

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

God of wisdom, enlighten your church. Guide theologians, biblical scholars, authors, and seminary professors as they seek greater knowledge and invite others into deeper understanding. Teach us to ask faithful questions and open our minds to new ideas. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, mend the earth. Cool warming oceans and preserve melting ice caps. Increase our awareness of changing climate patterns and reveal new approaches to the ecological challenges we face. Shield those in the path of hurricanes or tropical storms (*especially*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all nations, direct our leaders. Grant them courage to lay aside political grudges and renew their determination to address difficult conflicts. Guide them in the work of reconciliation. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 36. **Tuesday** Acts 7:9-16. **Wednesday** Genesis 47:13-26. **Thursday** Psalm 34:15-22. **Friday** (commemoration of Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, 1153) Romans 13:11-14. **Saturday** Luke 11:5-13. **13th Sunday after Pentecost** Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18; Psalm 34:15-22; Ephesians 6:10-20; John 6:56-69.

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God of compassion, tend to the wounded. Rescue those tormented by mental illness or mired in addiction. Ease the anxiety of those struggling with dementia. Come quickly to help all who are grieving and all those who suffer (*especially*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of beauty, inspire artists. Bless those whose visual and musical gifts enliven this assembly (*especially*). Bless the creative work of poets, hymnwriters, composers, painters, sculptors, and others that enrich our worship and daily life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of resurrection, bring us to new life. Give us the living bread from heaven through which we abide in your love, and on the last day raise us with (*Mary, mother of Jesus, name/s, and*) all the saints to eternal life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



Celebrate

Sunday, August 15, 2021
12th Sunday after Pentecost

Wisdom prepares a feast, sets her table, and invites all to come and eat her bread and drink her wine. The first chapter of John's gospel owes much to the biblical tradition that imagined Wisdom as existing before anything was created and having a role in the work of creation. Christ, the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24), today invites us to eat his flesh and drink his blood. John's gospel includes no account of the institution of the Lord's supper, but here we can't help hearing Jesus' words as an invitation to the meal of bread and wine we share.

Prayer of the Day

Ever-loving God, your Son gives himself as living bread for the life of the world. Fill us with such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

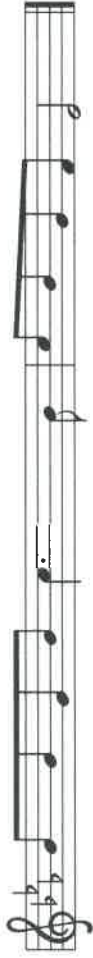
First Reading

Proverbs 9:1-6

Wisdom is portrayed as a woman who invites people to partake of her banquet. Just as ordinary food is necessary for physical life, Wisdom's food—insight and understanding—is necessary for fullness of life with God. Partaking of Wisdom's banquet is the way to life.

- Wisdom has built her house,
 she has hewn her seven pillars,
²She has slaughtered her animals,
 she has mixed her wine,
 she has also set her table.
³She has sent out her servant-girls,
 she calls
 from the highest places in the town,
- ⁴“You that are simple, turn in here!”
 To those without sense she says,
⁵“Come, eat of my bread
 and drink of the wine I have
 mixed.
⁶Lay aside immaturity, and live,
 and walk in the way of insight.”

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Those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.

Fear the LORD, you saints of the LORD,

for those who fear the LORD lack nothing.

¹⁰The lions are in want and I suffer hunger,

but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good. **R**

¹¹Come, children, and listen to me;

I will teach you reverence for the LORD.

¹²Who among you takes pleasure in life

and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?

¹³Keep your tongue from evil

and your lips from lying words.

¹⁴Turn from evil and do good;

seek peace and pursue it. **R**

True wisdom integrates our new reality in Christ with our Christian fellowship and daily conduct. Because we are filled with the Spirit, Christians regularly rejoice together, give thanks to God for one another, and care for one another. In this way we revere our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹as you

sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

John 6:51-58

In John's gospel, the feeding of the five thousand leads to extended teaching in which Jesus identifies himself as the true "bread of life." Finally, in these verses, he makes a connection that would not be understood until after his death, in light of the church's celebration of holy communion.

[Jesus said,] "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have

eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; ⁵⁵for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."