Prayers of Intercession

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

Drawn into the embrace of the holy Trinity, we lift our prayers for the wholeness of the church, the world, and all creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. As you raised up apostles like Peter and Paul, raise us up to share your life-giving gospel. Enrich the proclamation of bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the earth. As you rescued Paul from the lion's mouth, rescue your creation from harm. Sustain fragile ecosystems; watch over dwindling numbers of insects, birds, and fish; and open our hearts to regard this earth as a gift. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the nations. As you bid Peter to feed your sheep, bid our leaders to feed all in need and work for their good. Make peace in places of conflict (*especially*), and bring justice to each community. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for all who suffer. As you stood by Paul and gave him strength, stand by all who know loneliness, and give strength to all who know persecution. Comfort those in grief and heal those who are sick (*especially*). Channel our restlessness into your work in the world. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

We pray for this assembly. As you freed Peter from prison, free us from lethargy and fear. Loose the chains of timidity and doubt, and teach us to pray fervently. Strengthen the ministry of prison chaplains and ministries, and accompany all who are incarcerated and their families. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for all who rest in your eternal mercy. As you reserved a crown of righteousness for Paul, reserve for us a place in your heavenly kingdom, and bring us to life that knows no end. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Gather all our prayers in your mercy, O God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday 1 John 2:7-11. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Catherine Winkworth, 1878; John Mason Neale, 1866; hymn translators) Psalm 140. **Wednesday** Matthew 10:16-25. **Thursday** (Thomas, Apostle) John 14:1-7. **Friday** Psalm 66:1-9. **Saturday** Zechariah 14:10-21. **4th Sunday after Pentecost** (commemoration of Jan Hus, martyr, 1415) Isaiah 66:10-14; Psalm 66:1-9; Galatians 6:[1-6] 7-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20.

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Celebrate

Peter and Paul, Apostles
June 29, 2025

Today we celebrate two great figures of the early church, Peter and Paul, who represent the spread of the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles and, according to tradition, were martyred on this date. The witness of Peter and Paul inspires us as we seek ways to faithfully proclaim the gospel in our contemporary context.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, we praise you that your blessed apostles Peter and Paul glorified you by their martyrdoms. Grant that your church throughout the world may always be instructed by their teaching and example, be knit together in unity by your Spirit, and ever stand firm upon the one foundation who is Jesus Christ our Lord, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading — Acts 12:1-11

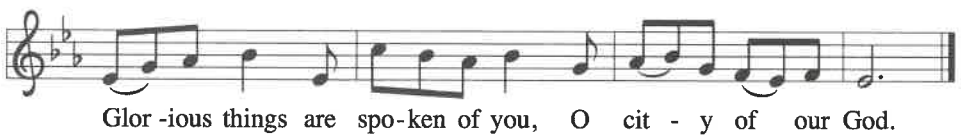
King Herod had James killed and had Peter put in prison, under heavy guard. In what Peter first believes is only a vision, an angel leads him past unseeing guards, out of the prison, and to freedom.

About that time King Herod laid
violent hands upon some who
belonged to the church. [2]He had
James, the brother of John, killed with
the sword. [3]After he saw that it pleased
the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter
also. (This was during the festival of
Unleavened Bread.) [4]When he had
seized him, he put him in prison
and handed him over to four squads
of soldiers to guard him, intending
to bring him out to the people after
the Passover. [5]While Peter was kept in
prison, the church prayed fervently to
God for him.

[6]The very night before Herod was
going to bring him out, Peter, bound
with two chains, was sleeping between
two soldiers, while guards in front of
the door were keeping watch over the
prison. [7]Suddenly an angel of the Lord
appeared and a light shone in the cell.
He tapped Peter on the side and woke
him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the
chains fell off his wrists. [8]The angel
said to him, "Fasten your belt and put
on your sandals." He did so. Then he
said to him, "Wrap your cloak around
you and follow me." [9]Peter went out
and followed him; he did not realize
that what was happening with the
angel's help was real; he thought
he was seeing a vision. [10]After they
had passed the first and the second
guard, they came before the iron gate
leading into the city. It opened for
them of its own accord, and they went
outside and walked along a lane, when
suddenly the angel left him. [11]Then
Peter came to himself and said, "Now
I am sure that the Lord has sent his
angel and rescued me from the hands
of Herod and from all that the Jewish
people were expecting."

Psalm

Psalm 87:1-3, 5-7; refrain, Ps. 87:3



On the | holy mountain
stands the city | God has founded;
[2]**the LORD loves the | gates of Zion**
more than all the dwell- | ings of Jacob. R
[3]Glorious things are spo- | ken of you,
O city | of our God.
[5]**Of the city it shall be said, "Everyone was | born in Zion,**
and the Most High shall sus- | tain the city."
[6]Enrolling the nations, the | LORD records:
"These al- | so were born there."
[7]**The singers and the danc- | ers will say,**
"All my fresh springs | are in you." R

Second Reading

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18

Paul has faithfully persevered in the mission the Lord had given to him. Near life's end he rests in the promise of eternal life, confident that the Lord who has rescued him in the past will bring him into the heavenly kingdom.

As for me, I am already being poured
out as a libation, and the time of my
departure has come. [7]I have fought
the good fight, I have finished the
race, I have kept the faith. [8]From now
on there is reserved for me the crown
of righteousness, which the Lord, the
righteous judge, will give me on that
day, and not only to me but also to all
who have longed for his appearing.

[17]But the Lord stood by me and
gave me strength, so that through
me the message might be fully pro-
claimed and all the Gentiles might
hear it. So I was rescued from the li-
on's mouth. [18]The Lord will rescue me
from every evil attack and save me for
his heavenly kingdom. To him be the
glory forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

John 21:15-19

Jesus invites Simon Peter to declare his love for him three times, in a manner reminiscent of the three times that Peter earlier denied Christ. Jesus commissions him to feed his sheep and predicts that he will die as a martyr for God.

When they had finished breakfast,
Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son
of John, do you love me more than
these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord;
you know that I love you." Jesus said to
him, "Feed my lambs." [16]A second time
he said to him, "Simon son of John,
do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes,
Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus
said to him, "Tend my sheep." [17]He
said to him the third time, "Simon son
of John, do you love me?" Peter felt
hurt because he said to him the third
time, "Do you love me?" And he said
to him, "Lord, you know everything;
you know that I love you." Jesus said
to him, "Feed my sheep. [18]Very truly,
I tell you, when you were younger,
you used to fasten your own belt and
to go wherever you wished. But when
you grow old, you will stretch out your
hands, and someone else will fasten a
belt around you and take you where
you do not wish to go." [19](He said this
to indicate the kind of death by which
he would glorify God.) After this he
said to him, "Follow me."