

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

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the ministry we share in Christ's name. Open our hearts to your call for justice, peace, and healing. Attune us to the needs of the world as you draw near. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for this planet in need of restoration: for devastated habitats, polluted waters, thawing ice, blazing fires, swelling floods, and long-lasting droughts. Renew the face of the earth and our relationship to it. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We pray for all people who care for others in our community and around the world. Fill them with compassion and the power to respond with justice for those who are oppressed, with welcome for those who are excluded, and with relief for those who suffer. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Andrew, Apostle) John 1:35-42. **Tuesday** Revelation 18:1-10. **Wednesday** Micah 5:1-5a. **Thursday** (commemoration of Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, 1552) Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13. **Friday** (commemoration of John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter, c. 749) Jeremiah 1:4-10. **Saturday** Ezekiel 36:24-28. **Second Sunday of Advent** (commemoration of Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, c. 342) Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8.

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Tracks 1 and 2



Celebrate

First Sunday of Advent
November 29, 2020

Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 64:1-9

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—

²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.

We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

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