Closing Devotions for UBE Annual Business Meeting 2020
July 25, 2020

For these closing devotions, remaining muted unless otherwise invited to unmute, we invite the membership to join us in offering worship to God. Deacon Linda Wilson will serve as the Voice of the People.

Opening Collects

Officiant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Officiant Let us pray.

O gracious God, we remember before you today your servant and apostle James, first among the Twelve to suffer martyrdom for the Name of Jesus Christ; and we pray that you will pour out upon the leaders of your Church that spirit of self-denying service by which alone they may have true authority among your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

God of all humanity, you call us to bring about healing and wholeness for the whole world – for women and men of all races and cultures and creeds. Help us to respond to a world that is groaning under the weight of injustice and broken relationships. Remind us that differences are a gift, and interdependence a strength from the same creative God. Strengthen us to resist the forces that encourage polarization and competition rather than understanding and cooperation. We know that your reign is not built on injustice and oppression, but on the transformation of hearts – new life, not just reordered life. Teach us forgiveness, O God. Bring us reconciliation. Give us hope for the future. We pray in Jesus’ love. Amen.
A Reading from the Book of Acts:

At that time prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them named Agabus stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine over all the world; and this took place during the reign of Claudius. The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea; this they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) [The Word of the Lord.]

People Thanks be to God.


A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew:

The mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.” But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” He said to them, “You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”

When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” [The Word of the Lord.]

People Thanks be to God.

The Homily The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry TEC Presiding Bishop and Primate

The Prayers The Rev. Deacon Linda Wilson

Let us pray: As you abide with us this day dear Lord, renew our commitment to stand up and fight for the elimination of racial, political, educational, social and economic inequality and hatred. Grant us the capacity and will to forgive, both ourselves and others, that we may be liberated from the pain that separates and paralyzes us.

We join with Sir Walter Drake in asking that you continue to disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves, when our dreams have come true because we have dreamed too little, when
we arrive safely because we have sailed too close to the shore. Push back the horizons of our hopes that we may dare more boldly to dismantle unbreached strongholds of disparity and injustice.

By the might of your Spirit and undying love for us, bless us that we may find new energy, devotion and strength to persevere in the struggle, through success and failure, through good report and evil report, until thy kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

For those who have died

Almighty God, with whom still live the spirits of those who die in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful are in joy and felicity: We give you heartfelt thanks for the good examples of all your servants, who, having finished their course in faith, now find rest and refreshment. We pray especially for our loved ones and UBE members who have died since the last UBE Annual Business Meeting and Conference, including Barbara C. Harris, Johnny Corbett, Jr., Gloria Vincent, Velma Burrs, Martha Frances, James Barron, Marion Smith Hanson, Richard Miller, Shirley Mae Fears, Alexander Clarke, Jr., Susan Ann Johnson, Beryl B. Buchanan, Henry “Hank” Foster, James Saunders, Jerry Simmons, Cedric Victor Samuel Sang, Gladys Lewis, Sidney King, Beatrice Tomlinson, Donald Bookal, Denniston Rupert Kerr, Margaret Mitchell, Esther Alicia Clarke, Noel Oliver Lawson, Thomas Cooke, Jr., Richard Livingston Marquess-Barry, James Melchor Sutton, Craig A. Daniels, and others we now name silently in our hearts [silence]. May we, with all who have died in the true faith of your holy Name, have perfect fulfillment and bliss in your eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For the Diversity of Races and Cultures and our Partners in Racial Justice Ministry

O God, who created all peoples in your image, we thank you for the wonderful diversity of races and cultures in this world. Enrich our lives by ever widening circles of fellowship. Bless all those individuals and organizations who partner with us to eradicate racism in our church and in the world, especially the Office of Black Ministries, the Episcopal Networks Collaborative, the Consultation, Episcopal Church Foundation, the Brotherhood of St. Andrews, as well as all our UBE Chapters and institutional members. Continue to show us your presence in those who differ most from us, until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Four-Fold Franciscan Blessing

The Very Rev. Kim L. Coleman

And now, may God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may continue to work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that we may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

May God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.

And the Blessing of God Almighty, the One who Creates, Redeems and Sanctifies, be upon you and all you love, this day, and forever more. Amen

Departing Word and Musical Selection