

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

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence.

We pray, O God, for the church. Unite us with any on the margins, that the whole world recognizes that your mercy is greater than our human capacity to restrict it. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray, O God, for creation. Tend forests and fields and safeguard all cattle, birds, and wild animals. Preserve lakes, rivers, and oceans and send rains to water the earth. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray, O God, for the nations. Awaken in our leaders compassion for people who have too often felt forgotten or neglected, and inspire policy solutions that promote equity and inclusion. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Barnabas, Apostle [transferred]) Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3. **Tuesday** Hosea 8:11-14; 10:1-2. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea, died 379; Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, died around 385; Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Constantinople, died around 389; Macrina, teacher, died around 379) Psalm 40:1-8. **Thursday** Exodus 4:18-23. **Friday** Exodus 4:27-31. **Saturday** (commemoration of Emanuel Nine, martyrs, died 2015) Mark 7:1-13. **Third Sunday after Pentecost** Exodus 19:2-8a; Psalm 100; Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35—10:8 [9-23].

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We pray, O God, for all who are in need. Accompany anyone enduring chronic illness, any who suffer in secret, and those grieving a loved one's death. Send healing for all who plead for relief from sickness or pain (*especially*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray, O God, for the eradication of racial hatred. On this week when we commemorate the Emanuel Nine, we implore you to cast out the demons of white supremacy that make us believe lies about ourselves and our neighbors. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks, O God, for Barnabas and all the saints (*especially*). Renew our faith that you can do what you have promised and raise us, with all our beloved dead, to new life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**



Celebrate

Sunday, June 11, 2023
2nd Sunday after Pentecost

Though Jesus was a devout Jew who practiced his faith, he was criticized for eating with tax collectors and sinners—the religiously nonobservant. Jesus criticizes the self-righteous and reminds us that mercy is to be at the heart of our religious practices. God continues to be made known in those on the margins of society, like Matthew the tax collector and the hemorrhaging woman. As we gather each Lord's day we receive the healing that makes us well and sends us forth to be signs of God's mercy for the world.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you are the source of life and the ground of our being. By the power of your Spirit bring healing to this wounded world, and raise us to the new life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Hosea 5:15—6:6

Because the people have trusted in military powers instead of God and have engaged in idolatrous worship practices, God decides to withdraw until Israel acknowledges its guilt and seeks God's face. The response of the people does not acknowledge this guilt and is as fickle as fog or dew burned away quickly by the sun. God desires loyalty rather than words or meaningless deeds.

I will return again to my place
until they acknowledge their guilt and
seek my face.
In their distress they will beg my favor:
^{6:1}“Come, let us return to the LORD;
for it is he who has torn, and he will
heal us;
he has struck down, and he will bind
us up.
²After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.
³Let us know, let us press on to know the
LORD;
his appearing is as sure as the dawn;

he will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the
earth.”
⁴What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
⁵Therefore I have hewn them by the
prophets,
I have killed them by the words of my
mouth,
and my judgment goes forth as the
light.
⁶For I desire steadfast love and not
sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather than
burnt offerings.



Call up-on me in the day of trou-ble, says your God.

“Listen, my people, and I will speak:
Israel, I will bear wit-ness against you;
for I am God, your God.

**8 I do not accuse you because of your sacrifices;
your burnt offerings are always before me.**

**9 I will not accept a calf from your stalls,
nor goats from your pens;**

**10 for all the wild animals of the forest are mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills. R**

**11 I know every bird of the mountains,
and the creatures of the fields are mine.**

**12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the whole world is mine and all that is in it.**

**13 Do you think I eat the flesh of bulls,
or drink the blood of goats?**

**14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving
and make good your vows to the Most High.**

**15 Call upon me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall honor me.” R**

Paul presents Abraham as a living model of right relationships. For Abraham and for us, a right relationship with God involves trusting that God's promises will be fulfilled because God makes the dead alive and calls into existence what otherwise does not exist.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become

“the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So numerous shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²Therefore his faith “was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Gospel

Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

Jesus demonstrates God's mercy and power, accepting the unacceptable and curing the incurable. Even the dead receive new life.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him.

¹⁰And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

¹⁸While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay

your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. ²³When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴he said, “Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶And the report of this spread throughout that district.