

**Sunday Readings, Collects, and Prayers  
for 2021  
January to May**



**CHRIST CHURCH  
DARTMOUTH**

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## **Sunday, January 10, 2021: The Baptism of the Lord (White)**

**Readings:** GENESIS 1:1-5; PSALM 29; ACTS 19:1-7; MARK 1:4-11

### **Collect**

Eternal Father,  
who at the baptism of Jesus  
revealed him to be your Son,  
anointing him with the Holy Spirit,  
keep your children, born of water and the Spirit,  
faithful to their calling;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### **First Reading** Genesis 1:1-15

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

### **Psalm 29**

Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

**Ascribe to the Lord the glory due the divine name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.**

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

**The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice; the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendour.**

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon, and makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.

**The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare. And in the temple of the Lord all are crying, "Glory!"

**The Lord sits enthroned above the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as sovereign for evermore.**

The Lord shall give strength to this people; the Lord shall give this people the blessing of peace.

**Second Reading** Acts 19:1-7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied - altogether there were about twelve of them.

**Gospel** MARK 1:4-11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

**Prayer over the Gifts**

God of life and freedom,  
we celebrate the revelation of Jesus  
as the Christ who makes all creation new.  
Accept all we offer you this day  
and make us new in him,  
who is Lord for ever and ever.

**Prayer After Communion**

Gracious God, lover of all,  
by this sacrament  
you make us one family in Christ your Son,

one in the sharing of his body and blood,  
one in the communion of his Spirit.  
Help us to grow in love for one another  
and come to the full maturity of the Body of Christ.  
We ask this in his name.

## Sunday, January 17, 2021 Second Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)

Readings: 1 SAMUEL 3:1-10 (11-20); PSALM 139:1-5, 12-17; 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20; JOHN 1:43-51

### Collect

Almighty God,  
your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ  
is the light of the world.  
May your people,  
illuminated by your word and sacraments,  
shine with the radiance of his glory,  
that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed  
to the ends of the earth;  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading 1 SAMUEL 3:1-10

*The narrative of the call of Samuel is chosen as a parallel to the call of Philip and Nathanael, for the God whom Christians hear calling them in baptism is the God whom ancient Samuel followed. Contrasting the God of the Old Testament with the God of the New Testament cannot be biblically sustained.*

**N**ow the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

## **Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17**

Lord, you have searched me out and known me; you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

**You trace my journeys and my resting-places and are acquainted with all my ways.**

Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, but you, O Lord, know it altogether.

**You press upon me behind and before and lay your hand upon me.**

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

**For you yourself created my inmost parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.**

I will thank you because I am marvellously made; your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

**My body was not hidden from you, while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.**

Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb; all of them were written in your book; they were fashioned day by day, when as yet there was none of them.

**How deep I find your thoughts, O God! how great is the sum of them!**

If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand; to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.

## **Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Over the course of the three years in the weeks between Epiphany and Lent, the lectionary appoints semicontinuous readings from 1 Corinthians, chosen because this seminal letter of Paul describes the communal life expected among believers and calls them to lives of mutual love. Today's selection focuses on one specific ethnical issue—sexuality—as paramount now as in first-century Corinth. As is usual in dealing with ethics, Paul offers, not new Christian regulations, but the theology of our baptism into the body of Christ.

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food," and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also

raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, "The two shall be one flesh." But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

## **Gospel JOHN 1:43-51**

*In various parts of John's gospel, we read a more developed Christology than in the synoptic gospels. For John, there needs to be no miraculous birth to indicate Jesus' divine identity, because he is the God-sent teacher, the one come from God to replace human kings, the ultimate fulfillment of religious hopes, and the divine judge glorified by angels at the end of time. Today's reading exemplifies why Christians need to know the Old Testament, for all the Christological titles adopt and alter imagery from the Hebrew Scriptures.*

**T**he next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Living God,  
you have revealed your Son as the Messiah.  
May we hear his word and follow it,  
and live as children of light.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

God of glory,  
you nourish us with bread from heaven.  
Fill us with your Holy Spirit,

that through us your light may shine in all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.

## Sunday, January 24, 2021 The Third Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)

**Readings** JONAH 3:1-5, 10; PSALM 62:6-14; 1 CORINTHIANS 7:29-31; MARK 1:14-20

### Collect

Almighty God,  
by grace alone you call us  
and accept us in your service.  
Strengthen us by your Spirit,  
and make us worthy of your call;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading

 Jonah 3:1-5, 10

*The passage from the short story of Jonah is chosen to parallel Jesus' call of his disciples. Jonah was called by God and now is calling even his nation's enemies to repent and believe. Such Old Testament selections proclaim that our God was, throughout time and place, always merciful.*

**T**he word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

### Psalm 62: 1-12

God alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold, so that I shall not be shaken.

**In God is my safety and my honour, my strong rock and my refuge.**

Put your trust in God always, O people, pour out your hearts before the One who is your refuge.

**Those of high degree are but a fleeting breath, even those of low estate cannot be trusted. On the scales they are lighter than a breath, all of them together.**

Put no trust in extortion; in robbery take no empty pride; though wealth increase, set not your heart upon it.

**God has spoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongs to God.**

Steadfast love is yours, O Lord, for you repay all according to their deeds.

## **Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

*Each year in the Sundays after Epiphany the lectionary reads through 1 Corinthians, one of the seminal writings of Paul. Paul's advice in Chapter 7 on sexual and status issues differs from Matthew's that we heard in year A. Whether or not we join Paul in assuming that the world will soon come to an end, we agree that life in Christ makes our old values give way to new ones. The reading is a good complement to the call narratives in Mark and Jonah.*

**I** mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

## **Gospel** Mark 1:14-20

*When Jesus calls us to believe in the good news and follow him, our lives are "immediately" altered by the proclamation of the word. The adverb "immediately" appears twice here and 27 times in the NRSV translation of Mark's gospel, not counting all the use of "at once." So it is that we stand for the gospel reading, on our feet, ready to follow.*

**N**ow after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea - for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

## **Prayer over the Gifts**

Loving God,  
before the world began you called us.  
Make holy all we offer you this day,  
and strengthen us in that calling.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord

**Prayer After Communion**

Gracious God,  
our hands have taken holy things;  
our lives have been nourished by the body of your Son.  
May we who have eaten at this holy table  
be strengthened for service in your world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

## Sunday, January 31, 2021 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)

Readings DEUTERONOMY 18:15-20; PSALM 111; 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-13; MARK 1:21-28

### Collect

Almighty God,  
on the holy mount you revealed to chosen witnesses  
your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured:  
mercifully deliver us from the darkness of this world,  
and change us into his likeness from glory to glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading Deuteronomy 18:15-20

**T**he passage from Deuteronomy is chosen to indicate Israel's religious hope that God will continue to speak words of covenant, comfort, and command. Christians see Jesus as the divine prophet for whom we all long. Mark's way to present Jesus responds to the Israelite desire for an authoritative prophet.

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak - that prophet shall die."

### Psalm 111

Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

**Great are the deeds of the Lord! They are studied by all who delight in them.**

O Lord, your work is full of majesty and splendour, and your righteousness endures for ever.

**You make your marvellous works to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion.**

You give food to those who fear you; you are ever mindful of your covenant.

**You have shown your people the power of your works in giving them the lands of the nations.**

The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice; all your commandments are sure.

**They stand fast for ever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity.**

You send redemption to your people; you commanded your covenant for ever; holy and awesome is your name.

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; those who act accordingly have a good understanding; the praise of the Lord endures for ever.**

### **Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

*Although it is always tempting to lay down a new law, Paul instead thinks through the ethical dilemma and urges the community members to care for each other. Twenty centuries later Christians are still split on many moral questions, including food issues. May we heed Paul's advice, and live together in one Lord, Jesus Christ.*

**N**ow concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him. Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth - as in fact there are many gods and many lords - yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. "Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one

of them to fall.

### **Gospel** Mark 1:21-28

*When Jesus speaks, evil flees. For Mark, “an unclean spirit” is more than an example of sickness or insanity: the risen Christ gives his Holy Spirit to conquer the power of all unclean spirits of the world. The miracle attests to Christ’s divine authority. Filled with the Holy Spirit, we too are able to recognize Jesus as the Holy One of God.*

**T**hey went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching - with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Holy God,  
receive all we offer you this day,  
and bring us to that radiant glory  
which we see in the transfigured face  
of Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Holy God,  
we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
May we who are partakers of his table  
reflect his life in word and deed,  
that all the world may know  
his power to change and save.  
We ask this in his name.

## Sunday, February 7, 2021 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)

Readings ISAIAH 40:21-31; PSALM 147:1-12, 21C; 1 CORINTHIANS 9:16-23; MARK 1:29-39

### Collect

Merciful Lord,  
grant to your faithful people pardon and peace,  
that we may be cleansed from all our sins  
and serve you with a quiet mind;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading ISAIAH 40:21-31

*This poem from Isaiah 40 is chosen to exemplify the power of the LORD God to bring hope and life out of despair and death. We too are faint and powerless, and we have gathered to be raised from our sickbeds to serve one another. The Old Testament reading both articulates the human hope for salvation and prepares us to receive today's gospel proclamation.*

**H**ave you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing. Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God"? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

### Psalm 147: 1-12, 20

Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God! How pleasant it is to honour God with praise!

**The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem and gathers the exiles of Israel.**

The Lord heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

**The Lord counts the number of stars and calls them all by their names.**

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; there is no limit to the wisdom of God.

**The Lord lifts up the lowly, but casts the wicked to the ground.**

Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; make music to our God upon the harp.

**The Lord covers the heavens with clouds and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow upon the mountains and green plants to serve humankind.**

The Lord provides food for flocks and herds and for the young ravens when they cry.

**The Lord is not impressed by the might of a horse and has no pleasure in human strength,**

but finds pleasure in those who fear God, in those who await the gracious favour of the Lord.

**Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion**

The Lord has not done so to any other nation; to them these judgements have not been revealed. Hallelujah!

### **Second Reading** 1 CORINTHIANS 9:16-23

*We are called to share Paul's paradoxical understanding of life under the gospel. We are free, in order to submit ourselves to others. In Luther's words, Christians are both perfectly free, subject to none, and dutiful servants, subject to all. Like Peter's mother-in-law, we arise from ourselves to be a slave to all.*

**I**f I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel. For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I

became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

### **Gospel MARK 1:29-39**

*Jesus meets with his disciples, and he escapes alone to pray. He heals, and he hides. He displays power, and he orders demons to keep silent. Mark's account of the meaning of Jesus' ministry alternates between his being hidden in the crucifixion and being acclaimed risen within the believing community. Like Peter's mother-in-law, we have been raised from illness and now serve one another.*

**A**s soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." He answered, "Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

God of compassion and forgiveness,  
receive our offering this day,  
and make us one with him who is our peace,  
Jesus Christ our Saviour.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Eternal God,  
in you we find peace beyond all telling.  
May we who share in this heavenly banquet  
be instruments of your peace on earth,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

## Sunday, February 14, 2021 Last Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)

Readings 2 KINGS 2:1-12; PSALM 50:1-6; 2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-6; MARK 9:2-9

### Collect

Almighty God,  
on the holy mount you revealed to chosen witnesses  
your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured:  
mercifully deliver us from the darkness of this world,  
and change us into his likeness from glory to glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading 2 KINGS 2:1-12

*On Transfiguration in year A, the first reading narrates Moses' death, and in year B, the first reading narrates the ascension of Elijah. Jewish legend anticipated the return of Elijah at the eschaton, thus (c.f. Mark 8:28) the gospels' repeated inquiries as to whether Jesus was Elijah. In Mark 9:13, Jesus refers to John the baptizer as Elijah. The gospels describe Jesus as like Elijah, a miracle-worker who healed, raised the dead, spoke the word of God, stood up to rulers, and goes to God at his death. Now it is our turn to follow Elijah.*

**W**hen the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent." Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent." Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father!

The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

### **Psalm 50: 1-6**

The Lord, the God of gods, has spoken and has called the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

**Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, God reveals the divine glory.**

Our God will come and will not keep silence; before whom there is a consuming flame, and round about whom a raging storm.

**God calls the heavens and the earth from above to witness the judgement of this people.**

"Gather before me my loyal followers, those who have made a covenant with me and sealed it with sacrifice."

**Let the heavens declare the rightness of the divine cause; for God, God alone, is judge.**

### **Second Reading 2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-6**

*The passage from 2 Corinthians brilliantly summarizes the day: God's light, shining first at creation, now shines in the illuminating gospel and through the lives of believers. To see the glory of God, we look to Jesus.*

**E**ven if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

## **Gospel MARK 9:2-9**

*In the narrative of the transfiguration the church sees testimony to Jesus' status as both the eschatological Son of Man and the beloved Son of God. Just as God, seen on a mountain and in a cloud, conferred authority on Moses at Sinai, now God confers authority on Jesus. This Sunday, as we stand to hear this reading, we heed Mark's message: "listen to him." The church, after the resurrection, is let in on the secret and becomes the dwelling that Peter thinks to erect.*

**S**ix days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Holy God,  
receive all we offer you this day,  
and bring us to that radiant glory  
which we see in the transfigured face  
of Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Holy God,  
we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
May we who are partakers of his table  
reflect his life in word and deed,  
that all the world may know  
his power to change and save.  
We ask this in his name.

## Wednesday, February 17, 2021 Ash Wednesday (Violet)

**Readings** ISAIAH 58:1-12; PSALM 103:8-18; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20B-6:10; MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21

### Collect

O God,  
you delight not in pomp and show,  
but in a humble and contrite heart.  
Overturn our love of worldly possessions  
and fix our hearts more firmly on you,  
so that, having nothing,  
we may yet possess everything,  
a treasure stored up for us in heaven. Amen.

### First Reading Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

**B**low the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near - a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

### Psalm 103:8-18

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness.

**He will not always accuse us, nor will he keep his anger for ever.**

He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

**For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.**

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins from us.

**As a father cares for his children, so does the Lord care for those who fear him.**

For he himself knows whereof we are made; he remembers that we are but dust.

**Our days are like the grass; we flourish like a flower of the field;**

When the wind goes over it, it is gone, and its place shall know it no more.

**But the merciful goodness of the Lord endures for ever on those who fear him, and his righteousness on children's children;**

On those who keep his covenant and remember his commandments and do them.

**Second Reading** 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20B-6:10

*Ash Wednesday begins Lent as the acceptable time, the day of salvation, the time to be reconciled to God. During these weeks, the church meditates on what it means that God made Christ to be sin, that we might become the righteousness of God.*

**W**e entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labours, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honour and dishonour, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see - we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## **Gospel MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21**

*Since the Middle Ages, this text was proclaimed on Ash Wednesday, and its call for almsgiving, prayer, and fasting lays out what have been called the three disciplines of Lent. The discipline of fasting means not to denigrate the human body, but to symbolize the turn from self-indulgence to care for the neighbor and reliance on God. In the surprise of faith, we discover that these disciplines can accompany us to the alternative treasures that come from God alone.*

**J**esus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Merciful God,  
turn us from sin to faithfulness.  
Accept our offering,  
and prepare us to celebrate  
the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour,  
who is alive and reigns with you now and for ever.

### **Prayer After Communion**

God of compassion,  
through your Son Jesus Christ  
you reconciled your people to yourself.  
Following his example of prayer and fasting,  
may we obey you with willing hearts  
and serve one another in holy love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Sunday, February 21, 2021 First Sunday in Lent (Violet)

Readings GENESIS 9:8-17; PSALM 25:1-9; 1 PETER 3:18-22; MARK 1:9-15

### Collect

God of the wilderness,  
your Son battled with the powers of darkness  
and grew closer to you in the desert:  
help us to use these forty days  
to grow in wisdom and prayer,  
so that we may witness to your saving love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.  
*Common Worship (2000) alt.*

### First Reading GENESIS 9:8-17

*Like popular disaster films, the flood myth expresses our fears of annihilation. Yet in the biblical version, God restores all things to beauty and promise. Even the natural world, such as the rainbow, can remind us of God's covenant of grace. In the resurrection of Christ, we celebrate that the forty days of the flood are over.*

**G**od said to Noah and to his sons with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

### Psalm 25: 1-9

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;

**my God, I put my trust in you; let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

Let none who look to you be put to shame; let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.

**Show me your ways, O Lord, and teach me your paths.**

Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

**Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your love and for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.

**Gracious and upright are you, O Lord; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

You guide the humble in doing right and teach your way to the lowly.

**O Lord, all your paths are love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

**Second Reading** 1 Peter 3:18-22

*This extremely important New Testament passage is an early example of Christian interpretation of the Old Testament. Christians treasure the story of the flood as a picture of baptism, God saving eight persons, and now us, through the waters. Lent is like our forty days in the ark.*

**C**hrist also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you -not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

## **Gospel Mark 1:9-15**

*We begin our Christian life with baptism and then, like Jesus, face testing. The Spirit of God accompanies us, both in baptism and in our wilderness. In receiving the gospel, the time is fulfilled; we repent and believe in the good news.*

**I**n those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

God our refuge and our strength,  
receive all we offer you this day,  
and through the death and resurrection of your Son  
transform us to his likeness.  
We ask this in his name.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Compassionate God,  
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage;  
may our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts;  
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

## Sunday, February 28, 2021 Second Sunday in Lent (Violet)

Readings GENESIS 17:1-7, 15-16; PSALM 22:22-30; ROMANS 4:13-25; MARK 8:31-38

### Collect

Faithful God,  
may we set our minds and wills to yours,  
and take up our cross,  
following Christ with confidence  
for the glory you reveal in him;  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.  
*FWM Proposed Prayers alt.*

### First Reading Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

*The story of God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah is read this Sunday to strengthen the Lenten focus on covenant and to present examples of those who receive life from God. That the passage speaks of God's everlasting covenant with the descendants of Abraham reminds Christians of God's continuing faithfulness also to Jews and Muslims.*

**W**hen Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

### Psalm 22: 22-30

I will declare your name to my kindred; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.

**Praise the Lord, you that fear God; stand in awe of God, O offspring of Israel; all you of Jacob's line, give glory.**

For God does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither turns away from them; when they cry to the Lord, they are heard.

**My praise is of God in the great assembly; I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship the Lord.**

The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall give praise: "May your heart live for ever!"

**All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow before God.**

For sovereignty belongs to the Lord, who rules over the nations.

**To God alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust fall before God.**

My soul shall live for God; my descendants shall serve God; they shall be known as the Lord's for ever.

**They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn the saving deeds that God has done.**

## **Second Reading** ROMANS 4:13-25

*In Lent we receive the grace of God, which like the surprise of a birth to a couple in old age, comes from the mercy of God rather than from our human efforts.*

**T**he promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations") in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully

convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

### **Gospel MARK 8:31-38**

*The gospel promises that following in the way of Christ offers life. During Lent, many Christians place limits on their lives—"fasting from self-indulgence" (ELW, p. 254)—as a sign of incorporation into Christ. We need to beware of counseling those who are suffering more than we are about willingly taking up their cross, by which Mark meant religious persecution.*

**J**esus began to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Compassionate God,  
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage;  
may our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts;  
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

### **Prayer After Communion**

Creator of heaven and earth,  
we thank you for these holy mysteries,  
which bring us now a share in the life to come,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Sunday, March 7, 2021 Third Sunday in Lent (Violet)

Readings EXODUS 20:1-17; PSALM 19; 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-25; JOHN 2:13-22

### Collect

Almighty God,  
your dear Son went not up to joy,  
but first he suffered pain,  
and entered not into glory before he was crucified.  
Mercifully grant that we,  
walking in the way of the cross,  
may find it none other than the way of life and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.  
*Common Worship (2002) alt.*

### First Reading EXODUS 20:1-17

*The Decalogue, which arose in a period of Israelite history prior to the building of the temple, is appointed for this Sunday to highlight both the similarities and the differences between the evolving biblical Judaism and the community of Christian believers. The Commandments understand all human life as conducted before God. In the New Testament itself (for example Matthew 5) we encounter the earliest of continuing Christian appropriation and reinterpretation of the Ten Commandments. Historically, attention to the Commandments has been part of baptismal catechesis.*

**G**od spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work - you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not

covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

## **Psalm 19**

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows the handiwork of the Lord.

**One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard,

**their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world.**

In the deep has God set a pavilion for the sun; it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber; it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**

The law of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent.

**The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes.**

The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever; the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

**More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.**

By them also is your servant enlightened, and in keeping them there is great reward.

**Who can tell how often they offend? Cleanse me from my secret faults.**

Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight; O Lord, my strength and my redeemer**

## **Second Reading** 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-25

*This reading helps connect the Ten Commandments with Christ as the replacement of the temple: Paul contrasts the faith of the baptized with both Greek learning and Jewish signs. In Lent we affirm the gospel with its offer of the weakness of the crucified Christ.*

**T**he message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

## **Gospel** JOHN 2:13-22

*This gospel is a primary example of John's use of narrative to proclaim Christology. Christ is the temple. Coming to church in Lent is coming to Christ, whose body is raised from death and who lives now in the community of believers. Our Passover is the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

**T**he Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

## **Prayer over the Gifts**

Gracious God,  
we know your power to triumph over weakness.  
May we who ask forgiveness  
be ready to forgive one another,  
in the name of Jesus the Lord.

**Prayer After Communion**

God of mercy and forgiveness,  
may we who share this sacrament  
live together in unity and peace,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

## Sunday, March 14, 2021 Fourth Sunday in Lent (Violet)

### Readings

NUMBERS 21:4-9; PSALM 107:1-3, 17-22; EPHESIANS 2:1-10; JOHN 3:14-21

### Collect

Steadfast God,  
you reach out to us in mercy.  
When we rebel against your holy call  
and walk in disobedience,  
soften our hearts with the warmth of your love,  
so that we may know your Son  
alive within us, redeeming us,  
and raising us up into your eternal presence. **Amen.**  
*Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.*

### First Reading NUMBERS 21:4-9

*The narrative from Numbers provides the story to which the gospel refers. With John in mind, we can say that the Israelites “loved darkness” and are “perishing.” The fiery serpent, like Christ, was “lifted up.” Those dying of snakebite, like Christians, are invited to believe.*

**F**rom Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

### Psalm 1-3, 17-22

Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, and whose mercy endures for ever.

**Let all those whom the Lord has redeemed proclaim that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe.**

The Lord gathered them out of the lands; from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

**Some were fools and took to rebellious ways; they were afflicted because of their sins.**

They abhorred all manner of food and drew near to death's door.

**Then they cried to you, O Lord, in their troubles, and you delivered them from their distress.**

You sent forth your word and healed them and saved them from the grave.

**Let them give thanks to you, O Lord, for your mercy and the wonders you do for your children.**

Let them offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and tell of your acts with shouts of joy.

### **Second Reading** Ephesians 2:1-10

*This passage is a magnificent compendium of Lenten baptismal proclamation. Baptism has given us life in Christ so that by grace we will do the good works of God.*

**Y**ou were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God - not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

### **Gospel** John 3:14-21

*The context of the beloved John 3:16 includes reference to Israelite sin, death by poison, the darkness of this world, hatred of God, and the evil that people commit. In John, eternal life begins now, in and among the baptized. In contrast to the story from Numbers in which people die of snakebite, John describes God as choosing to save, rather than condemn. The world, which does not know God, is loved by God.*

**J**esus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

God of mercy and compassion,  
your Word calls us home to faith and love.  
Accept all we offer you this day,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Compassionate God,  
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage;  
may our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts;  
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

## Sunday, March 21, 2021 Fifth Sunday in Lent (Violet)

**Readings** JEREMIAH 31:31-34; PSALM 119:9-16; HEBREWS 5:5-10; JOHN 12:20-33

### Collect

God of suffering and glory,  
in Jesus Christ you reveal the way of life  
through the path of obedience.

Write your law on our hearts,  
so that we may not stray from you,  
but be your people. **Amen.**

*Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.*

### First Reading JEREMIAH 31:31-34

*Lent has provided time for us to prepare for and remember baptism. In baptism we are wed to God and we receive God's covenant of love written in our hearts. Although we have repeatedly broken the covenant, God promises to remember our sin no more. This passage was formative for the Christian language of the "new covenant" in Christ's blood.*

**T**he days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

### Psalm 119: 9-16

How shall the young be cleanse their ways? By keeping to your words.

**With my whole heart I seek you; let me not stray from your commandments.**

I treasure your promise in my heart, that I may not sin against you.

**Blessed are you, O Lord; instruct me in your statutes.**

With my lips will I recite all the judgements of your mouth.

**I have taken greater delight in the way of your decrees than in all manner of riches.**

I will meditate on your commandments and give attention to your ways.

**My delight is in your statutes; I will not forget your word.**

### **Second Reading** Hebrews 5:5-10

*The suffering and death of Jesus are likened to the ministry of the high priest, whose prayers provided the people's access to forgiveness from God. We are comforted by the word that Christ suffered both for us and with us.*

**C**hrist did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

### **Gospel** John 12:20-33

*As we ready for Holy Week, the archaic simile of the grain of wheat depicts God's way of bringing life from what seems death. With the Greeks, we too wish to see Jesus. To do so, we must look up, for Jesus has been lifted up on the cross in order to draw everyone to God. The "hour" of salvation is Christ's death.*

**N**ow among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say - 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

**Prayer over the Gifts**

Eternal God,  
your only Son suffered death upon the cross  
to bring the world salvation.  
Accept the praise and thanksgiving  
we offer you this day,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

**Prayer After Communion**

Compassionate God,  
you have fed us with the bread of heaven.  
Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage;  
may our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts;  
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

## Sunday, March 28, 2021 Palm Sunday (Red)

Readings Mark 11:1-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

### Collect

Holy and immortal God,  
as we enter into this holy week  
turn our hearts to Jerusalem,  
so that, united with Christ and all the faithful,  
we may enter the city not made with hands,  
your promised realm of justice and peace,  
eternal from age to age. **Amen.**

*A Prayer Book for Australia* (1995) alt. **Gospel** Mark 11:1-11

*Holy Week begins with a palm procession and the proclamation of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem from the Gospel of Mark. Christ enters the assembly now, just as he did then, and we praise his presence among us. "Hosanna" is now our song, pleading for salvation.*

**W**hen the disciples were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

### Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

Give thanks to the Lord who is good; the mercy of the Lord endures for ever.

**Let Israel now proclaim, "The mercy of the Lord endures for ever."**

Open for me the gates of righteousness ; I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the Lord.

**This is the gate of the Lord; those who are righteous may enter.**

I will give thanks to the Lord who answered me and has become my salvation.

**The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.**

This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

**On this day the Lord has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.**

Hosannah, Lord, hosannah! Lord, send us now success.

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord.**

God is the Lord and has shined upon us; form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

**You are my God, and I will thank you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.**

Give thanks to the Lord who is good; the mercy of the Lord endures for ever.

**Prayer over the Gifts**

Gracious God,  
the suffering and death of Jesus, your only Son,  
makes us pleasing in your sight.  
Alone we can do nothing,  
but through his sacrifice,  
may we receive your love and mercy.

**Prayer after Communion**

God our help and strength,  
you have satisfied our hunger with this eucharistic food.  
Strengthen our faith,  
that through the death and resurrection of your Son,  
we may be led to salvation,  
for he is Lord now and for ever.

## Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Holy Week (Red)

Readings ISAIAH 42:1-9; PSALM 36:5-11; HEBREWS 9:11-15; JOHN 12:1-11

### Collect

Holy and immortal God,  
you bring us into being  
and hold our lives in your heart.  
May the fragrance of your love,  
made known to us in Christ,  
draw us closer to you  
and unite us with Christ. **Amen.**  
*Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.*

### First Reading Isaiah 42: 1-9

**H**ere is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching. Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

### Psalm 36: 5-11

Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, and your faithfulness to the clouds.

**Your righteousness is like the strong mountains, your justice like the great deep; you save both man and beast, O Lord.**

How priceless is your love, O God! your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.

**They feast upon the abundance of your house; you give them drink from the river of your delights.**

For with you is the well of life, and in your light we see light.

**Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you, and your favour to those who are true of heart.**

Let not the foot of the proud come near me, nor the hand of the wicked push me aside.

**Second Reading** Hebrews 9:11-15

**W**hen Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God! For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.

**Gospel** John 12: 1-11

**S**ix days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

**Prayer over the Gifts**

Ruler of all creation,  
your Son was anointed with costly oil  
in preparation for death and the grave.  
Receive all we offer you this day  
for the sake of him who died that we might live,  
Jesus Christ the Lord.

**Prayer After Communion**

God of our salvation,  
in this eucharist  
you have renewed us in your covenant.  
Help us to follow in the path of him  
who came to open the eyes of the blind  
and bring prisoners out of darkness,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Tuesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Holy Week (Red)

Readings ISAIAH 49:1-7; PSALM 71:1-14; 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31; JOHN 12:20-36

### Collect

Holy and immortal God,  
in Christ you have named us friends  
and called us to follow him as disciples:  
may we be faithful in our calling,  
so that, by walking in your light,  
we may scatter the darkness of the world;  
through Christ, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

*Provers Working Group (2016) First Reading* ISAIAH 49:1-7

**L**isten to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me. He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." But I said, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the Lord, and my reward with my God." And now the Lord says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord, and my God has become my strength - he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, "Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

### Psalm 71: 1-14

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be ashamed.

**In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free; incline your ear to me and save me.**

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe; you are my crag and my stronghold.

**Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.**

For you are my hope, O Lord God, my confidence since I was young.

**I have been sustained by you ever since I was born; from my mother's womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you.**

I have become a portent to many; but you are my refuge and my strength.

**Let my mouth be full of your praise and your glory all the day long.**

Do not cast me off in my old age; forsake me not when my strength fails.

**For my enemies are talking against me, and those who lie in wait for my life take counsel together.**

They say, "God has forsaken him; go after him and seize him; because there is none who will save."

**O God, be not far from me; come quickly to help me, O my God.**

Let those who set themselves against me be put to shame and be disgraced; let those who seek to do me evil be covered with scorn and reproach.

**But I shall always wait in patience, and shall praise you more and more.**

#### **Second Reading** 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

**T**he message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

## Gospel JOHN 12:20-36

**N**ow among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour. Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say - 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light." After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

### Prayer over the Gifts

Source of life,  
accept all we offer you this day,  
and turn us from sin and death,  
that we may share in the tree of life,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Prayer After Communion

Faithful God,  
may we who share this banquet  
glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
our salvation, life, and hope,  
who reigns as Lord now and for ever.

## Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 Holy Week (Red)

Readings ISAIAH 50:4-9A; PSALM 70; HEBREWS 12:1-3; JOHN 13:21-32

### Collect

Holy and immortal God,  
banish from our hearts those fears and desires  
which lead us to betray you in our lives,  
and so fill us with the faithfulness of Jesus  
that the world may know  
your wisdom, love and power. **Amen.**  
*Propers Working Group (2016)*

### First Reading ISAIAH 50:4-9A

**T**he Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens - wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

### Psalm 70

Be pleased, O God, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me.

**Let those who seek my life be ashamed and altogether dismayed; let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.**

Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me turn back, because they are ashamed.

**Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; let those who love your salvation say for ever, "Great is the Lord!"**

But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me speedily, O God.

**You are my helper and my deliverer; O Lord, do not tarry.**

## **Second Reading** HEBREWS 12:1-3

**T**herefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

## **Gospel** JOHN 13:21-32

**J**esus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples the - one whom Jesus loved - was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night. When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

God of glory,  
may our worship this day  
fix the eyes of our faith on Jesus,  
the pioneer and perfecter of our new humanity,  
who is seated at the right hand of your throne,  
now and for ever.

### **Prayer After Communion**

God our help,  
your Son was betrayed by one who called himself a friend.  
May we who call him Lord  
ever remain his faithful people,  
for he lives and reigns with you now and for ever.

## Thursday, April 1, 2021 Maundy Thursday (White)

**Readings** EXODUS 12:1-4 (5-10), 11-14; PSALM 116:1, 10-17; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26; JOHN 13:1-17, 31B-35

### Collect

O God,  
on the night he was betrayed  
Jesus washed the feet of his disciples  
and gave himself in a meal of bread and wine.  
May we who celebrate these signs of his love,  
serve and give ourselves to others  
in his name and to your glory;  
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**  
*FWM Proposed Prayers alt.*

### First Reading Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14

*Most second-century Christians continued to keep the Jewish Passover. Over the decades, the celebration moved from the date of Pesach to the following Sunday, because the primary focus had morphed from a memorial of God's liberation of the ancient Israelites into Christian praise for Jesus' resurrection, which is always celebrated on a Sunday. At the seder meal of Passover still today, Jews tell the story of Exodus 12. Christians remember the old Passover as a parallel to the new Passover. Over the Three Days we keep the Christian Passover: Jesus is the lamb whose blood saves the people from death.*

**T**he Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it.

This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the Lord. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

**Psalm 116: 1, 10-17**

I love the Lord who has heard the voice of my supplication,

**I believed, even when I said, "I have been brought very low."**

In my distress I said, "No one can be trusted."

**How shall I repay you, O Lord, for all the good things you have done for me?**

I will lift up the cup of salvation and call upon your name.

**I will fulfil my vows to the Lord in the presence of all the people.**

Precious in your sight, O Lord is the death of your servants.

**O Lord, I am your servant; I am your servant and the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.**

I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord.

**Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

*Appropriately on Maundy Thursday the second reading is Paul's narration of Jesus' last supper with his disciples before his death. During the Three Days, our eucharist heeds Paul's advice: we share food equally, as does one loving body, and we see the meaning of the meal in the death of Christ.*

**F**or I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**Gospel** John 13:1-17, 31B-35

*The liturgy of the Three Days features the Gospel of John, the last-written canonical gospel, described since the second century as, like an eagle, the gospel that flies highest and sees farthest about the meaning of Jesus' life and death. In John, the meal signifies the body of Christ by connecting Christ with the literal bodies of the believing community by means of the*

*servant's task of foot-washing. After the foot-washing, Jesus spoke about his coming death as the glorification of God.*

**N**ow before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean." After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord - and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Loving God,  
we spread this table  
to remember the loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ, your Son.  
Accept all we offer you this day.  
Bind us together in his love  
and in the love he has commanded us to bring one another;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Holy God,  
source of all love,

on the night of his betrayal  
Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment,  
to love one another as he loved them.  
Write this commandment in our hearts;  
give us the will to serve others  
as he was the servant of all,  
who gave his life and died for us,  
yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

## Friday, April 2, 2021 Good Friday: The Celebration of the Lord's Passion

**Readings** ISAIAH 52:13-53:12; PSALM 22; HEBREWS 4:14-16, 5:7-9; JOHN 18:1-19:42

### Collect

O Holy and Immortal One,  
hear us as we pray through Jesus, our high priest:  
heal all our divisions,  
reconcile all who are estranged,  
console all who suffer,  
and finally raise up to new life  
all that is bound by death. **Amen.**

*Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.*

### First Reading Isaiah 52:13-53:12

*Already in the writings of the New Testament, Christians viewed Jesus in light of the fourth Servant Song, seeing Christ's voluntary suffering as effecting salvation for all. Reading Isaiah 53 provides a contrast to John's passion narrative, since Isaiah stresses the suffering of one who is like a lamb led to the slaughter.*

**S**ee, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him - so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals - so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the Lord

shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

## **Psalm 22**

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me and are so far from my cry and from the words of my distress?

**O my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not answer; by night as well, but I find no rest.**

Yet you are the Holy One, enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

**Our ancestors put their trust in you; they trusted, and you delivered them.**

They cried out to you and were delivered; they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

**But as for me, I am a worm and not human, scorned by all and despised by the people.**

All who see me laugh me to scorn; they curl their lips and wag their heads, saying,

**“You trusted in the Lord; let the Lord deliver you; let God rescue you, if God delights in you.”**

Yet you are the one who took me out of the womb, and kept me safe upon my mother’s breast.

**I have been entrusted to you ever since I was born; you were my God when I was still in my mother’s womb.**

Be not far from me, for trouble is near, and there is none to help.

**Many young bulls encircle me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me.**

They open wide their jaws at me, like a ravening and a roaring lion.

**I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint; my heart within my breast is melting wax.**

My mouth is dried out like a potsherd; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; and you have laid me in the dust of the grave.

**Packs of dogs close me in and gangs of evildoers circle around me; they pierce my hands and my feet.**

I can count all my bones while they stare and gloat over me.

**They divide my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing.**

Be not far away, O Lord; you are my strength; hasten to help me.

**Save me from the sword, my life from the power of the dog.**

Save me from the lion's mouth, my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls.

**I will declare your name to my kindred; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.**

Praise the Lord, you that fear God; stand in awe of God, O offspring of Israel; all you of Jacob's line, give glory.

**For God does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; neither turns away from them; when they cry to the Lord, they are heard.**

My praise is of God in the great assembly; I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship the Lord.

**The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall give praise: "May your heart live for ever!"**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow before God.

**For sovereignty belongs to the Lord, who rules over the nations.**

To God alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust fall before God.

**My soul shall live for God; my descendants shall serve God; they shall be known as the Lord's for ever.**

They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn the saving deeds that God has done.

## Second Reading Hebrews 10:16-25

*The imagery in Isaiah that describes the sacrificial lamb is contrasted with the imagery in Hebrews, in which Christ is the high priest whose ministry of prayer, life of obedience, and willingness to suffer for others constitute his appeal to God for our forgiveness.*

**T**his is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds," he also adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

## Gospel John 18:1-19:42

*To make clear that Christians are not to despair at the memorial of Jesus' death, the gospel reading for Good Friday is the triumphant account in John 18–19. Christians gather on this day believing that Christ conquered death, and John's account with its many unique details proclaims that this Jesus is the divine I AM, whose death finishes the work of effecting eternal life.*

**A**fter Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person

die for the people. Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself. Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed. Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfil what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.) Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit. Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find

no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God." Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfil what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on

the one whom they have pierced." After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Holy God,  
your Son Jesus Christ carried our sins  
in his own body on the tree,  
so that we might have life.  
May we and all who remember this day  
find new life in him,  
now and in the world to come,  
where he lives with you and the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Almighty and eternal God,  
you have restored us to life  
by the triumphant death  
and resurrection of Christ.  
Continue this healing work within us.  
May we who partake of this mystery  
never cease to give you dedicated service.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Saturday, April 3, 2021 Holy Saturday (White)

Readings JOB 14:1-14; PSALM 31:1-4, 15-16; 1 PETER 4:1-8; MATTHEW 27:57-66

### Collect

God of sabbath rest,  
out of the depths we cry to you.  
Give light in our darkness  
and hope in the prison of our despair;  
through your Beloved who rests this day,  
obedient to your will. **Amen.**  
*Common Worship: Additional Collects (2004) alt.*

### First Reading JOB 14:1-14

**A** mortal, born of woman, few of days and full of trouble, comes up like a flower and withers, flees like a shadow and does not last. Do you fix your eyes on such a one? Do you bring me into judgement with you? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one can. Since their days are determined, and the number of their months is known to you, and you have appointed the bounds that they cannot pass, look away from them, and desist, that they may enjoy, like labourers, their days. For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease. Though its root grows old in the earth, and its stump dies in the ground, yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant. But mortals die, and are laid low; humans expire, and where are they? As waters fail from a lake, and a river wastes away and dries up, so mortals lie down and do not rise again; until the heavens are no more, they will not awake or be roused out of their sleep. Oh that you would hide me in Sheol, that you would conceal me until your wrath is past, that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If mortals die, will they live again? All the days of my service I would wait until my release should come."

### Psalm 31: 1-4, 15-16

In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

**Incline your ear to me; make haste to deliver me.**

Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

**Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me, for you are my tower of strength.**

"My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

**Make your face to shine upon your servant, and in your loving-kindness save me."**

**Second Reading** 1 PETER 4:1-8

**S**ince therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does. The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

**Gospel** MATTHEW 27:57-66

**W**hen it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb. The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can." So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

## Sunday, April 4, 2021 The Sunday of the Resurrection: Easter Day (White)

**Readings** ACTS 10:34-43; PSALM 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-11; JOHN 20:1-18

### Collect

Love divine,  
in raising Christ to new life  
you open the path of salvation to all peoples.  
Send us out with the joy of Mary Magdalene  
to proclaim that we have seen the Lord,  
so that all the world may celebrate with you  
the banquet of your peace. Amen.  
*Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.*

### First Reading Acts 10:34-43

*Throughout the eight Sundays of the fifty days of Easter from Easter Day through Pentecost, the three-year lectionary appoints first readings from Acts. The idea is that the Spirit extended the power of the resurrection from the empty tomb to the whole Christian church, spreading throughout the Greco-Roman world. Thus we can think of each Sunday's reading from Acts as another telling of the resurrection. In the sermon credited to Peter in Acts 10, Luke referred to the witnesses of the resurrection who "ate and drank with [Jesus] after he rose from the dead." We believers see ourselves as among these witnesses.*

**T**hen Peter began to speak to the Gentiles: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ - he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

## **Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24**

Give thanks to the Lord who is good; the mercy of the Lord endures for ever.

**Let Israel now proclaim, “The mercy of the Lord endures for ever.”**

The Lord is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation.

**There is a sound of exultation and victory in the tents of the righteous:**

“The mighty hand of the Lord has triumphed! the mighty hand of the Lord is exalted!  
the mighty hand of the Lord has triumphed!”

**I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.**

The Lord has punished me sorely, but did not hand me over to death.

**Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the Lord.**

This is the gate of the Lord; those who are righteous may enter.

**I will give thanks to the Lord who answered me and has become my salvation.**

The same stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

**This is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.**

On this day the Lord has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

## **Second Reading** 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

*It is good to encounter Paul’s description of the resurrection along with Mark’s. Christ’s appearances to believers embody the grace of God. Today millions of Christians gather with those Paul cited to encounter the risen Christ.*

**N**ow I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you - unless you have come to believe in vain. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then

he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them - though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

### **Gospel JOHN 20:1-18**

**E**arly on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

God of all creation,  
all you have made is good,  
and your love endures forever.  
You bring forth bread from the earth  
and fruit from the vine.  
Nourish us with these gifts,  
so that we might for the world  
signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ,

our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

**Prayer After Communion**

Life-giving God,  
in the mystery of Christ's resurrection  
you send light to conquer darkness,  
water to give new life,  
and the bread of life to nourish your people.  
Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection,  
so that we may show your glory to all the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

## Sunday, April 11, 2021 Second Sunday of Easter (White)

Readings ACTS 4:32-35; PSALM 133; 1 JOHN 1:1-2:2; JOHN 20:19-31

### Collect

Risen Christ,  
for whom no door is locked,  
no entrance barred:  
open the doors of our hearts,  
so that we may seek the good of others  
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,  
to the praise of God, the Source of all life. **Amen.**  
*Common Worship: Additional Collects (2004) alt.*

### First Reading Acts 4:32-35

*Throughout the Sundays of the fifty days of Easter, passages from Acts proclaim the meaning of the resurrection. In today's idyllic description of the primitive community, we see that the resurrection of Christ changes the values of believers, and their sense of self embraces the whole community.*

**N**ow the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

### Psalm 133

Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when kindred live together in unity!

**It is like fine oil upon the head that runs down upon the beard,**

Upon the beard of Aaron, and runs down upon the collar of his robe.

**It is like the dew of Hermon that falls upon the hills of Zion.**

For there the Lord has ordained the blessing: life for evermore.

## **Second Reading** 1 John 1:1-2:2

*Throughout the weeks of Easter, year B reads through 1 John. Chapter 1 proclaims the resurrection with language of eternal life, the light of God, and forgiveness. Christ is not dead but appeals for us before the Father.*

**W**e declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life - this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us - we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

## **Gospel** John 20:19-31

*The church continues the pattern alluded to in John's gospel, of assembling on the first day of the week to receive the Spirit of the cross and resurrection and to exchange the peace of Christ. As we expect of John, the narrative in chapter 20 testifies to the identity of Christ as Lord and God. For Christians, to touch Christ is to touch God, and we do this in the flesh of our neighbor's hand at the peace and with the bread of Christ in our palm at communion.*

**W**hen it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the

house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

God of grace,  
you have freed us from our sins  
and made us a kingdom in your Son  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Accept all we offer you this day,  
and strengthen us in the new life you have given us,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Life-giving God,  
in the mystery of Christ's resurrection  
you send light to conquer darkness,  
water to give new life,  
and the bread of life to nourish your people.  
Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection,  
so that we may show your glory to all the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen.  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

## Sunday, April 18, 2021 Third Sunday of Easter (White)

Readings ACTS 3:12-19; PSALM 4; 1 JOHN 3:1-7; LUKE 24:36B-48

### Collect

Holy and righteous God,  
you raised Christ from the dead  
and glorified him at your right hand.  
Let the words of scripture  
burn within our hearts  
and open our minds to recognize him  
in the breaking of the bread. Amen.  
*Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.*

### First Reading Acts 3:12-19

*We need to beware of perpetuating the primitive Christian tendency to blame the Jews for Jesus' death. Here critical biblical studies are a welcome gift for the preacher. The most profound Christian theological understanding is that we, our sins, were the cause of Jesus' death. But we stand with Acts 3 when it calls Jesus the servant of God, the holy and righteous one, the author of life, the messiah of God, through whose suffering we are saved.*

**P**eter addressed the people, "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you. And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out."

### Psalm 4

Answer me when I call, O God, defender of my cause; you set me free when I am hard-pressed; have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

**"You mortals, how long will you dishonour my glory; how long will you worship dumb idols and run after false gods?"**

Know that the Lord does wonders for the faithful; when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

**Tremble, then, and do not sin; speak to your heart in silence upon your bed.  
Offer the appointed sacrifices and put your trust in the Lord.**

Many are saying, "Oh, that we might see better times!" Lift up the light of your countenance upon us, O Lord.

**You have put gladness in my heart, more than when grain and wine and oil increase.**

I lie down in peace; at once I fall asleep; for only you, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

### **Second Reading** 1 John 3:1-7

*The baptized live in the hope that through the power of the risen Christ, their lives will be marked by extraordinary countercultural love. Yet it is Christ, not the community itself, who is righteousness. Christian tradition has admired 1 John but balances its depiction of communal perfection with Pauline realism about sin.*

**S**ee what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. Everyone who commits sins is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

### **Gospel** Luke 24:36B-48

*The risen Christ is here among us, eating with us, and that meal is part of the proclamation of the Messiah risen from the dead on the third day and offering forgiveness to all nations.*

**J**esus himself stood among the disciples and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence. Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you - that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the

psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Creator of all,  
you wash away our sins in water,  
you give us new birth by the Spirit,  
and redeem us in the blood of Christ.  
As we celebrate the resurrection,  
renew your gift of life within us.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the risen Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Author of life divine,  
in the breaking of bread we know the risen Lord.  
Feed us always in these mysteries,  
that we may show your glory to all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Sunday, April 25, 2021 Fourth Sunday of Easter (White)

Readings ACTS 4:5-12; PSALM 23; 1 JOHN 3:16-24; JOHN 10:11-18

### Collect

Lord of the sheepfold,  
whose love is not for hire:  
we thank you that Christ laid down his life for us  
when we could not help ourselves.  
Give us strength to work for peace  
in the world he came to serve;  
through the same Jesus Christ, the good shepherd. Amen.  
*Prayers for an Inclusive Church* (2009) alt.

### First Reading Acts 4:5-12

*Peter's speech describes Jesus as the savior and healer of the crippled man—which can function today as a gloss on the shepherd imagery. An alternate image in this excerpt is the metaphor of the cornerstone, Christ on whom the church is built.*

**T**he rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

### Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

**You make me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

You revive my soul and guides me along right pathways for your name's sake.

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed

my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

**Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

**Second Reading** 1 John 3:16-24

*We are reading in semicontinuous fashion through 1 John. Today's passage echoes the gospel selection that speaks of Christ laying down his life for us. Our baptism calls us now to follow our shepherd by offering ourselves to others.*

**W**e know love by this, that he laid down his life for us - and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

**Gospel** John 10:11-18

*John uses sheep as a communal metaphor for shared abundant life. In John's gospel are eleven passages in which the name of God, I AM, is tied to an image, and today's selection includes one of them: I AM the model shepherd. In John's christological explication of the metaphor, Christ is not a victim of the wolf, but instead wills of his own power to die for the flock. In Easter we praise Christ, who chose death to save the flock, who now is risen and with us.*

**J**esus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command

from my Father."

**Prayer over the Gifts**

God of loving care,  
you spread before us the table of life,  
and give us the cup of salvation to drink.  
Keep us always in the fold of your Son Jesus Christ,  
our Saviour and our shepherd.

**Prayer After Communion**

God of steadfast love,  
watch over the Church redeemed by the blood of your Son.  
May we who share in these holy mysteries  
come safely to your eternal kingdom,  
where there is one flock and one shepherd.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the risen Lord.

## Sunday, May 2, 2021 Fifth Sunday of Easter (Battle of the Atlantic)

Readings ACTS 8:26-40; PSALM 22:24-30; 1 JOHN 4:7-21; JOHN 15:1-8

### Collect

O God,  
you give us the Son as the vine,  
apart from whom we cannot live.  
Nourish our life in his resurrection,  
so that we bear the fruit of love  
and know the fullness of your joy;  
through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. Amen.  
*Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.*

### First Reading Genesis 22: 13-19

**A**nd Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.”

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.” So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba.

### Psalm 104: 24-33

O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

**Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.**

There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

**These all look to you to give them their food in due season;**

when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.

**When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.**

When you send forth your spirit,[g] they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.

**May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works—**

who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke.

**I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being.**

### **Second Reading** Acts 28: 1-6

**A**fter we had reached safety, we then learned that the island was called Malta. The natives showed us unusual kindness. Since it had begun to rain and was cold, they kindled a fire and welcomed all of us around it. Paul had gathered a bundle of brushwood and was putting it on the fire, when a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, “This man must be a murderer; though he has escaped from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live.” He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. They were expecting him to swell up or drop dead, but after they had waited a long time and saw that nothing unusual had happened to him, they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god.

### **Gospel** Matthew 8: 18-27

**N**ow when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. A scribe then approached and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” Another of his disciples said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” But Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!” And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?”

**Prayer over the Gifts**

Gracious God,  
you show us your way  
and give us your divine life.  
May everything we do  
be directed by the knowledge of your truth.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the risen Lord.

**Prayer After Communion**

God of love,  
in this eucharist we have heard your truth  
and shared in your life.  
May we always walk in your way,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

## Sunday, May 9, 2021 Sixth Sunday of Easter (White)

Readings ACTS 10:44-48; PSALM 98; 1 JOHN 5:1-6; JOHN 15:9-17

### Collect

God of abiding love,  
you dare to call us friends.  
Take our fragmented hearts,  
command them to love,  
and make whole our joy,  
which is our life, reborn in Jesus Christ,  
who laid down his life for us. Amen.  
*Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.*

### First Reading Acts 10:44-48

*How to experience the resurrection of Christ? Receive the Holy Spirit and be baptized. The order of events in this narrative has given support to those churches that understand baptism as only a ritual that confirms one's belief, thus "believer's baptism." Apparently in the 80s CE, some Christians were baptizing "in the name of Jesus Christ" and others in the name of the Trinity; this difference continues today.*

**W**hile Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

### Psalm 98

Sing a new song to the Lord, who has done marvellous things, whose mighty hand and holy arm have won the victory.

**O Lord, you have made known the victory; you have openly shown your righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

You remember your mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, and all the ends of the earth have seen your victory, O God.

**Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; lift up your voice, rejoice and sing.**

Sing to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the voice of song.

**With trumpets and the sound of the horn shout with joy before our sovereign, the Lord.**

Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, the lands and those who dwell therein.

**Let the rivers clap their hands, and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord, who is coming to judge the earth.**

In righteousness shall God judge the world and the peoples with equity

### **Second Reading** 1 John 5:1-6

*This reading complements the gospel from John by repeating an emphasis on love but also by placing “children” alongside “friends.” The truth of each term balances the other.*

**E**veryone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

### **Gospel** John 15:9-17

*We continue through John 15. The command to love takes the form of a sign in the footwashing of Maundy Thursday. The crucified and risen Christ enables us to live in such love. This passage includes an emphasis on joy and introduces the language of being a friend of God. We are so accustomed to this language that we lose the shock of the divinity calling humankind friends. The command to love in Mark 12 will be the reading on November 1, often celebrated as All Saints Day.*

**J**esus said, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 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. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. 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. 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. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

**Prayer over the Gifts**

God of glory,  
accept all we offer you this day,  
and bring us to that eternal city of love and light,  
where Christ is King.  
We ask this in his name.

**Prayer After Communion**

God of Love,  
you restored us to life  
by raising your Son from death.  
May we who receive this sacrament  
always be strengthened to do your will,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the risen Lord.

## Sunday, May 16, 2021 Ascension of the Lord (White)

**Readings** ACTS 1:1-11; PSALM 47 OR PSALM 93; EPHESIANS 1:15-23; LUKE 24:44-53

### Collect

Almighty God,  
your Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven  
that he might rule over all things as Lord.  
Keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit  
and in the bond of his peace,  
and bring the whole of creation  
to worship at his feet,  
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading Acts 1:1-11

*Angelic figures tell the apostles not to look up toward heaven, yet this has sometimes become the content of this Thursday's worship. Rather, Acts calls us to receive the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's witnesses throughout the whole world.*

**I**n the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

### Psalm 47

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with a cry of joy.  
For the Lord Most High is to be feared; he is the great king over all the earth.

**He subdues the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet.  
He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves.**

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the ram's-horn.  
Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our king, sing praises.  
**For God is king of all the earth; sing praises with all your skill.  
God reigns over the nations; God sits upon his holy throne.**

The nobles of the peoples have gathered together with the people of the God of Abraham.  
The rulers of the earth belong to God, and he is highly exalted.

### **Second Reading** EPHESIANS 1:15-23

*The prayer presents several images useful for Ascension Day: God's power is at work in Christ; Christ rules over all things; Christ's name is revered above all others; Christ's body as it were extends from the heavens to the earth—a kind of pillar of the universe; Christ fills all things.*

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

### **Gospel** LUKE 24:44-53

*The ascension of Christ to God is another way that Luke described the resurrection. From Christ's death and resurrection come forgiveness of sins and the power of the Holy Spirit. Since we no longer believe that God lives up in the sky, two fourth-century ways that theologians have spoken of the ascension are particularly helpful: Christ rose from death to fill the cosmos, and Christ ascended into the eucharist. Luther spoke of Christ's ubiquity, that is, that Christ is in the bread, in the community, indeed, in all things.*

Jesus said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he

said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Eternal God,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ  
has promised to be with us until the end of time.  
Accept all we offer you this day,  
and renew us in his transfigured life;  
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Eternal Giver of love and power,  
your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world  
to preach the gospel of his kingdom.  
Confirm us in this mission,  
and help us to live the good news we proclaim;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Sunday, May 23, 2021 The Day of Pentecost (Red)

**Readings** ACTS 1:1-11; PSALM 47 OR PSALM 93; EPHESIANS 1:15-23; LUKE 24:44-53

### Collect

Almighty God,  
your Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven  
that he might rule over all things as Lord.  
Keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit  
and in the bond of his peace,  
and bring the whole of creation  
to worship at his feet,  
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

### First Reading ACTS 2:1-21

*The narrative of Pentecost exemplifies Luke's expert storytelling ability. The reading includes hidden references to the Hebrew Bible, a citation from the prophets, a contemporary geography lesson, an account of miracles, and the folksy detail of the accusation of drunkenness. As we await the eschatological end of all things, we are now those who prophesy, see visions, and dream dreams. Although some Christians connect glossolalia with Pentecost, Luke describes these "tongues" as other languages with which to evangelize the world.*

**W**hen the day of Pentecost had come, the apostles were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs - in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine." But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

**PSALM 104:25-35, 37B.**

O Lord, how manifold are your works! in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

**Yonder is the great and wide sea with its living things too many to number, creatures both small and great.**

There move the ships, and there is that Leviathan, which you have made for the sport of it.

**All of them look to you to give them their food in due season.**

You give it to them; they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things. **You hide your face, and they are terrified; you take away their breath, and they die and return to their dust.**

You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.

**May the glory of the Lord endure for ever; may the Lord rejoice in all his works. He looks at the earth and it trembles; he touches the mountains and they smoke.**

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will praise my God while I have my being.

**May these words of mine please him; I will rejoice in the Lord.**

**Second Reading ROMANS 8:22-27**

*We and the whole creation are groaning in labor, awaiting the birth of God's new age in which Christ's resurrection will renew all things. Until that end time, we have the Spirit who is praying for us before God.*

**W**e know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit

intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

### **Gospel JOHN 15:26-27, 16:4B15**

*The Gospel of John is appointed for most of the primary festivals of the liturgical year because of John's high Christology and its centrality in the development of Christian doctrine. John says theologically the narrative of Pentecost: God sends the Spirit into the gathered community so that they can know the truth of Christ's resurrection. Christian theology subsumed John's description of the Advocate into its understanding of the Holy Spirit, and passages such as this led to the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Spirit is now the link between the believing community and God.*

**J**esus said to the disciples, "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

Giver of life,  
receive all we offer you this day.  
Let the Spirit you bestow on your Church  
continue to work in the world  
through the hearts of all who believe.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

### **Prayer After Communion**

Loving God,  
may we who have received this eucharist  
live in the unity of your Holy Spirit,

that we may show forth his gifts to all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord