

JULY 7, 2024

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of the covenant, in our baptism you call us to proclaim the coming of your kingdom. Give us the courage you gave the apostles, that we may faithfully witness to your love and peace in every circumstance of life, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 2:1-5

A voice said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD." Whether they hear or refuse to hear for they are a rebellious house, they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

PSALM: Psalm 123

To you I lift up my eyes,

to you enthroned in the heavens.

As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters,

and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,

so our eyes look to you, O LORD our God,

until you show us your mercy.

Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy,

for we have had more than enough of contempt,

too much of the scorn of the indolent rich,

and of the derision of the proud.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 12:2-10

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows—was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

GOSPEL: Mark 6:1-13

[Jesus] came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. ¹³They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

JULY 7, 2024

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION.

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

A brief silence.

God of all, through the waters of baptism you claim people of all races, ethnicities, and languages as your beloved children. Sustain the baptized and increase their faith, that your gospel may be proclaimed throughout the earth. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the heavens, your creating Spirit animates the universe. We give you thanks for the moon and stars, for the planets and the Milky Way Galaxy, and for all of the mysteries of the cosmos that remain unknown to us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of freedom, you have liberated us from sin and death and rescue us from all forms of spiritual, social, and political oppression. Defend us from tyrants in our midst and deliver us from all forms of slavery or corruption. Direct our freedom for works of liberation and wholeness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, you became vulnerable in the person of Jesus Christ in solidarity with the disempowered. Strengthen those who feel faint, give courage to those who fear, and bring wholeness to those in need. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of holiness, you send us out into the world to proclaim your love. We pray for our outreach ministries. Equip us as we leave this place to witness and serve our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks that in every time and place you call forth prophets who move us towards freedom. Thank you for those who work for human rights, community organizers, and all who strive for liberty for all. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregations, especially Mike, Pam and Koda Smith.

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness and injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.

Amen.

JULY 14, 2024

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, from you come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Amos 7:7-15

This is what [the Lord GOD] showed me: the LORD was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the LORD said, "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by; the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword." Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words.¹For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'" And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom." Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees,¹⁵and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"

PSALM: Psalm 85:8-13

I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;

for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,

that your glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;

righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,

and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,

and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness shall go before the LORD

and shall prepare for God a pathway.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every

spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

GOSPEL: Mark 6:14-29

King Herod heard of [the disciples' preaching,] for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

JULY 14, 2024

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

A brief silence.

Holy parent, you welcome your people into one family and gather all things to yourself. Bestow your grace upon your beloved church, lavish your wisdom upon us, and redeem us from our faults, that by our witness all might praise your glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Awesome Creator, you steadfastly tend to the smallest of seeds and the mightiest of sycamore trees. Spring up green growth from the earth, nourish the growth of fruit, grain, and other crops, and bless the work of farmers and laborers. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the oppressed, turn the ears of those who are in power to the voices of prophets in our own day. Protect those who speak difficult truths when it is risky to do so. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of strength, you are near to those who endure difficulty. Comfort all who are survivors of violence, guard the refugee and the immigrant, and protect all those who are victims of prejudice and discrimination. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, we pray for this holy house and all those who worship here. We pray especially for those whose efforts behind the scenes often go unnoticed; for the custodian(s) and maintenance workers, for our office staff and for all of our volunteers. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We thank you, God, for the saints, martyrs, and prophets who have died in the faith. We remember those in this community who have recently died. United with them as God's children, assure us that we are yours forever. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregations, especially Joe and Diane Sparcella

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness and injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.

Amen.

JULY 21, 2024

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, powerful and compassionate, you shepherd your people, faithfully feeding and protecting us. Heal each of us, and make us a whole people, that we may embody the justice and peace of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 23:1-6

Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD. The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

PSALM: Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures

and leads me beside still waters.

You restore my soul, O LORD,

and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I shall fear no evil;

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 2:11-22

Remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision"—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its

commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

GOSPEL: Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

JULY 21, 2024

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Tend your church, O God. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel. Raise up new leaders and encourage those pursuing a call to ministry. Embolden all the baptized to embody your love and justice. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Restore your creation, O God. Sustain croplands and pastures and safeguard all farm animals and livestock. Preserve lakes, rivers, and streams that offer refreshment. Revive lands recovering from natural disasters and protect coastlands threatened by rising oceans. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Reconcile the nations, O God. Break down the dividing walls that make us strangers to one another and unite us as one human family. Equip leaders to deal wisely with conflict and guide diplomats who seek peaceful solutions. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Heal your people, O God. Look with compassion on immigrants, exiles, and all who are afraid or feel lost. Give rest to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving, and recovery to those who are ill. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Nourish this congregation, O God. Prepare a table where we receive food for our hungering spirits. Renew our commitment to provide for one another and revitalize our ministries of feeding and nurturing hungry neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

You lead us home, O God. We give thanks for all who have died, now citizens with the saints. As you have received them into your heavenly home, so welcome all of us to dwell in your house forever. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregations, especially Tammy White.

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness and injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

JULY 28, 2024

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, you have placed within the hearts of all your children a longing for your word and a hunger for your truth. Grant that we may know your Son to be the true bread of heaven and share this bread with all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: 2 Kings 4:42-44

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to [Elisha], the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, "Give it to the people and let them eat." But his servant said, "How can I set this before a hundred people?" So he repeated, "Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and have some left.'" He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the LORD.

PSALM: Psalm 145:10-18

All your works shall praise you, O LORD,
and your faithful ones shall bless you.
They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom
and speak of your power,
that all people may know of your power and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.
Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;
your dominion endures throughout all ages.
You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.
The Lord upholds all those who fall
and lifts up those who are bowed down.
The eyes of all wait upon you, O LORD,
and you give them their food in due season.
You open wide your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.
You are righteous in all your ways
and loving in all your works.
You are near to all who call upon you,
to all who call upon you faithfully.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL: John 6:1-21

Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world." When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

JULY 28, 2024

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Bless the ministries of our neighboring congregations. Empower churches throughout the world and encourage missionaries who accompany global neighbors. Kindle in us a spirit of collaboration, that all people may know your loving works. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and come to the aid of those enduring sweltering heat. Nurture wheat and barley crops grown for the nourishment of your people and conserve aquatic habitats and fish populations Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for those who govern. Cast out arrogance, selfishness, and corruption and instruct those who lead to practice compassion and humility. Inspire them with a vision of the common good and a commitment to ensure that all who hunger are fed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We pray for those bowed down by heavy burdens: those who are unemployed or underemployed, those unable to find affordable housing, and those without health insurance. Console those who grieve and hear the cries of those who call to you for healing. (Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**)

We pray for this assembly. Deepen our resolve to use what we have to serve those in need. When we worry that we do not have enough resources for ministry, assure us of your abundance. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We give thanks for those who have died. As you sustained them through all their days, so dwell in our hearts, that we may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Let us pray for all the members of this congregations, especially Denny and Marsha Wombles.

Let us pray for all those in need:

The hungry, homeless, or unemployed;

The anxious and vulnerable

The sick and those recovering from illness and injury;

Those grieving over the death of loved ones;

Those celebrating birthdays and special occasions;

All our prayers, be spoken or unspoken. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**