

Trinity Episcopal Church

Cranford, in the Diocese of NJ



'Hands by Candlelight,' by Rebecca Zook

Advent Compline

Sundays of Advent at 8 PM

The Office of Compline

The ancient office of Compline derives its name from a Latin word meaning 'completion' (completorium). It is descended from the night prayers said before bed at the end of the monastic round of daily prayer, and is above all a service of quietness and reflection before rest at the end of the day. The shape of this simple office includes a gathering rite, scripture reading, prayers, and a conclusion. One of the hallmarks of Compline is the unhurried recitation of the psalms with a pause at the asterisk. Compline finds its fullest expression when it is the last thing we do before retiring to bed.

The Angelus

The service will begin with the Angelus devotion which is prayed during the ringing of the church bells. The focus of the devotion is on the Incarnation of Christ and the Annunciation by the Angel to Mary, the Mother of our Lord. The origin of this devotion is obscure, but likely goes back to the practice of the evening tolling of the bell for compline in tenth century English monasteries. It has become customary for the Angelus bell to consist of ringing three sets of three and then a nine. The real significance of this pattern is not a hidden symbolism - trinitarian or otherwise - but the likelihood that it reflects the time at which the bell was rung for Compline at 9 PM. Several monastic customs mention a custom of ringing three separate peals of bells before some of the daily offices to call the brothers to assemble for prayer. The laity, who were not able to gather, were encouraged to associate their prayers with those of the monks, but, instead of their elaborate orations, the well-known Ave Maria became the lay people's choice. It seems feasible that in this way the Angelus evolved, and the pattern of the nine bells from the late-evening devotion was joined to the triple peals at the morning and midday observance.

Candlelight

Those attending this service in-person will receive a lighted votive upon entering the church. Online participants are encouraged to light their own candle for the service.

Angelus Bell

The officiant rings three sets of three and then a nine. During the ringing the people may kneel and pray privately the Angelus devotions below.

And the angel Gabriel came to Mary and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

Luke 1:28

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

Luke 1:38

And Elizabeth exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

Luke 1:42

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

BCP 240

Gathering Sentences

Officiant The Lord Almighty grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end.

People **Amen.**

Officiant Our help is in the Name of the Lord:

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

Penitence

Officiant Let us confess our sins to God.

The People kneel and a period of silence follows, for reflection on the past day, then all pray.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father: We have sinned against you, through our own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, and in what we have left undone. For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us all our offenses; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Officiant stands and says

May the Almighty God grant us forgiveness of all our sins, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Anthem

The people may be seated for the proclamation of the Anthem.

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love, would keep
Your watch around us while we sleep.

From evil dreams defend our sight,
From fears and terrors of the night;
Tread under foot our deadly foe
That we no sinful thought may know.

To you, O Christ, all glory be,
Whose advent sets your people free;
Whom, with the Father, we adore,
And Holy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

Psalm 143

Domine, exaudi

A meditative recitation of the Psalm follows. At the asterisk, the Officiant sounds the chime, the people and officiant wait for the note to decay and then complete the second half verse.

1. LORD, hear my prayer,
and in your faithfulness heed my supplications; *
answer me in your righteousness.
2. Enter not into judgment with your servant, *
for in your sight shall no one living be justified.

3. For my enemy has sought my life;
he has crushed me to the ground; *
he has made me live in dark places
like those who are long dead.
4. My spirit faints within me; *
my heart within me is desolate.
5. I remember the time past;
I muse upon all your deeds; *
I consider the works of your hands.
6. I spread out my hands to you; *
my soul gasps to you like a thirsty land.
7. O LORD, make haste to answer me; my spirit fails me; *
do not hide your face from me
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
8. Let me hear of your loving-kindness in the morning,
for I put my trust in you; *
show me the road that I must walk,
for I lift up my soul to you.
9. Deliver me from my enemies, O LORD, *
for I flee to you for refuge.
10. Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God; *
let your good Spirit lead me on level ground.
11. Revive me, O LORD, for your Name's sake; *
for your righteousness' sake, bring me out of trouble.
12. Of your goodness, destroy my enemies
and bring all my foes to naught, *
for truly I am your servant.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Scripture Reading

The Reader begins without introduction.

Therefore, keep awake —
for you do not know when the master of the house will come,
in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,
or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.
And what I say to you I say to all:
Keep awake.” *Mark 13: 35-37*

People

Thanks be to God

Responsory

Incense is placed on the brazier. Then People kneel.

Officiant Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit:

People **For you have redeemed me, O Lord, O God of truth.**

Officiant Keep us, O Lord, as the apple of your eye:

People **Hide us under the shadow of your wings.**

Kyrie

Officiant Lord have mercy

People **Christ have mercy**

Officiant Lord have mercy

Lord's Prayer

Officiant As we look for the coming of the Kingdom,
Lord, teach us to pray.

People

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Evening Collect

Officiant

Look down, O Lord, from your heavenly throne, and illumine this night with your celestial brightness; that by night as by day your people may glorify your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People

Amen.

Advent Collect

Officiant

Stir up your power, O God, and come among us. Heal our wounds, calm our fears and give us peace; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

People

Amen.

Silence is kept for the private prayers of the people.

Concluding Prayer

Officiant

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.

People

Amen.

Song of Simeon

Nunc dimittis

**Lord, you now have set your servant free *
to go in peace as you have promised;**

**For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, *
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:**

**A Light to enlighten the nations, *
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

Blessing

Officiant
People

In peace, we will lie down and sleep:
For you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Officiant
People

Abide with us, Lord Jesus:
For the night is at hand and the day is now past.

Officiant
People

As the night-watch looks for the morning:
So do we look for you, O Christ.

Officiant
People

Let us bless the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

Officiant
People

The almighty and merciful Lord,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.
Amen.

The people depart in silence.