

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.

God of eternal wisdom, we pray for your church, which is being transformed by your word. Bless the church with your wisdom and guidance. Let us notice and take part in the new thing you are doing. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Your creation sustains us and all living creatures. Grant us humility to acknowledge the ways we bring harm to the earth. Grant us courage to make effective change so that all lands and living things prosper. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Embolden leaders of nations, corporations, and all in authority, that they lovingly tend those in their charge. Help them to respond to all who cry out in need. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (commemoration of Ansgar, Bishop of Hamburg, missionary to Denmark and Sweden, 865) 1 Kings 17:8-16. **Tuesday** Psalm 56. **Wednesday** (commemoration of The Martyrs of Japan, 1597) Luke 19:41-44. **Thursday** Psalm 138. **Friday** Acts 9:26-31. **Saturday** Judges 3:7-11. **Fifth Sunday after Epiphany** Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]; Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11.

Provide for those whose hunger runs deep due to isolation, loneliness, or illness (*especially*). Send your Spirit so that all are filled with your presence and experience welcome from their communities. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the young people in our congregations. May their voices be celebrated. Give youth a place of honor and value among us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We remember those who have gone before us. Let their faithful example continue to bear witness to us all. 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.**



Celebrate

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
February 2, 2025

The glory of God is often revealed when and where it is least expected. God uses our lips to declare that glory, inexperienced and hesitant though they may be. God uses our love to demonstrate that glory and so urges us to exercise it. God uses Jesus of Nazareth, water and the word, bread and wine, to reveal God's glory where and when God chooses. Take heed, lest the glory of God slip through our midst unnoticed.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Jeremiah 1:4-10

God calls Jeremiah to be a prophet and consecrates him in the womb. Jeremiah's task is to preach God's word amid the difficult political realities of his time, before the Babylonian exile. He is to make God known not only to Judah, but also to the nations.

Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

⁵"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

⁶Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." ⁷But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom

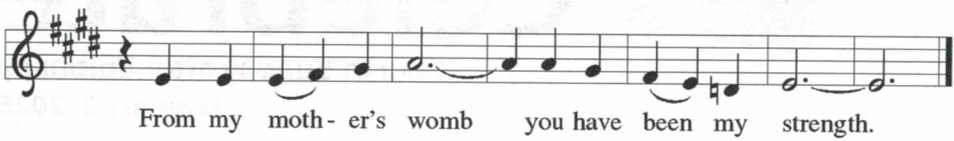
I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you.

⁸Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD."

⁹Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me,

"Now I have put my words in your mouth.

¹⁰See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."



In you, O LORD, have I ¹ taken refuge;
let me never be ¹ put to shame.
**²In your righteousness, deliver me and ¹ set me free;
incline your ear to ¹ me and save me.**
**³Be my strong rock, a castle to ¹ keep me safe;
you are my crag ¹ and my stronghold.**
**⁴Deliver me, my God, from the hand ¹ of the wicked,
from the clutches of the evildoer and ¹ the oppressor. R**
**⁵For you are my hope, ¹ O Lord God,
my confidence since ¹ I was young.**
**⁶I have been sustained by you ever since I was born;
from my mother's womb you have ¹ been my strength;
my praise shall be al- ¹ ways of you. R**

Second Reading

Christians in Corinth prided themselves on their spiritual gifts. Paul reminds them that God gives us many gifts through the Holy Spirit, but the purpose behind all of them is love, the kind of love that God showed us in Jesus Christ.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.
⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. ⁹For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Gospel

People in Jesus' hometown are initially pleased when he says that God will free the oppressed. Their pleasure turns to rage when he reminds them that God's prophetic mission typically pushes beyond human boundaries so that mercy and healing are extended to those regarded as outsiders.

Then [Jesus] began to say to [all in the synagogue in Nazareth], "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" ²³He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" ²⁴And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. ²⁵But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the

heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.