

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

God of new life, open your church to the unexpected ways your Spirit is at work. Guide bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders in their visioning, partnership, and planning. Surround us with your peace. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Give a vision of increase and abundant harvest for farmers, laborers, and gardeners who are beginning their growing season. Join their efforts with the goodness of creation to feed all living things. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Shine your light of wisdom and peace among nations. When those in power seek to assert dominance over others, confound their ways and make them yield to your humble authority. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 93. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Nicolaus Copernicus, 1543; Leonhard Euler, 1783; scientists) Revelation 21:15-22. **Wednesday** 2 Chronicles 34:20-33. **Thursday** (Ascension of Our Lord) Acts 1:1-11. **Friday** (commemoration of John Calvin, renewer of the church, 1564) Psalm 97. **Saturday** Exodus 33:18-23. **Seventh Sunday of Easter** (commemoration of Jiří Tranovský, hymnwriter, 1637) Acts 16:16-34; Psalm 97; Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21; John 17:20-26.

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Celebrate

Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 22, 2022

Visions abound in the readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter. Paul has a vision about what to do. John has a vision of what will be. Jesus provides visions of peace that surpasses human understanding and power beyond human imagination.

Prayer of the Day

Bountiful God, you gather your people into your realm, and you promise us food from your tree of life. Nourish us with your word, that empowered by your Spirit we may love one another and the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading

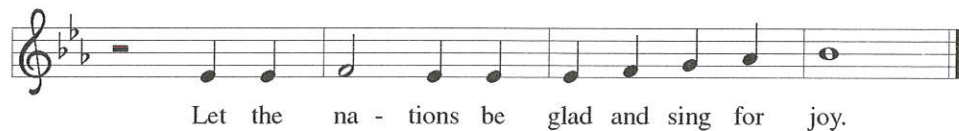
Acts 16:9-15

A vision compels Paul to move his ministry into Greece. There he meets Lydia, an important person in the business community, whose heart has been opened by God to receive the gospel. Her conversion and baptism provide the impetus for the founding of the church at Philippi.

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."¹⁰ When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

¹¹We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis,¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days.¹³ On the sabbath

day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there.¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul.¹⁵ When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.



May God be merciful to ¹us and bless us;
may the light of God's face ¹shine upon us.

²**Let your way be known ¹upon earth,
your saving health a- ¹mong all nations.**

³Let the peoples praise ¹you, O God;
let all the ¹peoples praise you.

⁴**Let the nations be glad and ¹sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the na- ¹tions on earth. R**

⁵Let the peoples praise ¹you, O God;
let all the ¹peoples praise you.

⁶**The earth has brought ¹forth its increase;
God, our own ¹God, has blessed us.**

⁷May God ¹give us blessing,
and may all the ends of the earth ¹stand in awe. R

John's vision of a new Jerusalem coming out of heaven provides continuity with God's past actions. Yet in this new city, God's presence replaces the temple, and the glory of God and the Lamb supplants sun and moon.

And in the spirit [one of the angels] carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

²²I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. ²⁵Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

^{22:1} Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

As Jesus talks of returning to the Father, he promises to send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will teach Jesus' followers and remind them of all that Jesus taught. Even more, those in whom God makes a home will experience a peace that overcomes fear.

Jesus answered [Judas (not Iscariot),] "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you

of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe."

or John 5:1-9 [not printed]

Jesus performs a healing miracle on the sabbath. In doing so he both reveals divine creative power and teaches a richer, deeper meaning for the sabbath as a healing and creative time.