

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.

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.

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Celebrate

Sunday, October 18, 2020
20th Sunday after Pentecost

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.