Prayers of Intercession

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.

You wash us through and through and remember our sin no more. Make your church a community of forgiveness throughout the world. Give your people courage to forgive; through them show the world new possibilities. Bless ministries of repentance and reconciliation. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

You fill the earth—from tiny grains of wheat to the mighty thunder—with your presence, and you call us to attend to your will for all creation. Grant weather that prepares the soil for seeds; protect all from violent storms, flooding, and wildfires (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

You promise to write your law on our hearts. Guide citizens throughout the world to shape communities that reflect your mercy, justice, and peace, and give them creativity to work for the welfare of all. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

You sustain us with your bountiful Spirit. Restore the joy of all who need to know your presence: those who are lonely or feel unforgivable, those who need healing of mind or body, those who are dying, and all who grieve. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Jesus calls us to follow him in life and death. Empower this congregation in discipleship. Equip children and teachers in Sunday school, confirmation, and learning ministries. Give us your truth and wisdom and teach us to follow Jesus. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In the cross of Christ, your name is glorified. We praise you for those who have given us words to worship you (*especially Thomas Cranmer*). With all those who have died in Christ, bring us into life everlasting. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (commemoration of Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, 1758) Psalm 119:9-16. **Tuesday** Acts 2:14-24. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, 1980) Haggai 2:1-9, 20-23. **Thursday** (Annunciation of Our Lord) Luke 1:26-38. **Friday** Philippians 2:12-18. **Saturday** Jeremiah 33:10-16. **Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday** Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1—15:47 *or* Mark 15:1-39 [40-47].

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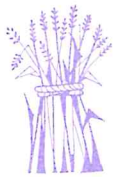


Celebrate

Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 21, 2021

God promises Jeremiah that a "new covenant" will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted up on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God's heart through Christ and draws God's love and truth into our hearts. We join together in worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God's love with all the world.

Prayer of the Day

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

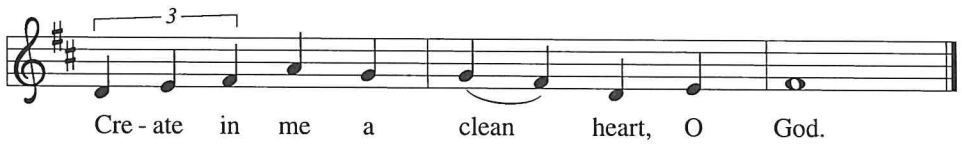
First Reading — Jeremiah 31:31-34

The Judeans in Babylon blamed their exile on their ancestors, who had broken the covenant established at Sinai. Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. 33But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Psalm

Psalm 51:1-12; refrain, Ps. 51:10



Have mercy on me, O God, according to your ǀ steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out ǀ my offenses.
[2]Wash me through and through ǀ from my wickedness,
and cleanse me ǀ from my sin.
[3]For I know ǀ my offenses,
and my sin is ev- ǀ er before me.
[4]Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil ǀ in your sight;
so you are justified when you speak
and right ǀ in your judgment. ℟
[5]Indeed, I was born ǀ steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my ǀ mother's womb.
[6]Indeed, you delight in truth ǀ deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom ǀ deep within.
[7]Remove my sins with hyssop, and I ǀ shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be pur- ǀ er than snow.
[8]Let me hear ǀ joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken ǀ may rejoice. ℟
[9]Hide your face ǀ from my sins,
and blot out ǀ all my wickedness.
[10]Create in me a clean ǀ heart, O God,
and renew a right spir- ǀ it within me.
[11]Cast me not away ǀ from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spir- ǀ it from me.
[12]Restore to me the joy of ǀ your salvation
and sustain me with your boun- ǀ tiful Spirit. ℟

or **Psalm 119:9-16; refrain, Ps. 119:11** [not printed]

Second Reading

Hebrews 5:5-10

Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.

Christ did not glorify himself in
becoming a high priest, but was ap-
pointed by the one who said to him,
"You are my Son,
today I have begotten you";
[6]as he says also in another place,
"You are a priest forever,
according to the order of
Melchizedek."
[7]In the days of his flesh, Jesus of-
fered up prayers and supplications,
with loud cries and tears, to the
one who was able to save him from
death, and he was heard because of
his reverent submission. [8]Although
he was a Son, he learned obedience
through what he suffered; [9]and hav-
ing been made perfect, he became
the source of eternal salvation for all
who obey him, [10]having been desig-
nated by God a high priest accord-
ing to the order of Melchizedek.

Gospel

John 12:20-33

Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time to celebrate the Passover festival. Here Jesus' words about seeds planted in the ground turn the disaster of his death into the promise of a harvest in which everyone will be gathered.

Now among those who went up to
worship at the festival were some
Greeks. [21]They came to Philip, who
was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and
said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."
[22]Philip went and told Andrew; then
Andrew and Philip went and told
Jesus. [23]Jesus answered them, "The
hour has come for the Son of Man to
be glorified. [24]Very truly, I tell you,
unless a grain of wheat falls into the
earth and dies, it remains just a sin-
gle grain; but if it dies, it bears much
fruit. [25]Those who love their life lose
it, and those who hate their life in
this world will keep it for eternal life.
[26]Whoever serves me must follow
me, and where I am, there will my
servant be also. Whoever serves me,
the Father will honor.
[27]"Now my soul is troubled. And
what should I say—'Father, save me
from this hour'? No, it is for this rea-
son that I have come to this hour.
[28]Father, glorify your name." Then a
voice came from heaven, "I have glo-
rified it, and I will glorify it again."
[29]The crowd standing there heard it
and said that it was thunder. Others
said, "An angel has spoken to him."
[30]Jesus answered, "This voice has
come for your sake, not for mine.
[31]Now is the judgment of this world;
now the ruler of this world will be
driven out. [32]And I, when I am lift-
ed up from the earth, will draw all
people to myself." [33]He said this to
indicate the kind of death he was to
die.