

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

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God for whom we wait, come quickly to your people, bring your salvation, and center us in hope found only in you. Deepen our faith through meaningful worship and send us out with your justice and truth. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

O God for whom we watch, we glimpse your power in rushing water and your beauty in the darkening night. Restore this creation, and provide clean water to all people and animals. Save us from foolish, wasteful living. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

O God for whom we long, let justice roll down like waters on all nations. Bless citizens with wise leaders; save your children from war. We pray for the veterans of this community, that they are supported and loved. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

## Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Psalm 63. **Tuesday** 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13. **Wednesday** Matthew 24:29-35. **Thursday** Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12. **Friday** (commemoration of Elizabeth of Hungary, renewer of society, died 1231) Ezekiel 7:1-9. **Saturday** Matthew 12:43-45. **Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost** Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30.

O God, in whom we hope, we pray for all who are in need. Provide for those who experience homelessness or hunger, support the under- or unemployed, and comfort any who are suffering this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

O God for whom we listen, inspire the music ministry of our congregation. Fill our worship with songs to proclaim your greatness. Help us to sing and dance with joy and tell boldly of your salvation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

O God, in whom we remain, we remember our loved ones who have died and now live in you (*especially*). Bring comfort and the assurance of new life to all who grieve. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**



# Celebrate

Sunday, November 12, 2023  
24th Sunday after Pentecost

*Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the lamb.*

## Prayer of the Day

O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## First Reading

Amos 5:18-24

*In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.*

Alas for you who desire the day of  
the LORD!

Why do you want the day of  
the LORD?

It is darkness, not light;

<sup>19</sup>as if someone fled from a lion,

and was met by a bear;

or went into the house and

rested a hand against the wall,

and was bitten by a snake.

<sup>20</sup>Is not the day of the LORD darkness,  
not light,

and gloom with no brightness

in it?

<sup>21</sup>I hate, I despise your festivals,  
and I take no delight in your  
solemn assemblies.

<sup>22</sup>Even though you offer me your  
burnt offerings and grain  
offerings,

I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being  
of your fatted animals

I will not look upon.

<sup>23</sup>Take away from me the noise of  
your songs;  
I will not listen to the melody of  
your harps.

<sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-  
flowing stream.

**or Wisdom 6:12-16 [not printed]**

*Wisdom is part of the structure of the universe and is easily accessible to those who want to find her. Wisdom actually seeks people out. People who are wise are free from care.*

You are my help - er and my de - liv - er - er;

O LORD, do not tar - ry.

Be pleased, O God, to de-<sup>l</sup>iver me;

O LORD, make <sup>l</sup>haste to help me.

<sup>2</sup>Let those who seek my life be put to shame <sup>l</sup>and confounded;  
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune  
draw back and <sup>l</sup>be disgraced. **R**

<sup>3</sup>Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat <sup>l</sup>over me  
turn back because <sup>l</sup>of their shame.

<sup>4</sup>Let all who seek you rejoice and be <sup>l</sup>glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great <sup>l</sup>is the LORD!"

<sup>5</sup>But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quick-<sup>l</sup>ly, O God.  
You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, <sup>l</sup>do not tarry. **R**

or Wisdom 6:17-20; refrain, Wis. 6:17 [not printed]

*Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.*

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means

precede those who have died. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.

## Gospel

Matthew 25:1-13

*Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup>Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise,

'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup>But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."