



The Conversion of Saul
by William Blake, c. 1800

Evening Prayer – Zoom Service **The Conversion of Paul**

Opening prayer

Come, pray to the Lord.
Lift up your hands this night and pray to the Lord.
Let us pray with one heart and mind
that this evening may be holy, good and peaceful.

Silence

As our evening prayer rises before you, O God,
so may your mercy come down upon us
to cleanse our hearts
and set us free to sing your praise
now and for ever.

Amen.

Collect

Almighty God,
who caused the light of the gospel
to shine throughout the world
through the preaching of your servant Saint Paul:
grant that we who celebrate his wonderful conversion
may follow him in bearing witness to your truth;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Psalm 67

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us,
that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has yielded its increase;

God, our God, has blessed us.

May God continue to bless us;

let all the ends of the earth revere him.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever.**

Amen

The Word of God

First reading – The Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 9, verses 1-22

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.' The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' He answered, 'Here I am, Lord.' The Lord said to him, 'Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is

praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.’ But Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.’ So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptised, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

This is the word of the Lord.

Amen

Second Reading – The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 19, verses 27-30

Then Peter said in reply, ‘Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

This is the word of the Lord.

Amen

Reflection on Paul’s story



Conversion of Saul
by Caravaggio (1601)

Related prayers

to be shared on screen

Closing Prayer

God be with us...

Jesus be with us...

Spirit be with us...

Each lying down and rising up,

Each step of the journey...

Amen

Blessing

May Christ who called Paul to his service,
and to preach the good news to the world,
strengthen us to witness to his grace and love.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

Amen

Service prepared for The Hempnall Group of Parishes by Liam Pilgrim, January 2023. Material is drawn from:
<<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/festivals/conversion>>. Images from the Visual Commentary on Scripture:
<<https://thevcs.org/road-damascus>>