

Holy Cross at Prayer



First Sunday in Advent to Epiphany, Series B

December 3, 2023 to January 6, 2024

This edition of Holy Cross at Prayer takes us through the seasons of Advent to Christmastide to Epiphany. The mediations for this edition are hymn verses from our hymnal, the Lutheran Service Book (LSB). The Church's hymnody is rich with scripture and its sacred poetry guides us through each Church season.

SUNDAY (December 3, 2023)

The First Sunday in Advent

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, and that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome things that we did not look for, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:1–4)

MEDITATION

O Savior, rend the heavens wide;
Come down, come down with mighty stride;
Unlock the gates, the doors break down;
Unbar the way to heaven's crown. (LSB 355:1)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Let your grace be upon David (Oschner), O Lord, and teach him to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (December 4, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities. But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Be not so terribly angry, O LORD, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people." (Isaiah 64:5-9)

MEDITATION

O earth, in flow'ring bud be seen;
 Clothe hill and dale in garb of green.
 Bring forth, O earth, a blossom rare,
 Our Savior, sprung from meadow fair. (LSB 355:3)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Darrian (Cruz-Schild) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross her path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (December 5, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:3-9)

MEDITATION

Savior of the nations, come,
 Virgin's Son, make here Your home!
 Marvel now, O heav'n and earth,
 That the Lord chose such a birth. (LSB 332:1)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Nick (Eason) this week. Give him your grace and teach him to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (December 6, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'"" (Mark 11:1-3)

MEDITATION

Then stepped forth the Lord of all
 From His pure and kingly hall;
 God of God, yet fully man,
 His heroic course began. (LSB 332:4)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Terry (Spadaro) this day, O Lord, and show her your great love throughout all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (December 7, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields." (Mark 11:4-8)

MEDITATION

Prepare the royal highway;
 The King of kings is near!
 Let ev'ry hill and valley
 A level road appear!
 Then greet the King of Glory
 Foretold in sacred story:
 Hosanna to the Lord,
 For He fulfills God's Word! (LSB 343:1)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Show your grace to Craig (Erickson) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (December 8, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" (Mark 11:8-10)

MEDITATION

God's people, see Him coming:

Your own eternal king!

Palm branches strew before Him!

Spread garments! Shout and sing!

God's promise will not fail you!

No more shall doubt assail you!

Hosanna to the Lord,

For He fulfills God's Word! (LSB 343:2)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Saralee (Frausto) before you this day, asking that You would give her your mercy all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (December 9, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him." (Isaiah 64:4)

READING

"Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up your might and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!" (Psalms 80:1-3)

MEDITATION

Beginning from His home on high,
In human flesh He came to die;
Creation by His death restored,
And shed new joys of life abroad. (LSB 401: 2)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Sophie (Ledic). Bless her now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (December 10, 2023)

The Second Sunday in Advent

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1-2)

MEDITATION

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
 From tender stem hath sprung!
 Of Jesse's lineage coming
 As prophets long have sung,
 It came, a flow'ret bright,
 Amid the cold of winter,
 When half-spent was the night. (LSB 359:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Maywan (Krach), O Lord, and teach her to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (December 11, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isaiah 40:3-5)

MEDITATION

Not by human flesh and blood,

By the Spirit of our God,

Was the Word of God made flesh—

Woman's offspring, pure and fresh. (LSB 332:2)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Tom (Ussery) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross his path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (December 12, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

"Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young." (Isaiah 40:9-11)

MEDITATION

"Comfort, comfort ye My people,
 Speak ye peace," thus saith our God;
 "Comfort those who sit in darkness,
 Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.
 Speak ye to Jerusalem
 Of the peace that waits for them;
 Tell her that her sins I cover
 And her warfare now is over." (LSB 347:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Les (Dahlstedt) this week. Give him your grace and teach him to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (December 13, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

"Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob. You forgave the iniquity of your people; you covered all their sin. You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger. Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us! Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations? Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation." (Psalm 85:1-7)

MEDITATION

As Your coming was in peace,
 Quiet, full of gentleness,
 Let the same mind dwell in me
 Which is Yours eternally. (LSB 352:4)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Be with Stephen (Zavala) this day, O Lord, and show him your great love throughout all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (December 14, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

"But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed." (2 Peter 3:8-10)

MEDITATION

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
 Announces that the Lord is nigh;
 Awake and hearken, for he brings
 Glad tidings of the King of kings! (LSB 344:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to Bill (Davis) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (December 15, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," (Mark 1:1-3)

MEDITATION

Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;

Make straight the way for God within,

And let us all our hearts prepare

For Christ to come and enter there. (LSB 344:2)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Celie (Linder) before you this day, asking that You would give her your mercy all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (December 16, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

READING

"John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (Mark 1:4-8)

MEDITATION

We hail Thee as our Savior, Lord,
 Our refuge and our great reward;
 Without Thy grace we waste away
 Like flow'rs that wither and decay. (LSB 344:3)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Spencer (Hartwig). Bless him now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (December 17, 2023)

Third Sunday in Advent

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified." (Isaiah 61:1-3)

MEDITATION

Now He gently leads us;
 With Himself He feeds us
 Precious food from heaven,
 Pledge of peace here given,
 Manna that will nourish
 Souls that they may flourish. (LSB 333:2)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Jerome (Herfindahl), O Lord, and teach him to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (December 18, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations." (Isaiah 61:4)

MEDITATION

Come, then, O Lord Jesus,
From our sins release us.

Keep our hearts believing,

That we, grace receiving,

Ever may confess You

Till in heav'n we bless You. (LSB 352:4)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Jim (Soals) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross his path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (December 19, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-22)

MEDITATION

Yea, amen, let all adore Thee,

High on Thine eternal throne;

Savior, take the pow'r and glory,

Claim the kingdom as Thine own.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thou shalt reign, and Thou alone! (LSB 336:4)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Katie (Cross) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (December 20, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it." (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

MEDITATION

So, when next He comes in glory
And the world is wrapped in fear,
He will shield us with His mercy
And with words of love draw near. (LSB 345:4)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Jan (Froh) this day, O Lord, and show her your great love throughout all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (December 21, 2023)

St. Thomas, Apostle

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light."
(John 1:6-8)

MEDITATION

Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
And let your lights appear;
The evening is advancing,
And darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising
And soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
At midnight comes the cry. (LSB 515:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to Wyatt (Yates) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF ST. THOMAS, APOSTLE

Almighty and ever-living God, You strengthened Your apostle Thomas with firm and certain faith in the resurrection of Your Son. Grant us such faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that we may never be found wanting in Your sight; through the same Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (December 22, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."" (John 1:19-23)

MEDITATION

Hark, the herald's voice is crying

In the desert far and near,

Calling sinners to repentance,

Since the Kingdom now is here.

O that warning cry obey!

Now prepare for God a way;

Let the valleys rise to meet Him

And the hills bow down to greet Him. (LSB 347:3)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Daisy (Davis) before you this day, asking that You would give her your mercy all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (December 23, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;" (Isaiah 61:1)

READING

"(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing." (John 1:23-28)

MEDITATION

When all the world was cursed

By Moses' condemnation,

Saint John the Baptist came

With words of consolation.

With true forerunner's zeal

The greater One he named,

And Him, as yet unknown,

As Savior he proclaimed. (LSB 346:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Theo (Ledic). Bless him now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (December 24, 2023)

Christmas Eve

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:1-14)

READING

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

MEDITATION

Of the Father's love begotten
 Ere the worlds began to be,
 He is Alpha and Omega,
 He the source, the ending He,
 Of the things that are, that have been,
 And that future years shall see
 Evermore and evermore. (LSB 384:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Peter (Ledic) O Lord, and teach him to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD—CHRISTMAS EVE

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (December 25, 2023)

The Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Day

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

READING

"Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world." (Hebrews 1:1-2)

MEDITATION

Love caused Your incarnation;

Love brought You down to me.

Your thirst for my salvation

Procured my liberty.

Oh, love beyond all telling,

That led You to embrace

In love, all love excelling,

Our lost and fallen race. (LSB 334:4)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Georgi (Price) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross her path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD--CHRISTMAS DAY

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (December 26, 2023)

St. Stephen, Martyr

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

READING

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. (Hebrews 1:3-4)

MEDITATION

Lord Jesus Christ, You deigned to dwell
 Among us here on earth
 As God with us, Emmanuel,
 To bring this holy birth.
 Though rich, You willingly became
 One with our poverty,
 That we might share Your wealth and name
 For all eternity. (LSB 362:4)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Betty (Ruecker) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN, MARTYR

Heavenly Father, in the midst of our sufferings for the sake of Christ grant us grace to follow the example of the first martyr, Stephen, that we also may look to the One who suffered and was crucified on our behalf and pray for those who do us wrong; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (December 27, 2023)

St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

READING

For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." (Hebrews 1:5-6)

MEDITATION

Jesus came, the heav'ns adoring,
 Came with peace from realms on high;
 Jesus came to win redemption,
 Lowly came on earth to die;
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Came in deep humility. (LSB 353:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Nikki (Fielitz) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

Merciful Lord, cast the bright beams of Your light upon Your Church that we, being instructed in the doctrine of Your blessed apostle and evangelist John, may come to the light of everlasting life; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (December 28, 2023)

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

READING

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:1-5)

MEDITATION

Oh, that birth forever blessed,
 When the virgin full of grace,
 By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
 Bore the Savior of our race,
 And the babe, the world’s Redeemer,
 First revealed His sacred face
 Evermore and evermore. (LSB 384:2)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Tyler (Jackson) this day, O Lord, and show him your great love throughout all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

Almighty God, the martyred innocents of Bethlehem showed forth Your praise not by speaking but by dying. Put to death in us all that is in conflict with Your will that our lives may bear witness to the faith we profess with our lips; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

FRIDAY (December 29, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

READING

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)

MEDITATION

O sing of Christ, whose birth made known

The kindness of the Lord,

Eternal Word made flesh and bone

So we could be restored.

Upon our frail humanity

God's finger chose to trace

The fullness of His deity,

The icon of His grace. (LSB 362:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to James (Erickson) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (December 30, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

READING

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

MEDITATION

The world may hold
Her wealth and gold:

But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true treasure.

To Him hold fast
Until at last

A crown be thine and honor in full measure (LSB 373:6)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Gary (Myer) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

SUNDAY (December 31, 2023)

The First Sunday after Christmas

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:10-11)

MEDITATION

He undertakes a great exchange,
 Puts on our human frame,
 And in return gives us His realm,
 His glory, and His name,
 His glory, and His name. (LSB 389:4)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Pam (Williams), O Lord, and teach her to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (January 1, 2024)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.” (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

“For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch. The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.” (Isaiah 62:1-3)

MEDITATION

Sing, choirs of angels,
 Sing in exultation,
 Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
 Glory to God
 In the highest:
 O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord! (LSB 379:3)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Ember (Eason) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross her path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

TUESDAY (January 2, 2024)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God." (Galatians 4:4-7)

MEDITATION

The infant Priest was holy born
 For us unholy and forlorn;
 From fleshly temple forth came He,
 Anointed from eternity. (LSB 624:1)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Carol (Berkenbile) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (January 3, 2024)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

"And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." (Luke 2:22-26)

MEDITATION

Sages, leave your contemplations,
 Brighter visions beam afar;
 Seek the great Desire of nations,
 Ye have seen His natal star.
 Come and worship, come and worship;
 Worship Christ, the newborn King. (LSB 367:3)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Finn (Cross) this day, O Lord, and show him your great love throughout all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (January 4, 2024)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

"And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."" (Luke 2:27-32)

MEDITATION

In peace and joy I now depart

Since God so wills it.

Serene and confident my heart;

Stillness fills it.

For the Lord has promised me

That death is but a slumber. (LSB 938:1)

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Show your grace to Eric (Jarvinen) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (January 5, 2024)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

"And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed." And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem." (Luke 2:33-38)

MEDITATION

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her King;

Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room

And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing. (LSB 387:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Sarah (Creiglow) before you this day, asking that You would give her your mercy all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (January 6, 2024)

The Epiphany of Our Lord

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations." (Isaiah 61:11)

READING

"And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him." (Luke 2:39-40)

MEDITATION

Let our gladness

Banish sadness

All throughout creation!

God, whose favor

Sent our Savior,

Praise with adoration!

He is born in a stall,

Now He lies, infant small,

In a manger,

Heavenly stranger,

Lord of all,

In a manger,

Heavenly stranger,

Lord of all. (LSB 371:1)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Phyllis (Reichley).

Bless her now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER



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