
THE CONGREGATION AT PRAYER

A Guide for Daily Meditation and Prayer

*The Week of Christmas
December 26–January 1, 2016*

THE ORDER OF MEDITATION AND PRAYER

Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate. If able, the head of the home should take the role of “Leader” (L) and the family the role of “Group” (G). The whole family should try to learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.

Theme: God Became Man for Us and for Our Salvation

Catechesis Notes for the Week—“Creation and redemption are equally impossible for man to accomplish, but not for God. ‘With God nothing will be impossible,’ not even the incarnation of His Son for the salvation of His fallen world. He is the actor, the Savior, and the Lord, who descends to our human flesh and joins Himself to our weaknesses, becoming like us in every way, except without sin, so that He might take our sin to Himself. When His Word sounds forth to announce His salvation, it can only be received and believed, for it carries with it all the saving benefits it proclaims. Mary received this Word, and the life of the world was conceived in her womb. Every Christian receives this Word too, through the call of the Gospel, and it brings to us the same Christ and the same salvation who was born of Mary. Therefore, our confession of faith is the same as Mary’s, “Let it be to me according to your word.” — Excerpted from Lutheran Catechesis, p. 90, used by permission

INVOCATION

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.¹

L In the name of the Father, and of the Son ✠, and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

APOSTLES’ CREED

VERSE

Isaiah 9:6

G And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

DAILY PSALM

The leader may read the appointed Psalm for the day. If applicable, members of the family may take turns reading the Psalm for the Day.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	2	96	93	98	97	48	111

¹ The name of the Triune God and the sign of the cross reminds worshipers of their baptisms. Martin Luther wrote in his Small Catechism, “In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross and say, ‘In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.’”



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Evening	98,96	132,97	89:1-52	45,96	99,8	45,29	107,115

PSALM PRAYER

L Lord God, gracious Father, who in the fullness of time sent Your Son to assume our flesh and become our Brother, we thank You for Your truth and fatherly goodness in giving us our Savior, by whose birth we are delivered from sin, death, Satan, and hell; and we beseech You, keep us until the end in true knowledge of our Redeemer, that, with all the holy angels, we may rejoice at His nativity and behold Him, together with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

THE CATECHISM: THE CREED

The Third Article

<p>L What is the Second Article?</p> <p>C I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.</p>	Preschool +
<p>L What does this mean?</p> <p>C I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him.</p>	First Grade +
<p>C But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.</p> <p>In this Christian church he daily and fully forgives all sins to me and all believers.</p> <p>On the Last Day he will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.</p> <p>This is most certainly true.</p>	Second Grade +
<p>Prayer on the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed:</p> <p><i>O Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son to give life and salvation to the world, and who, together with the Father and the Son, we worship and glorify as the only true God, receive our thanks and praise for proclaiming Christ to us through the preaching of the Gospel and gifts of the holy sacraments. Faith in Jesus Christ our Savior, hope in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, and love for God and our enemies are all Your creations and gifts to us through the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. Preserve the holy Christian Church among us through the faithful preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments of Christ. Bless the communion of saints that every baptized Christian, sharing in Christ's love through the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name, might abide in Christ and bear witness to His love in all that we do and say. Give us firm hope in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, so that we might faithfully endure persecution for Jesus' sake and suffer all, even death itself, rather than fall away from Him who gave His life for us. Hear us, O Holy Spirit, for You live and reign with the Father and the Son, one God, now and forever. Amen.</i></p>	

DAILY READINGS

In 2016, we will be working through a Harmony of the Four Gospels, following Jesus' birth, life, and death chronologically as the Gospels present it.

	Weekly Scripture Readings*		Through the Confessions in One Year
	Old Testament	New Testament	
Monday	<i>Festival of St. Stephen, Martyr:</i> Acts 6:8–7:2a, 51-60		Augsburg Confession [AC] XXVII:27-48
Tuesday	<i>Festival of St. John, Apostle:</i> John 21:20-25		AC XXVII:49°XXVIII:11
Wednesday	<i>Festival of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs:</i> Matthew 2:13-18		AC XXVIII:12-38
Thursday	Isaiah 55:1-13	Revelation 9:13-10:11	AC XXVIII:39-60
Friday	Isaiah 58:1-59:3, 14-21	Revelation 11:1-19	AC XXVIII:61–Conclusion 7
Saturday	Isiah 60:1-22	Revelation 12:1-17	-----
Sunday	<i>Feast of the Circumcision and Name of Jesus:</i> Luke 1:21		-----

PRAYERS

Collect for the Week of Christmas:

L 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.

G Amen.

Daily Themes for Prayer

Tuesday: Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.

Wednesday: Pray for marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.

Thursday: Pray for the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deacons, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood.

Friday: Pray for the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.

Saturday: Pray for faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.

Sunday: Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.

Monday: Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.

In Our Prayers this Week

Jackie Adelung and her Family, at the death of her mother this past week.

Phyllis Butterfield, and all the residents of Mt. Carmel Home, as the home was quarantined this past week for severe illness, that the Lord bring healing and relief swiftly.

Our shut-ins, that they may be comforted in their loneliness by your gracious presence.

Delores Adelung, as she celebrates her birthday this week.

Tilly Hansen and Judah Seelow, as they celebrate the anniversary of their baptisms this week.

Randy & Vicki Webb and Roland & Delores Adelung, as they celebrate their wedding anniversaries this week.

Aaron Scott & Amanda Arnold, as they will be joined in marriage this week.

All those who travel for the holidays, that they be kept safe and that their visits were enjoyable and their homecomings welcoming.

LORD'S PRAYER

G Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver ☩ us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

LUTHER'S MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning

G In the name of the Father, and of the Son (☩), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.²

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Evening

G In the name of the Father, and of the Son (☩), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.²

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

² Luther, in his *Small Catechism*, encourages Christians who pray the Morning and Evening prayers: "In the morning when you get up and in the evening when you go to bed, make the sign of the holy cross over your head and heart and say, 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son (☩), and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.'"

38 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come



1 "From heav'n a - bove to earth I come To bear good
 2 "To you this night is born a child Of Mar - y,
 3 "This is the Christ, our God most high, Who hears your
 4 "He will on you the gifts be - stow Pre - pared by
 5 "These are the signs which you shall mark: The swad-dling



news to ev - 'ry home; Glad ti - dings of great joy
 cho - sen vir - gin mild; This lit - tle child of low -
 sad and bit - ter cry; He will him - self your Sav -
 God for all be - low, That in his king - dom, bright
 clothes and man - ger dark. There you will find the in -



I bring, Where - of I now will say and sing:
 ly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.
 ior be From all your sins to set you free.
 and fair, You may with us his glo - ry share.
 fant laid By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

6 How glad we'll be to find it so!
 Then with the shepherds let us go
 To see what God for us has done
 In sending us his own dear Son.

7 Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
 And see what in the manger lies.
 Who is this child, so young and fair?
 It is the Christchild lying there.

8 Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
 Through whom the sinful world is blest!
 You came to share my misery
 That you might share your joy with me.

9 Ah, Lord, though you created all,
 How weak you are, so poor and small,
 That you should choose to lay your head
 Where lowly cattle lately fed!

10 Were earth a thousand times as fair
 And set with gold and jewels rare,
 It would be far too poor and small
 A cradle for the Lord of all.

11 Instead of soft and silken stuff
 You have but hay and straw so rough
 On which as King, so rich and great,
 To be enthroned in royal state.

12 And so it pleases you to see
 This simple truth revealed to me:
 That all the world's wealth, honor, might
 Are weak and worthless in your sight.

13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
 Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled
 Within my heart, made clean and new,
 A quiet chamber kept for you.

14 My heart for very joy must leap;
 My lips no more can silence keep.
 I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
 That sweetest ancient cradle song:

15 Glory to God in highest heaven,
 Who unto us his Son has given!
 While angels sing with pious worth
 A glad new year to all the earth.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

Tune: VOM HIMMEL HOCH (LM) Schumann, *Geistliche lieder aufs new gebessert*, Leipzig, 1539.