

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

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Holy One who acts righteously, equip your church as witnesses of your goodness to go and tell others of your abundant love, that they may believe that Jesus is our salvation and life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Renew your people's commitment to use resources responsibly and to live well with your creation. Invite us to recognize and nurture signs of resurrection life in the natural world. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Direct those who are given human authority to lead with humility and compassion. By your Holy Spirit channel their attention toward serving those who are most in need. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

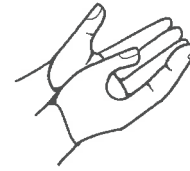
Uphold your children who cry out to you (*especially*). Wherever people are overcome by the fear of death, breathe into them your life and peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Inspire those who lead your people in worship and praise (*especially the art and music ministries of this congregation*). With joyful motion and sound, send us forth with praise that we cannot keep to ourselves. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Give us the words of your saints who, like Thomas, boldly confessed your Son as Lord and God. With Jesus our leader, empower us to live according to his ways. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**



Celebrate

Second Sunday of Easter
April 24, 2022

In spite of all we have heard and all we have seen, it is often hard to believe. Because it is hard to believe, we will invest ourselves in the Easter mystery for fifty days (a week of weeks). Because it is hard to believe, John the evangelist will provide sign after sign celebrating Jesus' victory over death. Because it is hard to believe, the risen Jesus will return to us again and again in the mystery of holy communion, inviting us to touch and taste his presence, and offering us his peace.

Prayer of the Day

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Acts 5:27-32

Peter has been arrested for proclaiming the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. His response to the charges of the high priest summarizes the early church's proclamation of forgiveness of sin through repentance.

When they had brought [the apostles,] they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, ²⁸saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." ²⁹But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rath-

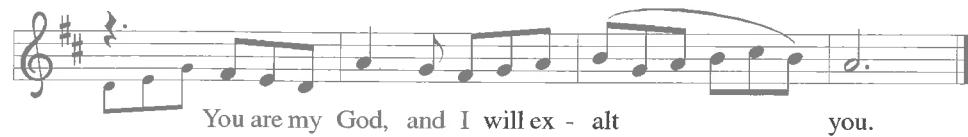
er than any human authority. ³⁰The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. ³¹God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Mark, Evangelist) Mark 1:1-15. **Tuesday** Esther 8:1-17. **Wednesday** Luke 12:4-12. **Thursday** Psalm 30. **Friday** (commemoration of Catherine of Siena, theologian, 1380) Isaiah 6:1-4. **Saturday** Genesis 18:1-8. **Third Sunday of Easter** Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19.

CELEBRATE April 24, 2022

Volume 53, Number 2



The LORD is my strength ¹ and my song,
and has become ¹ my salvation.

¹⁵Shouts of rejoicing and salvation echo in the tents ¹ of the righteous:

“The right hand of the ¹ LORD acts valiantly!

¹⁶The right hand of the LORD ¹ is exalted!

The right hand of the ¹ LORD acts valiantly!”

¹⁷**I shall not ¹ die, but live,**

and declare the works ¹ of the LORD. R

¹⁸The LORD indeed pun- ¹ ished me sorely,

but did not hand me o- ¹ ver to death.

¹⁹**Open for me the ¹ gates of righteousness;**

I will enter them and give thanks ¹ to the LORD.

²⁰“This is the gate ¹ of the LORD;

here the righ- ¹ teous may enter.”

²¹**I give thanks to you, for you have ¹ answered me**

and you have become ¹ my salvation. R

²²The stone that the build- ¹ ers rejected

has become the chief ¹ cornerstone.

²³**By the LORD has ¹ this been done;**

it is marvelous ¹ in our eyes.

²⁴This is the day that the ¹ LORD has made;

let us rejoice and be ¹ glad in it.

²⁵**Hosanna! ¹ O LORD, save us!**

We pray to you, LORD, pros- ¹ per our days! R

²⁶Blessed is the one who comes in the name ¹ of the LORD;

we bless you from the house ¹ of the LORD.

²⁷**The LORD is God and has giv- ¹ en us light.**

Form a procession with branches up to the corners ¹ of the altar.

²⁸You are my God, and ¹ I will thank you;

you are my God, and I ¹ will exalt you.

²⁹**Give thanks to the LORD, for the ¹ LORD is good;**

God’s mercy en- ¹ dures forever. R

or Psalm 150; refrain, Ps. 150:6

The book of Revelation recounts a mystical vision of the risen Christ experienced by a Christian prophet named John. Here he describes Christ as a timeless redeemer, the beginning, present, and end of all time.

John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶and made us to be a kingdom, priests

serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

⁸“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Gospel

John 20:19-31

The unprecedented events of the day of resurrection continue as the risen Jesus appears to his fearful disciples. A week later, after Thomas worships Jesus, Jesus pronounces that the blessings of the resurrection are also for those who “have not seen and yet believe.”

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the

mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.