

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

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A brief silence.

Holy God, you have given the church the holy name of Jesus, and in him we are your beloved children. Unite us in mission through the power of his Spirit. Make us worthy of the name we bear, the name in which we pray. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Renewing God, restore your glory to the earth. Awaken humanity to our kinship with all living things that depend on your provision. Teach us to care for the earth and safeguard its treasures for those who come after us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Peacemaking God, reconcile the nations. Lead those in conflict into negotiation, especially in areas of religious or ethnic strife (*regions and situations may be named*). End acts of aggression and violence carried out in your name. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Delivering God, rescue our siblings in any danger, especially in communities where disaster and disease threaten (*especially*). Move those in authority to respond with speed and compassion. We pray for the safety of first responders, health care workers, and all who protect us. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Healing God, raise up any who are bowed down with illness or sorrow. Deepen our care and concern for one another. We lift to you all who are undergoing transition in relationships, occupation, living situation, or health condition (*especially*). God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Saving God, redeem us and grant us eternal peace. We give thanks for the faithful departed who now rest in your undying love, made known to us in Jesus our Emmanuel. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (commemoration of Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe, renewer of the church, died 1872) Psalm 72. **Tuesday** Genesis 28:10-22. **Wednesday** Exodus 3:1-5. **Thursday** Hebrews 11:32—12:2. **Friday** (Epiphany of Our Lord) Matthew 2:1-12. **Saturday** 1 Kings 10:1-13. **Baptism of Our Lord** Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17.

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Celebrate

Name of Jesus
January 1, 2023

From the beginning, through baptism, we are called Christian. We were “Christ-ened” at the font. Bearing Christ’s name, we share the same Father and are invited to address this parent intimately: Abba! Jesus bears our sins in humble obedience to the will of God. Today we pray that the mind of Christ, whose name we bear, would be our own. It is a good way to begin, again, another year.

Prayer of the Day

Eternal Father, you gave your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be a sign of our salvation. Plant in every heart the love of the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Numbers 6:22-27

God commanded Aaron to say these words, known as the Aaronic benediction, in blessing the people of Israel. We too are marked with God’s name and God’s blessing as we are sent from our assemblies into the world.

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
²³Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them,
²⁴The LORD bless you and keep you;

²⁵the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
²⁶the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
²⁷So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.



How ma - jes - tic is your name in all the earth!

O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!—

²you whose glory is chanted above the heavens

out of the mouths of infants and children;

you have set up a fortress against your enemies,

to silence the foe and avenger.

³When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

⁴what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them,

human beings that you should care for them? **R**

⁵Yet you have made them little less than divine;

with glory and honor you crown them.

⁶You have made them rule over the works of your hands;

you have put all things under their feet:

⁷all flocks and cattle,

even the wild beasts of the field,

⁸the birds of the air, the fish of the sea,

and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

O LORD our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth! **R**

Paul proclaims the ultimate significance of the nativity: Jesus was born the Son of God so that, because of him, we all may be God's children.

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are

children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

or Philipians 2:5-11 [not printed]

This early Christian hymn points to Christ's self-emptying obedience on the cross as cause for his exaltation by God and worthy of praise by the entire cosmos.

Eight days after his birth, Jesus is circumcised according to Jewish law and given the name announced by the angel before his conception.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at

what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

²¹After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.