Prayers of Intercession

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

In hope and expectation, we bring to God our prayers for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Prepare your church for the mystery of Christ's incarnation. Strengthen your people with the promises made known in word and sacrament, in our common life, and in service with our neighbors (*local ministries of fellowship or service may be named*). God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Reveal your glory in the goodness and wonder of your creation. Inspire renewed commitments by individuals, cities, countries, and the global community to practices and policies that safeguard the planet. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Defend all who work for peace and cooperation among towns and cities, states and nations. Point us toward new solutions to long-standing challenges in our communities, and empower us and our leaders to act with clarity and wisdom. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Speak tenderly to all who cry out in hunger, pain, or distress. Bring comfort and connection to all who are hospitalized, homebound, or living in nursing homes (*especially*). Encourage those who care for them. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Stir up our commitment to your justice, especially for the most vulnerable communities among us. Transform the stories, structures, and attitudes that maintain the inequities among us. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We praise you for the wisdom of all the faithful saints. Guard our waking and our sleeping, until with (*Nicholas and*) all the faithful departed, we find our rest in you. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We entrust these and the prayers of our hearts to you, most holy God, in the name of Christ Jesus our Savior.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (commemoration of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, 397) Psalm 27. **Tuesday** Isaiah 4:2-6. **Wednesday** Luke 1:5-17. **Thursday** Psalm 126. **Friday** Philippians 3:12-16. **Saturday** Habakkuk 3:13-19. **Third Sunday of Advent** (commemoration of Lucy, martyr, 304) Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126 *or* Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28.

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Celebrate

Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2026

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; 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 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

3 A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
4 Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

6 A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All flesh is grass;
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
7 The grass withers; the flower fades,
[when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
8 The grass withers; the flower fades,]
but the word of our God will stand forever.
9 Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good news;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him
and his recompense before him.

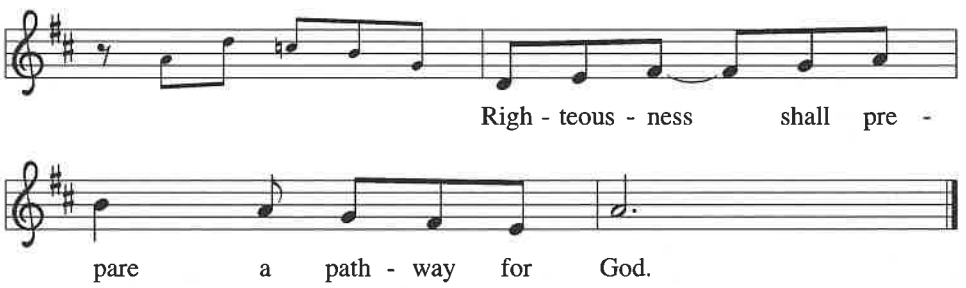
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First Reading, continued

[11]He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms
and carry them in his bosom
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Psalm

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; refrain, Ps. 85:13



You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.
[2]**You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people**
and blotted out | all their sins.
[8]I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people
and to those who turn their | hearts to you.
[9]**Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you,**
that your glory may dwell | in our land. R
[10]Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.
[11]**Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,**
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.
[12]The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,
and our land will | yield its increase.
[13]**Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD**
and shall prepare for | God a pathway. R

Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. [9]The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance. [10]But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be destroyed with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

[11]Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, [12]waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and destroyed and the elements will melt with fire? [13]But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

[14]Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish, [15a]and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.

[2]As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way,
[3]the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight,' "

[4]so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. [5]And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. [6]Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. [7]He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. [8]I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."