

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

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Calling God, you speak with power to your church. Open our hearts and minds to the new things you are declaring. Strengthen bishops, pastors, deacons, lay leaders, and teachers of the faith. Equip the baptized for your reconciling and redeeming work. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, you provide the waters of the earth and in Jesus' baptism you reveal the waters of life. Cleanse and protect oceans, rivers, and watersheds (*local water sources may be named*). Bring relief to parched lands and to communities without access to safe water. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, you never weary of establishing justice. Increase cooperation and constructive dialogue between nations. Guide local, national, and international authorities to govern with equity, vision, and integrity. We pray for those in military service,

for peacemakers, and for our enemies. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Abiding God, your mercy is steadfast. Give sanctuary to people who flee from oppression, war, poverty, and famine. Sustain health care workers, caregivers, first responders, counselors, and all who help and heal. Comfort those who are grieving or experiencing crisis (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Blessing God, in Christ you gather the beloved community. Kindle the gifts of your Spirit in your people. Accompany the newly baptized, those recently ordained, and any beginning a new ministry. Inspire synodical leaders and congregational councils to serve with imagination and wisdom. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Promising God, your faithfulness endures throughout all generations. We give thanks for those who have died in Christ, trusting that we will be united with them and all the saints in Christ's resurrection life. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified. **Amen.**

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 89:5-37. **Tuesday** Jeremiah 1:4-10. **Wednesday** Isaiah 51:1-16. **Thursday** Psalm 40:1-11. **Friday** Acts 1:1-5. **Saturday** 1 Kings 19:19-21. **Second Sunday after Epiphany** (commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr., renewer of society, martyr, died 1968) Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42.

CELEBRATE January 8, 2023

Volume 54, Number 1

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1063-3242, USPS 763-460) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 411 Washington Avenue North, Third Floor, Minneapolis, MN, 55401. Periodicals postage paid in St. Paul, MN and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Celebrate, Augsburg Fortress Publishers, P.O. Box 1553, Minneapolis, MN 55440-8730. 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 © 2022 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. May not be reproduced. Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Readings from New Revised Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Prayer of the day, psalm, and readings during the week from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Refrain music by Robert Wetzler. Refrain accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship, Year A* (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Please visit our website at augsburgfortress.org. Lectionary year A. 8 of 14
CELEBRATE is protected through trademark registration in the U.S.A. and Canada. Tracks 1 and 2



Celebrate

Baptism of Our Lord
January 8, 2023

In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.

Prayer of the Day

O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, 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 42:1-9

God's servant is endowed with God's spirit in order to bring justice to the nations. The servant will not exercise authority boisterously or with violence, nor will weariness ever prevent the fulfilling of the servant's task. God's old promises have been fulfilled; the servant's new assignment is to bring light to the nations.

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul
delights;

I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the
nations.

²He will not cry or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;

³a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will
not quench;

he will faithfully bring forth
justice.

⁴He will not grow faint or be
crushed

until he has established justice in
the earth;

and the coastlands wait for his
teaching.

⁵Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and
stretched them out,

who spread out the earth and
what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people

upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:

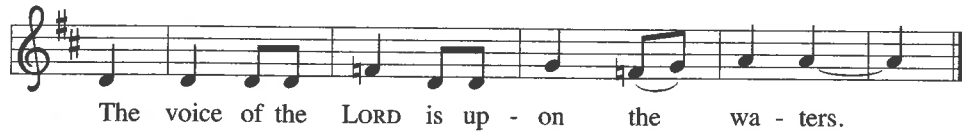
⁶I am the LORD, I have called you in
righteousness,

I have taken you by the hand and
kept you;

I have given you as a covenant to the
people,

a light to the nations,

⁷to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the
dungeon,



- Ascribe to the ¹ LORD, you gods,
ascribe to the LORD glo-¹ ry and strength.
- ²Ascribe to the LORD the glory ¹ due God's name;
worship the LORD in the beau-¹ ty of holiness.
- ³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of ¹ glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the ¹ mighty waters.
- ⁴The voice of the LORD is a pow-¹ erful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a ¹ voice of splendor. **R**
- ⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the ¹ cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the ce-¹ dars of Lebanon;
- ⁶the LORD makes Lebanon skip ¹ like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a ¹ young wild ox.
- ⁷The voice ¹ of the LORD
bursts forth in ¹ lightning flashes.
- ⁸The voice of the LORD ¹ shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilder-¹ ness of Kadesh. **R**
- ⁹The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe
and strips the ¹ forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are ¹ crying, "Glory!"
- ¹⁰The LORD sits enthroned a-¹ bove the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king for-¹ evermore.
- ¹¹O LORD, give strength ¹ to your people;
give them, O LORD, the bless-¹ ings of peace. **R**

First Reading, continued

from the prison those who sit in
darkness.
⁸I am the LORD, that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.

⁹See, the former things have come to
pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

Second Reading

Acts 10:34-43

Peter crosses the sharp religious boundary separating Jews from Gentiles and proclaims the good news of God's inclusive forgiveness in Jesus' name to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. As a result of Peter's preaching, Cornelius and his family become the first Gentiles to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Peter began to speak to [Cornelius and his household]: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

³⁹We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Gospel

Matthew 3:13-17

Before Jesus begins his ministry, he is baptized by John, touched by the Spirit, and identified publicly as God's child.

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented.

¹⁶And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."