

## Prayers of Intercession

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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs (*local water sources may be named*). Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Sustain international aid workers and peacemakers. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

## Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Psalm 89:5-37. **Tuesday** Acts 8:4-13. **Wednesday** Isaiah 51:1-16. **Thursday** (commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, martyr, died 1968) Psalm 40:1-11. **Friday** Acts 1:1-5. **Saturday** (commemoration of Anthony of Egypt, renewer of the church, died around 356; Pachomius, renewer of the church, died 346) 1 Kings 19:19-21. **Second Sunday after Epiphany** (week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins) Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42.

CELEBRATE January 11, 2026

Volume 57, Number 1

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1083-9242, USPS 783-460) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 411 Washington Avenue North, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN, 55401. Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, MN and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Celebrate, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-1553. Printed in U.S.A. Price per weekly part \$5.75 per 100 copies; price in Canada subject to exchange rates. Minimum order 50 copies of each issue; all orders must be in multiples of 50. Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced without written permission. © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Readings from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Prayer of the day, psalm, and readings during the week from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006, adm. Augsburg Fortress. Refrain music by Robert Weidner. Refrain accompaniment is in *Worship for Worship*, Year A (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Please visit our website at [augsburgfortress.org](http://augsburgfortress.org). Liturgical year A. CELEBRATE is protected through trademark registration in the U.S.A. and Canada.

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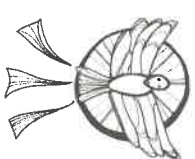
Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Provide safety and support for those seeking asylum or in need of shelter. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**



# Celebrate

Baptism of Our Lord  
January 11, 2026

*In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.*

## Prayer of the Day

O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading

Isaiah 42:1-9

*God's servant is endowed with God's spirit in order to bring justice to the nations. The servant will not exercise authority boisterously or with violence, nor will weariness ever prevent the fulfilling of the servant's task. God's old promises have been fulfilled; the servant's new assignment is to bring light to the nations.*

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen, in whom my soul  
delights;

I have put my spirit upon him;  
he will bring forth justice to the  
nations.

<sup>2</sup>He will not cry out or lift up his  
voice

or make it heard in the street;  
<sup>3</sup>a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will  
not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth  
justice.

<sup>4</sup>He will not grow faint or be crushed  
until he has established justice in  
the earth,  
and the coastlands wait for his  
teaching.

<sup>5</sup>Thus says God, the LORD,  
who created the heavens and  
stretched them out,  
who spread out the earth and  
what comes from it,

who gives breath to the people  
upon it  
and spirit to those who walk in it:

<sup>6</sup>I am the LORD; I have called you in  
righteousness;  
I have taken you by the hand and  
kept you;

I have given you as a covenant to the  
people,  
a light to the nations,

<sup>7</sup>to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the  
dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in  
darkness.

continued



The voice of the LORD is up - on the wa - ters.

Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,

ascribe to the LORD glo-ry and strength.

**2**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's 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. **R**

**5**The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars trees;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

**6**the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.

**7**The voice of the LORD  
bursts forth in lightning flashes.

**8**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. **R**

**9**The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees wither  
and strips the forests bare.

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 forevermore.

**11**O LORD, give strength to your people;  
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace. **R**

First Reading, continued

**1**I am the LORD; that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other,  
nor my praise to idols.

**9**See, the former things have come  
to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth,  
I tell you of them.

## Second Reading

Acts 10:34-43

*Peter crosses the sharp religious boundary separating Jews from gentiles and proclaims the good news of God's inclusive forgiveness in Jesus' name to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. As a result of Peter's preaching, Cornelius and his family become the first gentiles to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality,<sup>35</sup> but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him.<sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all.<sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced:<sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

<sup>39</sup>We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,<sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear,<sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.<sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead.<sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

## Gospel

Matthew 3:13-17

*Before Jesus begins his ministry, he is baptized by John, touched by the Spirit, and identified publicly as God's child.*

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him.<sup>13</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"<sup>14</sup> But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.

<sup>15</sup>And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him.<sup>16</sup> And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."