

The Congregation at Prayer

A guide for daily meditation and prayer the week following

First Sunday after Christmas – December 31st, 2023

Simple orders can be found on pages 294-298 in LSB or you may use the following order

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Psalm 77:11-20

Verse of the Month

Luke 1:35 “And [Gabriel] answered and said to [Mary], ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.’”

10 Commandments & Apostles’ Creed

Hymn of the Week

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come (LSB 358/TLH 85)

Reading from Holy Scripture

Members may choose...

- *Read the Bible in a year (church website) or children’s The Story Bible (CPH)*

- *Readings appointed from the Daily Lectionary (LSB p. 299-304)*

Looking forward to the Epiphany of Our Lord (Jan 6)

Monday: Isaiah 60:1-6

Tuesday: Ephesians 3:2-12

Wednesday: Matthew 2:1-12

Thursday: The Feast of the Epiphany centers in the visit of the Magi from the East. In that respect, it is a “Thirteenth Day” of Christmas; and yet, it also marks the beginning of a new liturgical season. While Christmas has focused on the Incarnation of our Lord—that is, on God becoming flesh—the season of Epiphany emphasizes the manifestation or self-revelation of God in that same flesh of Christ. For the Lord Himself has entered our darkness and rises upon us with the brightness of His true light (Is. 60:1-2). He does so chiefly by His Word of the Gospel, which He causes to be preached within His Church on earth—not only to the Jews but also to Gentiles (Eph. 3:8-10). As the Magi were guided by the promises of Holy Scripture to find and worship the Christ Child with His mother in the house (Matt. 2:5-11), so does He call disciples from all nations by the preaching of His Word, to find and worship Him within His Church (Is. 60:3-6). With gold they confess His royalty; with incense, His deity; and with myrrh, His priestly sacrifice (Matt. 2:11).

Catechism for the Week: Conclusion of the Lord’s Prayer

What is the Conclusion? For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.* Amen.

What does this mean? (or, What is meant by the word "Amen"?) This means that I should be certain that these petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us. Amen, amen means “yes, yes, it shall be so.”

Prayers:

Collect of the Week (from Lutheran Prayer Companion)

Lord God, heavenly Father, who have caused Your dear Word, the true star that shows us the infant Jesus, to shine on us: we beseech You to put Your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive that light and make salutary use of it, so that like the Wise Men we may follow that star and let no toil or danger frighten us, but with our whole heart cling to Your Son, Christ Jesus, the only Savior, and dispose of all our temporal possessions for the building up of Your poor Church and for the glory of Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.

In Our Prayers This Week:

Linda Winkelman, Jean Luerssen, Betty Beierle, Ronald Baumgart, Carrie Strueder, Marian Becker

Lord’s Prayer

Morning Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that you would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer

The eyes of all look to You, O Lord, and You give them their food at the proper time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these Thy gifts which we receive from Thy bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Closing

Let us bless the Lord: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Hymn of the Month

Creator of the Stars of Night (LSB 351)

Reading from the Book of Concord

Portions of the Augsburg Confession p. 102-116

From Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions (CPH)