

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

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

In Jesus your realm has come near to us in every place and time. Give your church throughout the world a spirit of humility and repentance; teach us to trust always in the good news of your salvation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You have made a covenant of mercy with every living creature. Protect all the earth's creatures from destruction (*especially . . . here local environmental concerns may be named*). Empower the work of biologists, conservationists, and science educators. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

All your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness. Direct the words and actions of leaders in our community and throughout the world, that they may maintain justice for the lowly. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 77. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, 156) 1 Peter 3:8-18a. **Wednesday** Proverbs 30:1-9. **Thursday** (commemoration of Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, 1921) Psalm 22:23-31. **Friday** Genesis 16:1-6. **Saturday** Mark 8:27-30. **Second Sunday in Lent** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38.

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Tracks 1 and 2



Celebrate

First Sunday in Lent
February 21, 2021

On Ash Wednesday the church began its journey toward baptismal immersion in the death and resurrection of Christ. This year, the Sundays in Lent lead us to focus on five covenants God makes in the Hebrew Scriptures and to use them as lenses through which to view baptism. First Peter connects the way God saved Noah's family in the flood with the way God saves us through the water of baptism. The baptismal covenant is made with us individually, but the new life we are given in baptism is for the sake of the whole world.

Prayer of the Day

Holy God, heavenly Father, in the waters of the flood you saved the chosen, and in the wilderness of temptation you protected your Son from sin. Renew us in the gift of baptism. May your holy angels be with us, that the wicked foe may have no power over us, 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

Genesis 9:8-17

Today's reading is the conclusion to the flood story. Because of human sin, God destroys the earth by flood, saving only Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark. Yet divine destruction gives way to divine commitment. As in the first creation, God blesses humanity and establishes a covenant with all creatures.

God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹"As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." ¹²God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow

in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." ¹⁷God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."



Your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithful-ness.

- To ¹you, O LORD,
I lift ¹up my soul.
- ²My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be ¹put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph ¹over me.
- ³Let none who look to you be ¹put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame ¹who are treacherous.
- ⁴Show me your ¹ways, O LORD,
and teach ¹me your paths. **R**
- ⁵Lead me in your ¹truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all ¹the day long.
- ⁶Remember, O LORD, your compas- ¹sion and love,
for they are from ¹everlasting.
- ⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and ¹my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love
and for the sake of your good- ¹ness, O LORD.
- ⁸You are gracious and up- ¹right, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners ¹in your way. **R**
- ⁹You lead the low- ¹ly in justice
and teach the low- ¹ly your way.
- ¹⁰All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast ¹love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your ¹testimonies. **R**

As God acted through Christ's suffering and death to bring us to God, so God acts through baptism to save us from a sinful existence. This spiritual cleansing marks our new life in Christ.

Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Gospel

Mark 1:9-15

The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." ¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. ¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news."