

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen

↓ **FIRST READING: 1 Peter 2: 2-10**

A A READING FROM 1 PETER THE 2ND CHAPTER

² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.
⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and ⁵ like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture:
“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”
⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,
“The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,”
⁸ and
“A stone that makes them stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”
They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.
⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
¹⁰ Once you were not a people,
but now you are God’s people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

A THE WORD OF THE LORD.

C Thanks be to God

↑ **GOSPEL: John 15: 1-17**

P THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN THE 15TH CHAPTER

C Glory to you, O Lord.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes^[a] to make it bear more fruit. ³ You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.
¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷ I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

P THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

THE PRAYERS

A United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

A God of life, strengthen your church to proclaim your gospel even in times of trouble. As we remember Stephen, we give thanks for diaconal ministry. Bless all deacons and strengthen them for their bridge-building ministry between church and world. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Creating God, you show your steadfast love through mighty waters, towering mountains, verdant fields, and arid deserts. Protect the earth’s diverse habitats from the forces of pollution, erosion, extinction, and global warming. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Mighty God, your Spirit guides us into all truth. Give wisdom to world and local leaders and organizations as they begin, build, or renew relationships. Strengthen leaders and aid organizations in areas needing to be rebuilt following conflict, unrest, or natural disaster. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Loving God, you make your home among us. Abide with refugees, those experiencing homelessness, those fleeing war and poverty, and all who question if there is a home in your heart. We pray for all who are sick (*especially*). **Barbara Birger, Russell Dawson, Kathy Ferrise, Emily Freely, Lauren Kahn, Dick Peterson, Nisha Ribardo, Michael Sherrick, Carl Swenson, Anna Swing**, and those we name aloud, and in our hearts (pause). We also pray today, Lord for our homebound members and our military personnel those struggling with mental health issues and persons facing abuse. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Assuring God, you accompany your people amid uncertainty and change. Uphold people in this community who have recently moved, changed jobs or schools, retired, or are going through transitions of any kind. Lead us in your ways. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P Renewing God, you gather the saints at your heavenly banquet. We give you thanks for the care shown us by those who have gone before us. Grant confidence and comfort for all awaiting the place you have prepared.

C Your mercy is great.

P Rejoicing in the victory of Christ’s resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

C Amen.