

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

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Bless the ministries of our neighboring congregations (*especially*). Empower churches throughout the world and encourage missionaries who accompany global neighbors. Kindle in us a spirit of collaboration, that all people may know your loving works. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and come to the aid of those enduring sweltering heat. Nurture wheat and barley crops grown for the nourishment of your people and conserve aquatic habitats and fish populations. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We pray for those who govern. Cast out arrogance, selfishness, and corruption and instruct those who lead to practice compassion and humility. Inspire them with a vision of the common good and a commitment to ensure that all who hunger are fed. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 111. **Tuesday** Romans 15:22-33. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Johann Sebastian Bach, 1750; Heinrich Schütz, 1672; George Frederick Handel, 1759; musicians) Isaiah 25:6-10a. **Thursday** (commemoration of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany; Olaf, King of Norway, martyr, 1030) Psalm 78:23-29. **Friday** 1 Corinthians 11:27-34. **Saturday** Exodus 13:3-10. **10th Sunday after Pentecost** Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15; Psalm 78:23-29; Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35.

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We pray for those bowed down by heavy burdens: those who are unemployed or underemployed, those unable to find affordable housing, and those without health insurance. Console those who grieve and hear the cries of those who call to you for healing (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We pray for this assembly. Deepen our resolve to use what we have to serve those in need. When we worry that we do not have enough resources for ministry, assure us of your abundance. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for those who have died. As you sustained them through all their days, so dwell in our hearts, that we may have the power to comprehend, with (*the apostle James, name/s, and*) all the saints, the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Celebrate

Sunday, July 25, 2021
9th Sunday after Pentecost

Today is the first of five Sundays with gospel readings from John 6, the first four of which focus on Jesus as bread of life. Today Jesus feeds thousands of people with five loaves and two fish. What we have, what we bring to Jesus' table, seems like it is not nearly enough to meet all the needs we see around us. But it is not the adequacy of our supplies or our skills that finally makes the difference: it is the power of Jesus working in the littlest and least to transform this world into the world God desires, a world where all the hungry are satisfied.

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, you have placed within the hearts of all your children a longing for your word and a hunger for your truth. Grant that we may know your Son to be the true bread of heaven and share this bread with all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

2 Kings 4:42-44

Today's reading is part of a larger section of 2 Kings that describes the miracles of Elisha, the successor to Elijah. Here the prophet gives food to a hungry crowd. Though there is not enough food to go around, Elisha trusts God, who provides enough and even more to satisfy the need.

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to [Elisha,] the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, "Give it to the people and let them eat."⁴³ But his servant said, "How can I set this

before a hundred people?" So he repeated, "Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and have some left.'"⁴⁴ He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the LORD.

Second Reading

Ephesians 3:14-21

We have been rooted and grounded in the love of Christ, which surpasses all human knowledge. Because Christ dwells in our hearts, our lives are continuously strengthened and empowered by the ongoing presence of the Spirit.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.
¹⁶I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may

be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit,¹⁷ and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.¹⁸ I pray that you

continued

You o - pen wide your hand and
sat - is - fy the de - sire of ev - 'ry liv - ing thing.

All your works shall praise ¹ you, O LORD,
and your faithful ¹ ones shall bless you.

¹¹ **They shall tell of the glory ¹ of your kingdom
and speak ¹ of your power,**

¹² that all people may know ¹ of your power
and the glorious splendor ¹ of your kingdom.

¹³ **Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;
your dominion endures through- ¹ out all ages.**

**You, LORD, are faithful in ¹ all your words,
and loving in ¹ all your works. R**

¹⁴ The LORD upholds all ¹ those who fall
and lifts up those who ¹ are bowed down.

¹⁵ **The eyes of all wait upon ¹ you, O LORD,
and you give them their food ¹ in due season.**

¹⁶ You open ¹ wide your hand
and satisfy the desire of every ¹ living thing.

¹⁷ **You are righteous in ¹ all your ways
and loving in ¹ all your works.**

¹⁸ You are near to all who ¹ call upon you,
to all who call up- ¹ on you faithfully. R

may have the power to comprehend,
with all the saints, what is the breadth
and length and height and depth,
¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that
surpasses knowledge, so that you may
be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who by the power at
work within us is able to accomplish
abundantly far more than all we can
ask or imagine, ²¹ to him be glory in
the church and in Christ Jesus to all
generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

John 6:1-21

In John's gospel, the miracles of Jesus are called "signs," because they reveal the true character of God. As such, they remain within the mystery of God and cannot be brought under human control.

Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" ¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. ¹¹ Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. ¹² When they were satisfied,

he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. ¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

¹⁵ When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. ²⁰ But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." ²¹ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.