the text.

If the Paschal Blessing is not used at the end of the service, Te Deum may, except in Advent and Lent, replace the Benedictus. Normally, however, Benedictus should be used as the traditional, fixed Gospel Canticle of Morning Prayer.

MORNING PRAYER: THE PRAYERS

The concluding part of Morning Prayer is the prayers of intercession. Several forms are possible. The more usual is for the Prayer of the Day to be said (or sung, especially on festivals) followed by other appropriate prayers. The selection of Petitions, Intercessions, and Thanksgivings in the Ministers Edition of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (pp. 105-117) is a convenient source of prayers for various situations and needs. Or the congregation, especially in less formal settings, may be invited to offer its petitions and thanksgivings. The series of prayers is then concluded with the ancient prayer for grace written in the fifth

century and probably based on still earlier prayers. Since the middle of the nineteenth century the prayer for grace has been traditional in the Lutheran form of Matins. The prayers and indeed the entire Office concludes with the praying of the Our Father.

Instead of this series of prayers, following the Gospel Canticle the traditional Western Litany may be used, especially in penitential seasons and on Fridays, the day of crucifixion. Or Responsive Prayer I for Morning could be used.

When a layperson leads Morning Prayer and preaches, the benediction (11) is used after the sermon and prayer: "The Lord almighty, bless us and direct our days and our deeds in his peace."

THE PASCHAL BLESSING

On Sundays and throughout the fifty days of Easter, the Paschal Blessing may be used to conclude Morning Prayer, either following the *Benedicamus* ("Let us bless the Lord. *Thanks be to God*" p. 52) or, when there is a sermon, after the sermon and the collect. This little Office of the resurrection joins the celebration of Christ's rising from the dead with a remembrance of Baptism and is a dramatic parallel to the service of Light in Evening Prayer.

The Paschal Blessing is an appropriate remembrance of Baptism. As such it may be used separately, particularly on baptismal anniversaries in family devotion. Water may be put into a dish on the table to recall the waters of Baptism. The baptismal candle may be lighted.

When the Paschal Blessing is used in a church, it should be led from the font to emphasize the connection between resurrection and baptism. The connection need not be pointed out in words; the location of this expanded blessing is a sufficient suggestion. The ministers go to the font; the Paschal Candle, if it is kept by the font, is lighted. If the baptistry is spacious enough, the congregation may gather around the font with the ministers. A hymn may need to be sung while the people move to the font. If only the ministers go to the font, the congregation stands and faces the font.

The leader or an assisting minister sings the verse and a resurrection Gospel. The response to the verse, "Alleluia," is appropriate even on Sundays in Lent, for Sundays are always commemorations of the resurrection. Moreover, in the Eastern Churches "Alleluia" is sung throughout Lent on Sundays. The resurrection account in the text is from Luke 24:1-7. Instead, one of the following may be sung or read: Matthew 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-7; Luke 24:36-53; John 20:1-10. If the Paschal Blessing

is used as a separate Office in remembrance of Baptism, one of the following may be used: 1 Peter 1:3-9; 1 Peter 1:13-21; Romans 6:1-11; Colossians 2:12-15.

The Te Deum is sung. A chant setting is at canticle 3. Hymn 547, "Thee we adore, eternal Lord," or hymn 535, "Holy God, we praise your name," paraphrases of Te Deum, may on occasion be sung instead. Occasionally a choral setting may be used; it need not employ the same translation of the text.

The original text of the Te Deum ended "and bring us with your saints to glory everlasting." Traditionally, however, it was followed by certain verses from the Psalms sung in the form of versicles and responses, known as *capitella*. The verses are:

Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance
Govern and uphold them now and always. (Psalm 28:10)
Day by day we bless you.
We praise your name for ever. (145:2)
Keep us today, Lord, from all sin.
Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy. (123:3)
Lord, show us your love and mercy;
for we put our trust in you. (56:1, 3)
In you, Lord, is our hope:
and we shall never hope in vain.³⁸ (31:1)

These verses may be used between Te Deum and the prayer, sung to a simple tone.

The leader intones or says the prayer and the blessing. At the blessing the ministers and those around the font may dip their fingers into the water and sign themselves with the cross. At the blessing the leader might sprinkle the people with water from the font three times as a further sign of the baptismal washing. A small bough of evergreen—which suggests eternal life—may be used for this sprinkling.

There is no closing hymn. It could only detract from the Te Deum. As the people leave, they might dip their fingers in the water of the font as a reminder of their Baptism.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER I: SUFFRAGES FOR USE IN THE MORNING

The Morning Suffrages, as the prayers were called in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and in the *Service Book and Hymnal*, were from the old Roman Catholic Office of Prime. The name "suffrages"

is from the Latin *suffragium*, a prayer of intercession; the suffrages are sometimes also called *preces* (PRAY-sees).

Loeche's *Agenda* of 1844, prepared for German congregations in America, included the Morning, Evening, and General Suffrages. The *Church Book* of 1868 provided an English translation, which was carried over into the *Common Service Book*, *The Lutheran Hymnal*, and the *Service Book and Hymnal*.

In the revised form in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, Responsive Prayer 1 begins with a characteristic feature of Eastern Orthodox liturgies, the *Trisagion*, "Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, *Have mercy on us*," followed by the Our Father and the Creed. There is a series of psalm verses.³⁹ The leader then says the salutation and the Prayer of the Day. Other prayers may follow, and then the prayer for morning which Luther gives in the *Small Catechism*, cast in the plural.⁴⁰ The *Benedicamus* and the blessing conclude the Office.

Responsive Prayer 1 may be used alone as a morning service, especially when the service is held at a time later than the beginning of the day when Morning Prayer would be inappropriate, or it may be used in place of the prayers in Morning Prayer.

When it is used alone, the service may be augmented with a psalm or a hymn and a brief lesson before "Holy God, holy and mighty. . . ."

When used at Morning Prayer, Responsive Prayer 1 follows the Gospel Canticle. The Creed may be omitted. When there is a sermon, the optional ending of Morning Prayer (12-15) follows the *Benedicamus* ("Let us bless the Lord") of Responsive Prayer 1.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER 2: SUFFRAGES FOR USE AT OTHER TIMES

The Evening Suffrages, from the old Roman Catholic Compline, are a pale reflection of the Morning Suffrages from Prime; their intercessory nature is inferior to the verses of the general suffrages. The suffrages from Compline were suppressed in the Roman Church in 1960.

The General Suffrages in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and in the *Service Book and Hymnal* are the suffrages from Lauds and Vespers, with the petitions for the pope, the bishop, benefactors, and the departed omitted. In the revision of the Divine Office in 1960 these *Preces* were appointed for Lauds and Vespers after the Gospel Canticle on Wednesdays and Fridays of

Advent, Lent, and Passiontide; at Lauds and Vespers of Ember Wednesday and Friday in September; at Lauds of Ember Saturdays except the Saturday within the octave of Pentecost.⁴¹ These Preces are no longer used in the Roman Catholic Office. The verses were: (deleting those for the pope, the bishop, the king, benefactors, and the departed):

I said, "Lord be merciful to me; Heal me, for I have sinned against you."	Psalm 44:1
Return, O Lord; how long will you tarry? Be gracious to your servants.	90:13
Let your lovingkindness, O Lord, be upon us, As we have put our trust in you.	33:22
Let your priests be clothed with righteousness; Let all your faithful people sing with joy.	132:9
Save your people and bless your inheritance; Shepherd them and carry them for ever.	28:11
Remember your congregation That you purchased long ago.	74:2
Peace be within your walls, And quietness within your towers.	122:7
Let us pray for our absent brothers and sisters. Save your servants who put their trust in you.	86:2
Let us pray for the broken hearted and the captives. Deliver Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.	25:21
Send them help from your holy place, And strengthen them out of Zion.	20:2
Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.	80:7
Rise up, O Christ, and help us, And save us for the sake of your love.	44:26
Lord, hear my prayer, And let my cry come before you.	102:1

Instead of these verses, Responsive Prayer 2 borrows the Preces from Evening Prayer II in the *Proposed Book of Common Prayer*. These Preces concisely intercede for the concerns of the church and the world and lead into the collects and indeed can replace the collects.

On occasions such as retreats when Responsive Prayer 2 is used both at noon and in the afternoon, a selection of the traditional verses given above might be used in the afternoon to avoid duplication, or these:

Return, O Lord, how long will you tarry? Be gracious to your servants.	Psalm 90:13
Let your lovingkindness, O Lord, be upon us, As we have put our trust in you.	33:22
Let your priests be clothed with righteousness, Let your faithful people sing with joy.	132:9
Make governments rule your people righteously, and the poor with justice.	(72:2)
Remember your congregation that you purchased long ago, the people you redeemed to be your inheritance and Mt. Zion where you dwell.	74:2
Send them help from your holy place, and strengthen them out of Zion.	20:2
Restore us, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.	80:7

Responsive Prayer 2 concludes with one of three prayers, depending on the time of day. The prayer for noon (“Gracious Jesus, our Lord and our God”) is from Herbert Lindemann’s *The Daily Office*.⁴² The prayer for the afternoon is from the *Proposed Book of Common Prayer*. The prayer for evening is from Luther’s *Small Catechism*.

A form of prayer for travellers, said before setting out on a journey, especially at the end of meetings far from home, has been preserved in Lutheran circles from medieval precedents.⁴³ Originally this *Itinerarium* followed the Gospel Canticle at Lauds. In the *Lutheran Book of Worship* a prayer, a conflation of traditional prayers, is provided in Responsive Prayer 2. It recalls three archetypal journeys of the Old Testament and the New Testament—Abraham and Sarah, the Exodus, the Magi—and points the pilgrim church to the eschatological consummation of its journey.

Responsive Prayer 2 may be used alone as a separate service, especially at a time earlier than sunset when the use of Evening Prayer would be inappropriate. Responsive Prayer 2 may also replace the Litany in Evening Prayer.

When used alone, the service may be augmented with a psalm or hymn and a brief lesson before “Holy god, holy and mighty. . . .”

When used at Evening Prayer, Responsive Prayer 2 follows the Gospel Canticle, the Magnificat (Ministers Edition, p. 63). The Creed may be omitted. When there is a sermon, the optional ending of Evening Prayer (14-17) follows the *Benedicamus* (“Let us bless the Lord”) of Responsive Prayer 2.

THE LITANY

The Litany is a responsive intercession for a wide variety of human needs. It arose in connection with processions for obtaining God's blessing on the fields, or God's defense against enemies and calamities. It took on a penitential cast. The invocation of the prayers of the saints was expanded to such a degree that the Litany became known as the Litany of the Saints. At the Reformation, Luther revised the Great Litany in 1529 and his German text became enormously popular in Germany and Scandinavia and was influential in England. The Great Litany is a classic of Christian prayer and appears in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* in a conservative revision.

The Litany, which is directed primarily to Christ, begins with the three-fold Kyrie and invocation of the persons of the Holy Trinity.

The *deprecations* (from *deprecari*, to avert by prayer) against evils and dangers follow: "From all sin, from all error, from all evil. . . ." There are three of these sections in the Litany.

The *obsecrations* (from *obsecrare*, to ask on religious grounds) lay the foundation on which the prayer is built: "By the mystery of your holy incarnation. . . ." The obsecrations recall Christ's entire earthly life of obedience, from the incarnation to the sending of the Spirit. Again, there are three of these sections.

The *supplications* or prayers for ourselves are brief and are all included in one petition:

In all time of our tribulation,
In all time of our prosperity,
In the hour of death,
And in the day of judgment:
Save us, good Lord.

One line confessing our unworthiness bridges the prayers for ourselves and the prayers for others:

Though unworthy, we implore you
To hear us, Lord our God.

The *intercessions* on behalf of others are the largest part of the Litany. Five sections pray for the church, for support of the weak,⁴⁴ for the nations,⁴⁵ for all sorts and conditions of humanity, for reconciliation with our enemies and with the natural world.

A plea to the Lord Jesus Christ is followed by the Agnus Dei. Then, as the Litany began with Kyrie and "O Christ, hear us," the order is reversed as the prayer concludes with, "O Christ hear us" and the Kyrie. The repetition here and throughout the prayer should not trouble users of the Litany, for the essence of the Litany is repetition. It is a powerfully insistent prayer which importunes God for mercy and protection.

The collects, with which the Litany has traditionally concluded, are omitted in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* as excessive. After the antiphonal singing of the wide-ranging petitions of the Litany, further prayers seem unnecessary and add little to what has already been prayed.

The Litany is led by a minister or a cantor.

The Litany may be sung as indicated in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* or the congregational response may follow each line. When this is done, the singing must not drag. The tempo must move, and there must not be even the briefest pause between the conclusion of one line and the beginning of the next. The effect can be powerfully hypnotic as two sides of the congregation sing their prayer back and forth.

The Litany may be used alone as a separate penitential service. When it is so used, it may be augmented with a psalm or psalms and a brief lesson at the beginning; and with the Prayer of the Day or another appropriate prayer, the Lord's Prayer, and a blessing at the end.

At penitential times, the Litany may be used as the entrance hymn for the Holy Communion. The Kyrie (6) then would be omitted from the liturgy for Holy Communion; the Hymn of Praise would not be appropriate on such occasions. Immediately following the Litany the minister would say the Apostolic Greeting and the Prayer of the Day.

When used alone or as the entrance hymn, the Litany may be sung in procession as a dramatization of our passage through this world toward that which is to come.

The Litany may replace the prayers printed in the services for Morning Prayer (Ministers Edition p. 51) and Evening Prayer (pp. 65-68).

When the Litany is used at Morning Prayer, it follows the Gospel Canticle. After the Litany, Morning Prayer continues with the prayer for grace. When the Litany is used at Evening Prayer, it replaces the Litany provided (11). Evening Prayer concludes as indicated with the Prayer for Peace, the Lord's Prayer and the benediction.

TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES AT EVENING PRAYER

ASSISTANT

LEADER

Opening verses

“Joyous light of glory”

“The Lord be with you.”

“Let us give thanks. . . .”

“Blessed are you. . . .”

“Let my prayer rise before you.”

Psalm Prayer(s)

Readings*

“In many and various ways. . . .”

“In peace, let us pray. . . .”

“O God, from whom come
all holy desires. . . .”

“Lord, remember us in your
kingdom. . . .”

“Let us bless the Lord”

Blessing

TABLE OF RESPONSIBILITIES AT MORNING PRAYER

ASSISTANT

LEADER

“O Lord open my lips”

“Give glory to God,
our light and our life.”

Psalm Prayer(s)

Readings*

“In many and various ways. . . .”

Prayer of the Day

Other prayers

“Let us bless the Lord”

“As many as have been baptized
into Christ. . . .”

The Gospel in the Paschal Blessing

“O God, for our redemption. . . .”

Blessing

*The Readings may appropriately be read by people from the congregation.

APPENDIX I: SOURCES OF THE PSALM PRAYERS

The basic source of most of the psalm prayers is the Roman Catholic series, translated by the International Consultation on English in the Liturgy. Nearly all those from that series have been altered slightly by Philip H. Pfatteicher; more substantial alterations are indicated "alt." A second source is a series of psalm prayers done by Frank C. Senn and some of his students in liturgy at Christ Seminary/Seminex. A few prayers come from other sources.

Psalm	1	RC	30	RC
	2	RC	31	RC
	3	Jack Bailey, alt.	32	RC
	4	RC	33	RC
	5	RC	34	RC alt.
	6	RC	35	RC alt.
	7	Jack Bailey	36	RC alt.
	8	Philip H. Pfatteicher	37	RC alt.
	9	RC alt.	38	RC alt.
	10	RC alt.	39	RC
	11	Jack Bailey and RC alt.	40	RC alt.
	12	RC alt.	41	RC alt.
	13	RC	42	RC
	14	RC alt.	43	RC
	15	RC alt.	44	RC alt.
	16	RC alt.	45	RC
	17	RC alt.	46	RC
	18	RC	47	RC alt.
	19	<i>American Book of Com-</i>	48	RC
		<i>mon Prayer</i> p. 596.	49	RC
	20	RC	50	RC
	21	RC	51	<i>Morning Praise and</i>
	22	RC alt.		<i>Evensong</i>
	23	RC	52	RC alt.
	24	RC	53	RC alt.
	25	RC alt.	54	RC alt.
	26	RC	55	RC
	27	RC alt.	56	RC
	28	RC alt.	57	RC
	29	RC	58	RC

59	RC	97	RC
60	RC	98	Frank C. Senn
61	RC	99	Frank C. Senn
62	RC alt.	100	George Loewer
63	RC	101	RC
64	RC	102	RC
65	Mark Felde	103	RC
66	RC	104	RC
67	RC	105	RC
68	RC	106	RC alt.
69	RC	107	RC
70	Roman Catholic Mass	108	RC
71	RC	109	RC
72	RC alt.	110	RC alt.
73	RC alt.	111	RC alt.
74	RC alt.	112	RC alt.
75	RC	113	RC alt.
76	RC	114	RC
77	RC	115	RC alt.
78	RC	116	RC alt.
79	Philip H. Pfatteicher (after Mark Felde and RC)	117	RC alt.
80	RC	118	RC
81	RC	119	RC
82	RC alt.	120	RC
83	RC	121	RC
84	RC	122	RC
85	RC	123	Bill Schreiber
86	RC	124	RC
87	RC alt.	125	RC alt.
88	RC alt.	126	RC
89	RC alt.	127	RC alt.
90	Philip H. Pfatteicher	128	RC alt.
91	RC	129	RC
92	RC	130	RC
93	RC	131	RC
94	RC	132	RC alt.
95	RC	133	RC alt.
96	RC	134	RC
		135	Philip H. Pfatteicher

136	RC alt.	145	Philip H. Pfatteicher (after Edward Tilley)
137	RC alt.	146	RC
138	RC alt.	147	RC
139	RC	148	RC
140	RC alt.	149	RC
141	RC	150	Philip H. Pfatteicher
142	RC alt.		
143	RC alt.		
144	RC		

APPENDIX II: SOURCES OF THE TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS OF THE CANTICLES

Canticle	1	<i>Prayers We Have in Common</i>
	2	<i>Prayers We Have in Common</i>
	3	<i>Prayers We Have in Common</i>
	4	<i>Proposed Book of Common Prayer</i>
	5	<i>Proposed Book of Common Prayer</i>
	6	<i>Prayers We Have in Common</i>
	7	(for Advent) John Arthur
	8	(for Christmas and Epiphany) John Arthur
	9	(for Lent) John Arthur
	10	(for Easter) John Arthur
	11	John Arthur
	12	John Arthur
	13	Lucien Deiss
	14	John Arthur
	15	<i>Proposed Book of Common Prayer</i> , alt.
	16	(for Marriage) Philip H. Pfatteicher
	17	<i>New English Bible</i>
	18	Philip H. Pfatteicher after the <i>Proposed Book of Common Prayer</i>
	19	Philip H. Pfatteicher after the <i>New English Bible</i> and the <i>Revised Standard Version</i>
	20	Philip H. Pfatteicher after the <i>New English Bible</i> and the <i>Revised Standard Version</i>
	21	<i>Proposed Book of Common Prayer</i> , alt.