

First Sunday after the Epiphany, Jan. 12, 2025

The Collect and psalms will be read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer
The Old Testament, New Testament and Gospel will be read from the Christian Standard Bible

The Collect: Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.
Amen.

Old Testament: Isaiah 43:1-7

Now this is what the Lord says—
the one who created you, Jacob,
and the one who formed you, Israel—
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by your name; you are mine.

2 When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you,
and the rivers will not overwhelm you.

When you walk through the fire,
you will not be scorched,
and the flame will not burn you.

3 For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, and your Savior.
I have given Egypt as a ransom for you,
Cush and Seba in your place.

4 Because you are precious in my sight
and honored, and I love you,
I will give people in exchange for you

and nations instead of your life.

5 Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your descendants from the east,
and gather you from the west.

6 I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'
and to the south, 'Do not hold them back!'
Bring my sons from far away,
and my daughters from the ends of the earth—

7 everyone who bears my name
and is created for my glory.

I have formed them; indeed, I have made them.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People

Psalm: Psalm 29

1 Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, *

ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; *

worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;

the God of glory thunders; *

the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

4 The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice; *

the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.

5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; *

the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *

and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.

7 The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire;

the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; *

the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

8 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe *

and strips the forests bare.

9 And in the temple of the Lord *

all are crying, "Glory!"

10 The Lord sits enthroned above the flood; *

the Lord sits enthroned as King for evermore.

11 The Lord shall give strength to his people; *

the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

New Testament: Acts 8:14-17

14 When the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. 15 After they went down there, they prayed for them so that the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit because he had not yet come down on any of them. 16 (They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

17 Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

15 Now the people were waiting expectantly, and all of them were questioning in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah. 16 John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I am is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing shovel is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out."

21 When all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. As he was praying, heaven opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in a physical appearance like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord

On January 9 we celebrate the life of Julia Chester Emery, Missionary. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Julia Chester Emery was born in Dorchester, Massachusetts, on September 24, 1852. In 1876 she succeeded her sister, Mary, as Secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Board of Missions, which had been established by the General Convention in 1871.

During the forty years she served as Secretary, Julia helped the Church to recognize its call to proclaim the gospel both at home and overseas. Her faith, her courage, her spirit of adventure, and her ability to inspire others combined to make her a leader respected and valued by the whole Church.

She visited every diocese and missionary district within the United States, encouraging and expanding the work of the Woman's Auxiliary, and in 1908 she served as a delegate to the Pan-Anglican Congress in London. From there she traveled around the world, visiting missions in remote areas of China, in Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Hawaii, and then all the dioceses on the Pacific Coast before returning to New York. In spite of the fact that travel was not easy, she wrote that she went forth "with hope for enlargement of vision, opening up new occasions for service, acceptance of new tasks."

Through her leadership a network of branches of the Woman's Auxiliary was established which shared a vision of and a commitment to the Church's mission. An emphasis on educational programs, a growing recognition of social issues, development of leadership among women, and the creation of the United Thank Offering are a further part of the legacy Julia left to the Church when she retired in 1916.

In 1921, the year before she died, on January 9, 1922, the following appeared in the Spirit of Missions: "In all these enterprises of the Church, no single agency has done so much in the last half-century to further the Church's Mission as the Woman's Auxiliary." Much of that accomplishment was due to the creative spirit of its Secretary for forty of those fifty years, Julia Chester Emery.

Let us pray: God of all creation, you call us in Christ to make disciples of all nations and to proclaim your mercy and love: Grant that we, after the example of your servant Julia Chester Emery, may have vision and courage in proclaiming the Gospel to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our light and our salvation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**