



Sunday, October 18, 2020
20th Sunday after Pentecost

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

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you call us by name and invite us to share your good news. Send your Holy Spirit among preachers, missionaries, and evangelists. We give thanks for the witness of your servant Luke, the evangelist, whom the church commemorates today. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of praise, the heavens and all creation declare your salvation. From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the whole universe show forth your goodness. Raise up devoted stewards of all that you have made. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all, may your word of justice sound forth in every place. Restore divided nations and communities with reconciling truth. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of light, we pray for those living with pain, illness, isolation, grief, anger, or doubt (*especially*). Join their voices in a new song, assuring them that you call them each by name. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of truth, you show no partiality. May your spirit guide the work of justices, magistrates, court officials, and all vocations of the law, that your promise of restoration may be known. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Living God, as you raised Jesus from the dead, so raise up those who have died in you (*especially*). We give thanks for their witness, confident of your rescuing welcome for all. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Luke, Evangelist [transferred]) Luke 1:1-4; 24:44-53. **Tuesday** Daniel 3:19-30. **Wednesday** Matthew 17:22-27. **Thursday** Psalm 1. **Friday** (commemoration of James of Jerusalem, martyr, died around 62) Titus 2:7-8, 11-15. **Saturday** John 5:39-47. **Reformation Sunday** Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 46; Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36.

CELEBRATE October 18, 2020 (Lectionary 29)

Volume 51, Number 4

CELEBRATE (ISSN 1083-3242, USPS 763-460) is published quarterly by Augsburg Fortress, 510 Marquette Ave, Suite 800, Minneapolis, MN, 55402. Periodicals postage paid in Twin Cities, 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 \$4.90 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 © 2020 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 John W. Becker. Refrain accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship, Year A* (Augsburg Fortress, 2007). Please visit our Web site at augsburgfortress.org. Lectionary year A. 8 of 13
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In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 45:1-7

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

Thus says the LORD to his anointed,
to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
²I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of
bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
³I will give you the treasures of
darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the
LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you by
your name.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not
know me.
⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not
know me,
⁶so that they may know, from the rising
of the sun
and from the west, that there is no
one besides me;
I am the LORD, and there is no
other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the LORD do all these things.



As - crite to the LORD hon - or and power.

Sing to the LORD ¹ a new song;
sing to the LORD, ¹ all the earth.

²Sing to the LORD, bless the name ¹ of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from ¹ day to day.

³Declare God's glory a- ¹ mong the nations
and God's wonders a- ¹ mong all peoples.

⁴For great is the LORD and greatly ¹ to be praised,
more to be feared ¹ than all gods. **R**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they ¹ are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have ¹ made the heavens.

⁶Majesty and magnificence are ¹ in your presence;
power and splendor are in your ¹ sanctuary.

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families ¹ of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD hon- ¹ or and power.

⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the ¹ holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts ¹ of the LORD. **R**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beau- ¹ ty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, ¹ all the earth.

[¹⁰Tell it out among the nations: "The ¹ LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peo- ¹ ples with equity."

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the ¹ earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that ¹ is therein.

¹²Then shall all the trees of the wood
shout for joy at your com- ¹ ing, O LORD,
for you come to ¹ judge the earth.

¹³You will judge the ¹ world with righteousness
and the peoples ¹ with your truth.] **R**

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians
in God the Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ:

Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all
of you and mention you in our prayers,
constantly ³remembering before our
God and Father your work of faith and
labor of love and steadfastness of hope
in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know,
brothers and sisters beloved by God,
that he has chosen you, ⁵because our
message of the gospel came to you not
in word only, but also in power and in
the Holy Spirit and with full conviction;
just as you know what kind of persons
we proved to be among you for your

sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us
and of the Lord, for in spite of perse-
cution you received the word with joy
inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you
became an example to all the believers
in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the
word of the Lord has sounded forth
from you not only in Macedonia and
Achaia, but in every place your faith
in God has become known, so that we
have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the
people of those regions report about us
what kind of welcome we had among
you, and how you turned to God from
idols, to serve a living and true God,
¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven,
whom he raised from the dead—Jesus,
who rescues us from the wrath that is
coming.

Gospel

Matthew 22:15-22

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

The Pharisees went and plotted to en-
trap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they
sent their disciples to him, along with
the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we
know that you are sincere, and teach
the way of God in accordance with
truth, and show deference to no one;
for you do not regard people with par-
tiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is
it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or
not?" ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice,
said, "Why are you putting me to the

test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin
used for the tax." And they brought
him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them,
"Whose head is this, and whose title?"
²¹They answered, "The emperor's."
Then he said to them, "Give therefore
to the emperor the things that are the
emperor's, and to God the things that
are God's." ²²When they heard this,
they were amazed; and they left him
and went away.