Prayers of Intercession

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

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

God of community, we pray for the church around the world. Unite us in our love for you. Help us overcome our divisions, that we are encouraged to work together for your sake. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of creation, we pray for this hurting earth. Awaken in us a new desire to care for this world and empower us to support agencies, organizations, and individual efforts to heal our environment. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of cooperation, we pray for nations of the world embroiled in conflict (*especially*). Inspire leaders to listen to each other and work towards peaceful solutions to disagreements. Protect the vulnerable, especially children, who cannot find safety in their home or country. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of comfort, we pray for all who live with mental or physical illness. Help them find appropriate care. Bring healing and wholeness when the path forward seems bleak. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of compassion, we pray for the young people of this congregation. Renew in us your call to welcome the children in our midst. As they grow, strengthen their faith and our commitment to them. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of consolation, we give you thanks for our loved ones who have died and pray for all who grieve today (*especially*). Shine your grace on all your saints. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 139:1-18. **Tuesday** (Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist) Matthew 9:9-13. **Wednesday** Jeremiah 1:4-10. **Thursday** Psalm 19:7-14. **Friday** Acts 12:20-25. **Saturday** Matthew 5:13-20. **18th Sunday after Pentecost** Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; Psalm 19:7-14; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50.

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 © 2021 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 Marilyn Comer. Refrain accompaniment is in *Psalter for Worship, Year B* (Augsburg Fortress, 2008). Please visit our Web site at augsburgfortress.org. Lectionary year B.

CELEBRATE is protected through trademark registration in the U.S.A. and Canada.

Celebrate

Sunday, September 19, 2021
17th Sunday after Pentecost

Today we hear James warn against selfish ambition, while the disciples quarrel over which one of them is the greatest. Jesus tells them the way to be great is to serve. Then, to make it concrete, he puts in front of them a flesh-and-blood child. We are called to welcome the children God puts in front of us, to make room for them in daily interaction, and to give them a place of honor in the assembly.

Prayer of the Day

O God, our teacher and guide, you draw us to yourself and welcome us as beloved children. Help us to lay aside all envy and selfish ambition, that we may walk in your ways of wisdom and understanding as servants of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading — Jeremiah 11:18-20

Today's reading tells of the suffering of the prophet Jeremiah, who announced God's word to Judah but was met with intense opposition and persecution. Jeremiah continues to trust in God in the midst of his suffering.

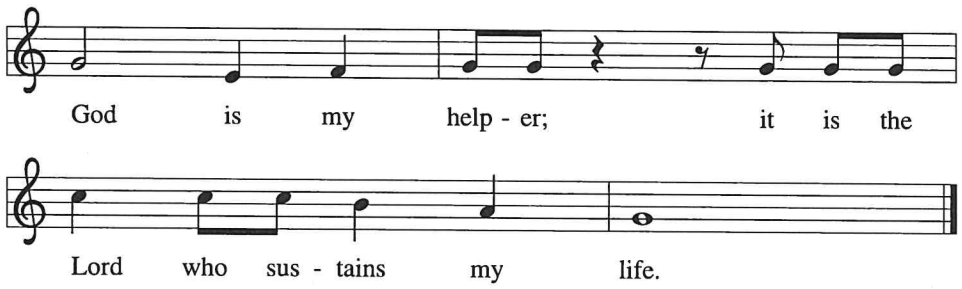
It was the LORD who made it known
to me, and I knew;
then you showed me their evil
deeds.
19 But I was like a gentle lamb
led to the slaughter.
And I did not know it was
against me
that they devised schemes, saying,
"Let us destroy the tree with its
fruit,
let us cut him off from the land
of the living,
so that his name will no longer
be remembered!"
20 But you, O LORD of hosts, who
judge righteously,
who try the heart and the mind,
let me see your retribution upon
them,
for to you I have committed my
cause.

or Wisdom 1:16—2:1, 12-22 [not printed]

Dating from shortly before the time of Christ, the Wisdom of Solomon is a piece of Jewish wisdom literature. This reading portrays the ungodly planning the downfall of the righteous person. The ungodly are allied with death, and they do not know that God gives eternal life to the righteous.

Psalm

Psalm 54; refrain, Ps. 54:4



Save me, O God, | by your name;
in your might, de- | fend my cause.
[2]**Hear my | prayer, O God;**
give ear to the words | of my mouth.
[3]For strangers have risen up against me,
and the ruthless have | sought my life,
those who have no re- | gard for God.
[4]**Behold, God | is my helper;**
it is the Lord who sus- | tains my life. **R**
[5]Render evil to those who | spy on me;
in your faithful- | ness, destroy them.
[6]**I will offer you a | freewill sacrifice**
and praise your name, O LORD, for | it is good.
[7]For you have rescued me from | every trouble,
and my eye looks down | on my enemies. **R**

Second Reading

James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a

The wisdom God gives unites our hearts and minds. Instead of living to satisfy our own wants and desires, we manifest this wisdom in peace, gentleness, mercy, and impartiality toward others.

Who is wise and understanding
among you? Show by your good life
that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. [14]But if you
have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. [15]Such
wisdom does not come down from
above, but is earthly, unspiritual,
devilish. [16]For where there is envy
and selfish ambition, there will also
be disorder and wickedness of every
kind. [17]But the wisdom from above
is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy
and good fruits, without a trace
of partiality or hypocrisy. [18]And a
harvest of righteousness is sown in
peace for those who make peace.
[4:1]Those conflicts and disputes
among you, where do they come
from? Do they not come from your
cravings that are at war within
you? [2]You want something and do
not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and
cannot obtain it; so you engage in
disputes and conflicts. You do not
have, because you do not ask. [3]You
ask and do not receive, because you
ask wrongly, in order to spend what
you get on your pleasures. [7]Submit
yourselves therefore to God. Resist
the devil, and he will flee from you.
[8]Draw near to God, and he will
draw near to you.

Gospel

Mark 9:30-37

Jesus' teaching and action in this text are directed to the church whenever it is seduced by the world's definition of greatness: prestige, power, influence, and money. The antidote to such a concern for greatness is servanthood.

[Jesus and the disciples went on]
and passed through Galilee. He did
not want anyone to know it; [31]for he
was teaching his disciples, saying to
them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they
will kill him, and three days after
being killed, he will rise again."
[32]But they did not understand what
he was saying and were afraid to
ask him.
[33]Then they came to Capernaum;
and when he was in the house he
asked them, "What were you arguing
about on the way?" [34]But they were
silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the
greatest. [35]He sat down, called the
twelve, and said to them, "Whoever
wants to be first must be last of all
and servant of all." [36]Then he took a
little child and put it among them;
and taking it in his arms, he said
to them, [37]"Whoever welcomes one
such child in my name welcomes
me, and whoever welcomes me
welcomes not me but the one who
sent me."