Prayers of Intercession

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

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

You call us by name and form us. We give thanks for the gift of baptism. Nurture the baptized and equip people sent to proclaim the good news, especially Young Adults in Global Mission and international congregations. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Your voice sounds over the waters. Speak words of healing over the rivers and lakes, seas and oceans (*local bodies of water may be named*). Heeding your voice, lead us to care for water, and the land and creatures it nourishes. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You give strength to your people. Uphold all who serve the common good. Guide federal and state legislators, city and county officials, judges and juries. Strengthen our resolve to serve all in need. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You are with us in challenging times. Draw near to all who are ill, undergoing treatment, or recovering from surgery (*especially*). Accompany individuals and families affected by addiction or mental health challenges. Uphold each person as your beloved. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

You draw us into community. Embolden ministries of racial reconciliation, nurture work on behalf of immigrants and refugees, and equip each to use their gifts for the sake of neighbors near and far. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You grant us peace. Comfort all who grieve. Dwell with us in this life and, at the last, join us with the saints whom you have created, formed, and named. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 106:1-12. **Tuesday** 1 John 5:13-21. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, martyr, 1968) Numbers 27:1-11. **Thursday** Psalm 36:5-10. **Friday** (commemoration of Antony of Egypt, renewer of the church, c. 356, and Pachomius, renewer of the church, 346) 1 Corinthians 7:1-7. **Saturday** (Confession of Peter, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins) Matthew 16:13-19. **Second Sunday after Epiphany** (commemoration of Henry, Bishop of Uppsala, martyr, 1156) Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11.

CELEBRATE January 12, 2025 Volume 56, Number 1

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1083-3242, USPS 763-460) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 411 Washington Avenue North, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN, 55401. Periodicals postage paid in 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 $5.79 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 © 2024 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Readings from New Revised Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Prayer of the day, psalm, and readings during the week from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Refrain music by Robert Hobby. Refrain accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship, Year C* (Augsburg Fortress, 2006). Please visit our website at augsburgfortress.org. Lectionary year C.
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Celebrate

Baptism of Our Lord
January 12, 2025

Today's festival rejoices in God's blessings. We recall and celebrate our adoption as God's children, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promised company of almighty God when we "pass through the waters . . . the rivers . . . fire." On this day the heavens open again for this assembly, and we receive the gift of God's Beloved, Jesus, in bread and wine.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, 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 43:1-7

Near the end of Israel's exile in Babylon, God promises to bring the people home. They need no longer be afraid, because the one who formed, created, and called them by name now redeems them from all their enemies. God declares them precious and honored, and God loves them.

But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
2When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
3For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
4Because you are precious in my sight,
and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
5Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
6I will say to the north, "Give them up,"
and to the south, "Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
7everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

Psalm — Psalm 29; refrain, Ps. 29:3

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 beau- | ty 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 pow- | erful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a | voice of splendor. R
[5]The voice of the LORD breaks the | cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the ce- | dars 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 wilder- | ness of Kadesh. R
[9]The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe
and strips the | forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are | crying, "Glory!"
[10]The LORD sits enthroned a- | bove the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king for- | evermore.
[11]O LORD, give strength | to your people;
give them, O LORD, the bless- | ings of peace. **R**

Second Reading — Acts 8:14-17

Peter and John are sent to support the new Christians in Samaria, a group that was recently baptized after hearing the good news of Christ through the preaching of Philip. Here the Samaritans receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands.

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. [15]The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit [16](for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; 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.

Gospel — Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

The reading opens with questions about the identity of the Messiah. John the Baptist insists that he is not the Messiah; instead he points ahead to one who is coming. And whether the voice of God was heard by all or only by Jesus, God settles the matter: Jesus is God's beloved Son.

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, [16]John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. [17]His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

[21]Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, [22]and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."