

# Hear what the Spirit is saying

In Scripture and Prayer and  
The Great Cloud of Witnesses

Week of February 20, 2022

*Collect for the Seventh Sunday after Epiphany*

O Lord, you have taught us that without love whatever we do is worth nothing: Send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts your greatest gift, which is love, the true bond of peace and of all virtue, without which whoever lives is accounted dead before you. Grant this for the sake of your only Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. –BCP 216

## **Genesis 45:3-11, 15 NRSV**

<sup>3</sup> Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence. <sup>4</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. <sup>5</sup> And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. <sup>6</sup> For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. <sup>7</sup> God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. <sup>8</sup> So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, “Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. <sup>10</sup> You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. <sup>11</sup> I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.

<sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

## **1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 NRSV**

<sup>35</sup> But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” <sup>36</sup> Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. <sup>37</sup> And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. <sup>42</sup> So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. <sup>43</sup> It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is

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sown in weakness, it is raised in power. <sup>44</sup> It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

<sup>50</sup> What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

### **Luke 6:27-38** NRSV

<sup>27</sup> “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup> If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you. <sup>32</sup> “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup> If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. <sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

<sup>37</sup> “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup> give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

### **Psalms 37:1-12, 41-42** BCP 633

- 1 Do not fret yourself because of evildoers; \*  
do not be jealous of those who do wrong.
- 2 For they shall soon wither like the grass, \*  
and like the green grass fade away.

- 3 Put your trust in the Lord and do good; \*  
dwell in the land and feed on its riches.
- 4 Take delight in the Lord, \*  
and he shall give you your heart's desire.
- 5 Commit your way to the Lord and put your trust in him, \*  
and he will bring it to pass.
- 6 He will make your righteousness as clear as the light \*  
and your just dealing as the noonday.
- 7 Be still before the Lord \* and wait patiently for him.
- 8 Do not fret yourself over the one who prospers, \*  
the one who succeeds in evil schemes.
- 9 Refrain from anger, leave rage alone; \*  
do not fret yourself; it leads only to evil.
- 10 For evildoers shall be cut off, \*  
but those who wait upon the Lord shall possess the land.
- 11 In a little while the wicked shall be no more; \*  
you shall search out their place, but they will not be there.
- 12 But the lowly shall possess the land; \*  
they will delight in abundance of peace.

## (Re)Introducing A Spiritual Day Hike



In our Spiritual Day Hike we'll walk among and walk with "Holy Women" and "Holy Men," who constitute a "Great Cloud of Witnesses." As 'hikers' we'll use "The Great Commandment" as a guide. Without leaving the building we'll travel far and wide. We'll ask: "How did this person love God with all their heart, soul, and mind?" Likewise, "How did this person love their neighbor as they loved themselves?" More importantly we'll ask, "What does his/her witness teach us about the love of God and neighbor?" We'll depend on the Spirit to extend our questions into realms we can barely imagine at the moment. We'll depend on the Spirit to call forth our growth in holiness, in wisdom, and in action. Each week I'll select at least two "saints" to walk with. Also, I encourage you to explore with "trail mates" from the Great Cloud of Witnesses. You can find the calendar of saints to explore with here: <https://bit.ly/Learn104>. The short biographies, Collects, and suggested readings can be found on Holy Women, Holy Men web pages here: <https://bit.ly/Learn151>. Google a name or visit Wikipedia for even more information.

## This Week's Holy Women and Men (Witnesses to inspire us)

- February 20 [Frederick Douglass, Social Reformer, 1895](#)  
 February 21 [John Henry Newman, Priest and Theologian, 1890](#)  
 February 22 Margaret of Cortona, Mystic, 1297  
 February 22 [Eric Liddell, Missionary to China, 1945](#)  
 February 23 [Polycarp of Smyrna, Bishop and Martyr, 156](#)  
 February 24 [Saint Matthias The Apostle](#)  
 February 25 [John Roberts, Priest, 1949](#)  
 February 26 [Photini, The Samaritan Woman, c. 67](#)  
 February 26 [Emily Malbone Morgan, Prophetic Witness, 1937](#)

## Saint Matthias The Apostle

*Commemoration on February 26*

In the nine days of waiting between Jesus' Ascension and the Day of Pentecost, the disciples remained together in prayer. During this time, Peter reminded them that the defection and death of Judas had left the fellowship of the Twelve with a vacancy. The Acts of the Apostles records Peter's proposal that "one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection" (see [Acts 1:12-26](#)). Two men were nominated, Joseph called Barsabbas who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. After prayer, the disciples cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias, who was then enrolled with the eleven.

Scripture does not relate anything further about Matthias, but gives him as an example to Christians of one whose faithful companionship with Jesus qualifies him to be a suitable witness to the resurrection, and whose service is unheralded and unsung.

There are, however, several early Christian accounts of his mission and ministry, such as the second century text *The Acts of Andrew and Matthias in Cannibal City*. According to this account, immediately after the selection of Matthias, the apostles cast lots to determine which of them would take responsibility for which part of the world, and the unlucky Matthias was dispatched to a city of cannibals! Although an unabashedly fictionalized account, it is nevertheless an inspiring tale that shows Matthias being dealt the worst possible lot, and yet nevertheless responding to his call with equanimity, competence, and grace, which are the same qualities we see reflected in the canonical account that is given by Scripture.

*Lesser Feasts and Fasts Revised 2018*

## Learn more

[Saint Matthias](#) on Wikipedia

[Apostle Matthias](#) on [OrthodoxWiki](#)

## Collect and Readings from the Commemoration

Almighty God, who in the place of Judas chose your faithful servant Matthias to be numbered among the Twelve: Grant that your Church, being delivered from false apostles, may always be guided and governed by faithful and true pastors; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## Lessons and Psalm

[Acts 1:15–26](#) | [Psalm 15](#) | [Philippians 3:13–21](#) | [John 15:1–16](#)

## Photini, The Samaritan Woman, c. 67 CE

*Commemoration on February 26*

When Jesus passed through Samaria ([John 4.3-42](#)) he stopped at Jacob’s Well in Sychar, a well that the patriarch Jacob had left to his son Joseph. Sitting by the well to rest, the Lord asked a Samaritan woman who came to the well to draw water to give him a drink. The request violated cultural taboos — a man speaking privately with a woman, and a Jew speaking to a Samaritan — anticipating the theological insight of Galatians 3:28. Their brief encounter is one of notable theological depth in which Jesus makes the first of several important “I am” statements in John’s Gospel. The Samaritan woman had been married five times and was living with a man to whom she was not married. Whether this was through her own fault or due to unfortunate circumstances beyond her control the text does not indicate. However, she has the distinct honor of being the first person to whom Jesus reveals his Messianic title and the first person to preach the gospel that Jesus is the Christ.

While unnamed in the Johannine text, Orthodox Christian tradition has it that the woman was baptized by the Apostles on the first Pentecost and given the name Photini, “the enlightened one” (Svetlana, in the Russian Church). Celebrated in the Orthodox Church as an Evangelist, “Equal to the Apostles,” a significant hagiography developed around her. She, her sisters, and her children are said to have been cruelly tortured and martyred at the command of the emperor Nero.

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Over the centuries many churches have been built at the site of Jacob's Well, where Jesus held discourse with the Samaritan woman; the present church building within Bir Ya'qub Monastery was built in 1893 by order of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and consecrated to St. Photini.

*Lesser Feasts and Fasts Revised 2018*

### Learn more

[Samaritan Woman at the Well](#) (Photini) on Wikipedia

[Photine of Samaria](#) (Photini or Svetlana) on [OrthodoxWiki](#)

### Collect and Readings from the Commemoration

O Almighty God, whose most blessed Son revealed to the Samaritan woman that He is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the World; grant us to drink of the well that springs up to everlasting life that we may worship you in spirit and in truth through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Lessons and Psalm

[2 Kings 17:28–41](#) | [Psalm 119:33–40](#) | [John 4:1–26](#)