

## Prayers of Intercession

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

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease (especially). Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith (especially *Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, whom we commemorate today*). Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.  
**Amen.**

# Celebrate



## Second Sunday of Advent December 7, 2025

*At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.*

### Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; 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 describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.*

#### Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump  
of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his  
roots.  
The spirit of the LORD shall rest  
on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and  
understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear  
of the LORD.  
His delight shall be in the fear of the  
LORD.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see  
or decide by what his ears hear,  
but with righteousness he shall judge  
for the poor  
and decide with equity for the  
oppressed of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of  
his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he  
shall kill the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the belt around  
his waist  
and faithfulness the belt around his  
loins.  
The wolf shall live with the lamb;  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;  
the calf and the lion will feed together,  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze;  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
The nursing child shall play over the  
hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its  
hand on the adder's den.  
They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the  
knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.  
On that day the root of Jesse shall stand  
as a signal to the peoples; the nations  
shall inquire of him, and his dwelling  
shall be glorious.

### Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Psalm 21. **Tuesday** Romans 15:14-21. **Wednesday** Genesis 15:1-18. **Thursday** Psalm 146:5-10. **Friday** 2 Peter 3:1-18. **Saturday** (commemoration of Lucy, martyr, died 304) 1 Samuel 2:1-8. **Third Sunday of Advent** (commemoration of John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591) Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11.

#### CELEBRATE December 7, 2025

Volume 57, Number 1

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1083-3242, USPS 783-480) 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 55401-1553. 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 © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Revised October 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, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Refrain music by Robert A. Hobby. Refrain accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship: Year A* (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Please visit our website at [augsburgfortress.org](http://augsburgfortress.org). Lectionary year A.

ITEM014617

2 of 13

CELEBRATE is protected through trademark registration in the U.S.A. and Canada.

Tracks 1 and 2

May the right - teous flour - ish;  
let there be an a - bun - dance of peace.

Give the king your jus- ' tice, O God,  
and your righteousness to ' the king's son;  
**2**that he may rule your ' people righteously  
and the ' poor with justice;  
**3**that the mountains may bring prosperity ' to the people,  
and the ' hills, in righteousness.  
**4**Let him defend the needy a- ' mong the people, **R**  
rescue the poor, and crush ' the oppressor. **R**  
**5**May he live as long as the sun and ' moon endure,  
from one generation ' to another.  
**6**Let him come down like rain upon ' the mown field,  
like showers that wa- ' ter the earth.  
**7**In his time may the ' righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace  
till the moon shall ' be no more.  
**18**Blessed are you, LORD God, the ' God of Israel;  
you alone do ' wondrous deeds!  
**19**And blessed be your glorious ' name forever,  
and may all the earth be filled with your glory.  
A- ' men. Amen. **R**

*God's promise to include gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.*

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.  
**5**May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, **6**so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**7**Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. **8**For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors **9**and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name";  
**10**and again he says,  
"Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people";  
**11**and again,  
"Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him";  
**12**and again Isaiah says,  
"The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles;

in him the gentiles shall hope."  
**13**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Gospel

## Matthew 3:1-12

*Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.*

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,  
**2**"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." **3**This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight." "

**4**Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. **5**Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, **6**and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

**7**But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers!

Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? **8**Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, **9**and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. **10**Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

**11**"I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. **12**His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."