

Season of Easter

Crafting the Liturgy - Seasonal Planning Page

The season of Easter is one of joy and renewed hope as we celebrate the miracle of all miracles: Jesus is risen from the dead, alleluia! The whole church, in heaven and on earth, sings of God's glorious power and rejoices in the new reality brought to human life through Christ – death no longer has the last word. The Savior of the world has overcome sin, death, and the devil for the sake of all those who believe in the power of God. Jesus has triumphed, and believers are promised eternity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SEASON

The following are some ideas for helping to make the season distinct and memorable. Congregations are free to adapt these suggestions, or follow the local customs of the congregation.

Preparing the Worship Space

Easter lilies are perfect for decorating the worship space during the season. Other bulbed flowers are also lovely to add to the adornment of the chancel space. Consider making new banners for the worship space for Easter. Symbols might include butterflies, a lamb, cross with lilies, an empty tomb, angels, or three crosses.

Liturgical Color

The liturgical color for Easter is white or gold.

The Gathering

Use the alternate liturgical prayers on the Seasonal Page of SOWeR for the gathering rite and other portions of the liturgy.

The Creed

Use the Nicene Creed during Easter.

The Offering

Consider using the hymn, "Give Me Jesus" as the offertory as we remember in this Easter season what Jesus' life, death, and resurrection has offered to us. You can find a downloadable PDF version on the Hymns and Music Page of SOWeR.

The Proclamation of the Word

Consider preaching a sermon series during the Easter season on the epistle lessons from 1 Peter. There is a lesson from 1 Peter beginning with the Second Sunday of Easter through the Seventh Sunday. Below are possible titles and themes to get you started.

Easter 2: 1 Peter 1:3–9 *A Living Hope:* Through Jesus' death and resurrection we are given a new life.

Easter 3: 1 Peter 1:17–25 *Reborn of Imperishable Seed:* Salvation is given to believers, not from a perishable source but from the imperishable Lord.

Easter 4: 1 Peter 2:19–25 *Jesus' Wounds Have Healed Us:* Only a suffering God can save his people from sin, death, and the devil.

Easter 5: 1 Peter 2:2–10 *Newborn Infants Longing for Spiritual Milk:* We are fed with the pure gospel of Christ who calls us to be the holy priesthood.

Easter 6: 1 Peter 3:13–22 *Blessed Even Through Suffering:* We are not to fear suffering because we have Jesus who went before us and is with us.

Easter 7: 1 Peter 4:12–19; 5:6–11 *Cast All Your Cares on Him:* The enemy will seek God's people, but we are to resist him and cling to Christ in suffering.

REMINDERS FOR THE SEASON

- ✦ Take orders for Easter lilies or other flowers before Easter Sunday.
- ✦ Use social media to advertise your church's Easter schedule.
- ✦ Bring back the hidden "Alleluia" on Easter Sunday and remind children why it was that you hid it during Lent.
- ✦ If you did not have any Baptisms at the Easter Vigil, Easter Day is also an appropriate day for Baptisms. The Baptismal liturgy beautifully reminds us of our new life in Christ even as we hear of his conquering of the grave and gates of death.
- ✦ If you need an Easter program for children in the parish there are five options on the SOWeR Easter Seasonal Page to choose from.
- ✦ As you celebrate Holy Communion during Easter, sing upbeat and celebratory hymns that call to mind the real presence of Jesus and how in the breaking of the bread, Jesus revealed himself to two disciples in Emmaus.
- ✦ If your congregation has an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Day, be sure to announce it well in advance.
- ✦ Consider encouraging worshippers to commit to more faithful worship attendance after Easter when there is often a drop off. "Take back Sunday" might be a theme to draw disciples to a regular habit of Sunday worship.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES THIS SEASON

- ✦ Encourage people to pray the "Fifty Day Challenge." (See the Easter Seasonal Page of SOWeR). The focus of this prayer during Easter is to listen to God's nudging in our lives in terms of inviting others to worship and/or simply engaging in a faith discussion.

COMMEMORATIONS

April 20: Johannes Bugenhagen, Pastor (24 June 1485 – 20 April 1558)

May 7: C.F.W. Walther, Theologian (October 25, 1811 – May 7, 1887)

May 21: Emperor Constantine, Christian Ruler (February 27, c. 272 – May 22, c. 337) and Helen, Mother of Constantine (c. 246 – c. 330).

LESSER FESTIVALS

April 25: St. Mark, Evangelist

May 1: St. Philip and St. James (son of Alphaeus), Apostles

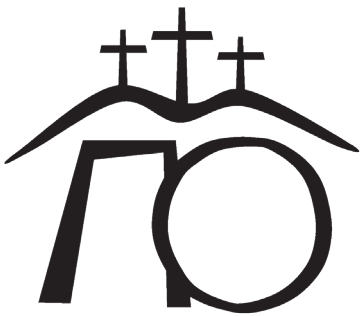
None of the above festivals fall on Sundays this year.

Easter Sunday

April 5, 2026

Resurrection of Our Lord - Easter Sunrise (Year A)

This day brings us joy and renewed hope as we celebrate the miracle of all miracles: Jesus is risen from the dead, alleluia! The whole church, in heaven and on earth, sings of God’s glorious power and rejoices that death no longer has the last word. Jesus has triumphed, and we who believe are promised eternity. That promise is our future hope, but it also guides are lives in the present as we are freed from sin.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Exodus 14:10—15:1 **Red Sea Rescue**
The writer of Exodus recalls the rescue of the Hebrew slaves from Pharaoh, who promised to leave them alone after the deadly Passover event. Going back on his word, the Egyptian king sends his army after the slaves, who left reluctantly and in fear for their lives. God delivers them as they pass dry-shod through the Red Sea and the Egyptian army is swallowed up in the crashing waters.

Psalm 118:15-29 **Chief Cornerstone**
Discipline in the psalmist’s life does not lead to death but rather to a new life of salvation for which he gives thanks and praise. From the line of David, the Lord has made One who is the chief cornerstone; even though this stone is rejected by many, it will be the stability and structure for God’s people.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 **Resurrection Truth**
Paul proclaims Christ’s death and resurrection and subsequent appearance to the disciples and many others, including Paul himself. His former life of punishing the church has been met with grace in Jesus Christ for which he now dedicates his entire being, as he fervently shares the good news everywhere he journeys.

Gospel Reading: John 20:1-18 **Early Morning Encounter**
As she goes to the tomb of Jesus to anoint his body after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene finds it empty except for two angels and someone she thinks is the gardener. When he says her name, Mary instantly knows the man is Jesus, her Lord.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

Bring out the hidden “alleluias” with the children today. Recall how they were put away during Lent, but now in this joyful season they are brought back into worship.

Create banners for Easter that use the words of Good Friday, but with the images of the empty tomb, lilies, and the sun. For example: “Come down from the cross,” or “Let him save himself,” or “What is truth?”

There are Easter day skits on the Easter seasonal page of SOWeR.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds	135	---	464	366	157	157
The Strife is O’er	143	---	465	367	159	159
Jesus Christ is Risen Today	151	---	457	365	---	web
Now the Green Blade Rises	148	---	---	379	---	---
Christ is Risen, Alleluia	131	---	---	382	---	---
Christ the Lord is Risen Today	128	---	463	369	151	151
Alleluia Sing to Jesus	158	---	458	370	154	154
Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands	134	---	638	492	---	---
In the Garden	---	---	---	---	160	160
Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises	---	722	---	535	---	---

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles
Rising Sun
(CCLI # 6364759)
Great Are You Lord
(CCLI# 6460220)
Resurrecting
(CCLI# 7051507)
Because He Lives (Amen)
(CCLI# 7027887)
King of Kings
(CCLI# 7127647))

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Easter Sunday

April 5, 2026

Resurrection of Our Lord - Easter Day (Year A)

The resurrection of our Lord ushers in a new reality for those who believe: a new life in Christ. God, who shows no partiality, offers salvation and forgiveness to all who believe. Our confession of faith in the resurrection of Christ is a commitment to a deeper walk with God: one characterized by worship, prayer, and an intentional living out of Jesus' kingdom principles. This Good News is something we act upon.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 10:34-43

The Good New For All

Peter recounts the story of Jesus from baptism through his death and resurrection. Those who were with him are called as witnesses to the truth of who he is: the One Lord of all. Now, non-Jews are gathered into the fold so that those who have faith in the One who conquered death are granted forgiveness of sins.

Psalm 16

Shelter and Protection in God

This psalm is unusual in that it is a personal cry from the psalmist for help against his enemies rather than a communal lament. God is involved in all aspects of human life, both communally and individually. David affirms the sovereignty of God.

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4

Christ is Your Life

Paul begins this chapter with an "if/then" statement. Acknowledging that Christ is our life means that we are faced with many choices in life. IF you have been raised with Christ (which you have been), THEN seek the things and ways of Christ. Namely, devote yourself to worship, prayer, service and life in his name.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:1-10

Jesus is Risen!

The two Marys go to the tomb at dawn and are surprised by an earthquake, the presence of two angels, and a stone rolled away from an empty tomb. The guards who stood by trembled with fear, but the women were told, "Do not be afraid." The angels charged them with the mission of taking the Easter message back to the disciples along with instructions for them to meet Jesus in Galilee.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

Consider making some small cards to hand out to worshippers for Easter Sunday. You have access to all of Sola's artwork on SOWeR and could use one of the weekly images to make cards that can be taken home. The intended purpose of the card might be to remind people of the promises and joy of Jesus' resurrection, or to put your church's information in the hands of visitors.

There are Easter day skits on the Easter seasonal page of SOWeR.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds	135	---	464	366	157	157
The Strife is O'er	143	---	465	367	159	159
Jesus Christ is Risen Today	151	---	457	365	---	web
Now the Green Blade Rises	148	---	---	379	---	---
Christ is Risen, Alleluia	131	---	---	382	---	---
Christ the Lord is Risen Today	128	---	463	369	151	151
Alleluia Sing to Jesus	158	---	458	370	154	154
Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands	134	---	638	492	---	---
In the Garden	---	---	---	---	160	160
Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises	---	722	---	535	---	---

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Living Hope
(CCLI # 7106807)
Springtime
(CCLI# 7146308)
All Hail King Jesus
(CCLI# 7097216)
This Is Amazing Grace
(CCLI# 6333821)
Death Was Arrested
(CCLI# 7046448))

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Easter 2

April 12, 2026

Second Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Today's readings center on the witness of Jesus' original disciples, who are met by the Lord as they gathered together on the evening of his resurrection. They, and we, will be sent into a hostile world with the message of salvation for all people. The Holy Spirit will guide their journey and equip them, even as they encounter resistance by those who do not believe in Christ. Believers will never be alone.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 5:29-5

Witnesses to the Resurrection

Peter and the other apostles get themselves into trouble by preaching the good news of Jesus Christ in the temple. Peter appeals to the authority of God over any human authority as he continues to proclaim the story of Jesus' death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sin.

Psalm 148

Praise the Lord of All Creation

The psalmist sings God's praises as he recounts all the wonders of the world that the Lord has spoken into being. Israel has a cherished place in the heart of the Creator; his people are close to him and exalt his name above all else.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Source of Hope

Peter explains to both Jewish and Gentile Christians that it is Christ's resurrection that is the source of our hope. Because of Jesus' atoning sacrifice, believers have been promised an inheritance that is kept in heaven for them. Even though they faced pressure from the society, they held the promise of eternity with God above.

Gospel Reading: John 20:19-31

Peace and Power

On that first Easter evening, Jesus appears to the disciples and brings them a word of peace. He breathes on them, pouring out on them the power of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit enables the disciples to bind and loose sin within the faith community, passing on the ministry that he began when Jesus was physically among them.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

One of the things we human beings fear the most is being alone. The promise that Jesus offers us is that no matter where we are, if we are with other people or not, we are never alone because we always have him with us. This is true peace for all who believe.

Consider making peace signs out of colored paper and decorating the chancel with them for the Second Sunday of Easter.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
I Know that My Redeemer Lives	352	---	461	619	274	274
Thine is the Glory	145	---	---	376	161	161
Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won	133	---	490	---	---	---
Hallelujah! Jesus Lives	147	---	---	380	---	---
A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing	157	---	493	393	---	---
At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing	210	---	633	362	150	150
God Himself is Present	249	---	720	635	---	---
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms	---	780	---	774	208	208
Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling	523	---	650	582	---	---
Awake, My Heart, with Gladness	---	---	467	378	152	152

*The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."*

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Great Are You Lord
(CCLI# 6460220)
You're the Only One
(CCLI# 7130876)
This is Living
(CCLI# 7032393)
Fresh Wind
(CCLI# 7166857)
Closer
(CCLI# 7121659)

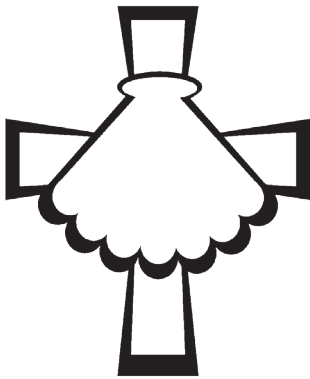
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Easter 3

April 19, 2026

Third Sunday of Easter (Year A)

The Gospel for today recalls how two disciples were able to see the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread. Though he appeared to many on the day of his resurrection, not everyone was able to see him and know his true identity. In the bread and wine of Holy Communion, we are promised a place where we will always be met by Christ, a place where his promises are continually proclaimed anew.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36–41 **One Promise for All**
Peter addresses the men of Jerusalem, recalling what God has done in Jesus Christ. Those who heard him asked what they might do in response to this message. Peter urges them to repent and be baptized so their sins may be forgiven. That day, around three thousand new converts were added to the number of The Way.

Psalm 116:1–14 **Delivered from Death**
The psalmist gives thanks to the Lord who delivered him from illness and suffering. Those who are in distress are never far away from the God of life, for God is gracious and merciful, protecting the lowly and healing the ill.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:17–25 **Reborn Through the Living Word**
Peter continues his discourse to the believers who have been scattered far from home because of their faith in Christ. He urges them to love one another in genuine love, reminding them that they have been reborn from the imperishable and abiding word of God which is the good news of Jesus Christ.

Gospel Reading: Luke 24:13–35 **Walk to Emmaus**
As two followers of Jesus make their journey back to their home in Emmaus, they walk in sadness over the events of the past days. Jesus shows up and walks alongside them and asks them what is troubling them. They wonder aloud why he is the only person in Jerusalem who doesn’t know what happened in the past few days. Just then he begins to speak to them and he “opens the Scriptures.”

Suggestions for the Day:
Liturgical Color: White
During the Season of Easter:
• Use the Kyrie.
• Use the Hymn of Praise
• Use the Nicene Creed.
Consider using parts of the Small Catechism section on the Lord’s Supper today in worship. For example: The Promise of Communion
It is pointed out in these words: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Through these words the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the Sacrament, for where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
I Know That My Redeemer Lives	352	---	461	619	274	274
That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright	154	---	---	384	---	---
This Joyful Eastertide	149	676	482	391	---	---
Now We Join in Celebration	203	---	462	---	---	---
For the Bread Which You Have Broken	200	---	---	494	---	---
With High Delight, Let Us Unite	140	---	483	368	---	---
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart	---	711	641	484	---	---
Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise	---	801	680	826	41	41
Just a Closer Walk with Thee	---	---	---	697	248	248
Holy God, We Praise Your Name	535	---	940	414	13	13

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles
Glorious Day (Living He Loved Me) (CCLI# 5638022)
Come As You Are (CCLI# 7017790)
Evidence (CCLI# 7147432)
Goodness of God (CCLI# 7117726)
O Come to the Altar (CCLI# 7051511)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Easter 4

April 26, 2026

Fourth Sunday of Easter (Year A)

The focus of the Fourth Sunday of Easter is on the metaphor of the Shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the one who lays down his life for his sheep because of his great love for them. This one, prefigured in Psalm 23, is the shepherd who provides for, protects, and leads his sheep into green pastures and by still waters. This Shepherd suffered greatly for his sheep so they might never be lost or forsaken.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47

Communal Generosity

The newly baptized Christians who are being added to the community of believers are ones who held everything in common. Whoever had a need among them would be taken care of by the others. Even food was distributed evenly, and all existed with joy and thrived together as one body.

Psalm 23

Shepherd Lord

God's providence in our lives is like that of a shepherd who watches over the sheep, keeping them from harm, grazing them in fertile pastures, protecting them when they rest. The Shepherd King takes care of all our needs, no matter how small.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:19-25

Righteous Endurance

As those who are devoted to Christ, we are bound to experience suffering because Jesus experienced all sorts of unjust suffering. Following his example, when we are abused, we refrain from abusing; when we are threatened, we do not return threats. We are freed from sin and healed by his wounds even as we are called to emulate his suffering in patience.

Gospel Reading: John 10:1-10

The Good Shepherd

The shepherd knows his sheep by name, and his sheep know him. He will protect them and lead them, and they will not run from him, because they know his voice and trust his leadership. This Good Shepherd came so that all the sheep may have abundant life; he ensures this by offering his own life in their stead.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

Consider making "Blessing Stones" for the children for today. Explain that shepherds (like young David in the Old Testament) used stones to keep wolves away from their flock. Tell the children, "Instead of throwing stones, here are some to keep so you know that you are blessed." On the stones you could write inspirational messages such:

- * You are loved!
- * You are never alone.
- * Be still and know that I am God.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	456	---	709	502	198	198
Christ the Lord is Risen Today	128	---	463	369	151	151
The Lord's My Shepherd	451	---	710	778	209	209
All People that on Earth Do Dwell	245	---	791	883	17	17
Alleluia, Jesus is Risen	---	674	474	377	---	---
Precious Lord, Take My Hand	---	731	739	773	206	206
Shall We Gather at the River?	---	690	---	423	275	275
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms	---	780	---	774	208	208
The Lord's My Shepherd	451	---	710	778	209	209
Blest Be the Tie That Binds	370	---	649	656	48	48

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CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

King of Love My Shepherd Is
(CCLI# 6529824)
King of Love
(CCLI# 7052881)
Trust In God
(CCLI# 7206001)
Who You Say I Am
(CCLI# 7102401)
Run to the Father
(CCLI# 7133494))

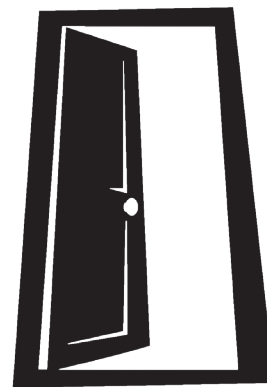
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Sunday 5

May 3, 2026

Fifth Sunday of Easter (Year A)

Our God forms his people into a holy nation — equipping and protecting them as they do his holy will in the world. Suffering for the Gospel is bound to come; Stephen, the first Christian martyr, is stoned for his proclamation of the Good News. In the midst of uncertainty and insecurity, Jesus continually urges his followers to trust in him; he will not leave them, but will show them the way.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 6:1-9; 7:2a, 51-60

Stephen, Chosen & Martyred

Stephen was one of the first deacons of *The Way* who were chosen to serve the people while the apostles did the work of preaching and teaching. Yet Stephen, too, is a witness. His telling of the story of Christ ends in his martyrdom. He is stoned in public while Paul stands and watches.

Psalm 146

Prisoners Freed

The psalmist sings of the help of the Lord who is the only One who can ever provide aid to the weary, blind, sick, or distressed. This Lord is one who watches over strangers and exacts justice for the poor and oppressed.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:2-10

Spiritual Milk

Peter instructs believers to honor God with their behavior. As they continue to mature in the faith they will long for the spiritual milk of the gospel. What they are learning and how they are living is part of them being formed into the living stones of Christ's spiritual house.

Gospel Reading: John 14:1-14

My Father's House

Jesus tells his disciples not to be troubled; there are many rooms in his Father's house and he is going there to prepare a place for them. Thomas is confused by Jesus' cryptic words, wondering, "How can we know where you are going?" In reply, Jesus proclaims, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Knowing Jesus means knowing the Father who sent him.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

Explain to children what a martyr is and why we remember St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. The word martyr comes from the Greek word for "witness." How is a martyr a witness to God's great love? In what ways are all of us martyrs/ witnesses to faith in Christ? Where are people dying for their faith around the world today? (For ideas about this topic see Voice of the Martyrs ministry.)

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds	143	---	465	367	---	---
At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing	210	---	633	362	150	150
Christ is Made the Sure Foundation	367	---	909	645	---	---
Let All Things Now Living	557	---	---	881	---	---
Lord of All Hopefulness	469	---	738	765	200	200
Beautiful Savior	518	---	537	838	252	252
Lift High the Cross	377	---	837	660	269	269
Blest Are They	---	764	---	728	---	---
I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me	---	673	---	860	---	---
Be Thou My Vision	---	776	---	793	230	230

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CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Abide
(CCLI# 7168160)
House of the Lord
(CCLI# 7168995)
The Father's House
(CCLI# 7135153)
Firm Foundation (He Won't)
(CCLI# 7188203)
Your Grace Is Enough
(CCLI# 4477026)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Easter 6

May 10, 2026

Sixth Sunday of Easter (Year A)

The theme of following Christ in truth and love abounds on this Sunday. Paul is faced with foreign gods, Peter teaches that suffering is bound to come, and Jesus promises his disciples that he will send them the Holy Spirit to accompany them as they continue his work in the world God loves. Obedience to the Lord's commands means nothing less than the sacrificial love showed the world on the cross.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 17:16–31

Paul Preaches in Athens

As Paul continues his missionary journey in the city of Athens, he is confronted with idol worshippers who wonder what his message is really about. Paul proclaims the Good News of the living God to all those who worship stones and statues.

Psalm 66:8–20

Tried and Tested

God's people have undergone suffering at the hands of their enemies. Like silver is refined in the fire of the silversmith, so God has refined his people through the fires of suffering. The psalmist praised God for his gracious rescue and restoration.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:13–22

You Will Be Blessed

Peter continues his teaching by encouraging the faithful not to fear if they should encounter suffering for the sake of their faith in Christ. He urges them to be ready to give a sure defense of their faith when anyone questions them. He assures them that their good behavior and obedience to the Lord's command will put to shame those who want to harm. Even though they suffered for Christ, they will be blessed.

Gospel Reading: John 14:15–21

Jesus Will Send a Helper

Jesus indicates to the disciples that to love him with the fullness of their hearts means they will keep his commandments. In order to help them when he is absent from them, he promises to send an Advocate who will guide them, encourage them, and never leave them alone. This helper is the Holy Spirit of God who will dwell in them when they can no longer see their Master in the flesh.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

It is important to understand the difference between temptation and testing. The psalm for today speaks of testing as a refining fire for believers. God is always with us when testing comes through faith. God never tempts us – that is the work of the Enemy. But when suffering comes because of our faith in Christ, we are strengthened by God and refined like precious metal in a blazing fire. Testing is part of the faith journey, and in it we are guided by God.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Come, Thou Almighty King	522	---	905	408	247	247
Children of the Heavenly Father	474	---	725	781	201	201
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	315	---	700	631	14	14
Come Down, O Love Divine	508	---	501	804	---	---
Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart	486	---	---	800	---	---
Holy God, We Praise Your Name	535	---	940	414	13	13
Holy, Holy, Holy	165	---	507	413	10	10
Blessed Are They	---	764	---	728	---	---
Take My Life, and Let It Be	406	---	783	685	233	233
Jesus Calls Us; O'er the Tumult	494	---	---	696	184	184

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW=Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS=With One Voice, ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB=The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC=The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Rest On Us
(CCLI# 7126736)
Blessed Be Your Name
(CCLI# 3798438)
Holy Spirit
(CCLI# 6087919)
Holy Spirit Rain Down
(CCLI# 2405227)
Fresh Wind
(CCLI# 7166857)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Ascension of Our Lord

May 14, 2026

Ascension of Our Lord (Year A)

On this holy day we recall Jesus' rising into heaven following 40 days on earth after his having been raised from the dead. He gives his followers final instructions and promises to never leave them alone, even though he will be seated in that place of authority and power at God's right hand. The wonder and majesty of this festival day is characterized by trumpet blasts, angels, and a wondrous feast for the eyes.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

Jesus Ascends into Heaven

St. Luke recounts Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit to the newly formed church. He commissioned the disciples to be witnesses to all that they have seen and heard while they were with him. As they stood speaking to him, he was taken up into the clouds. Two angels announced to the stunned followers that Jesus would return again in the same way he left. This would happen in God's time.

Psalm 47

God is King

The psalmist sings about God being King over the whole creation. This psalm fore-shadows the ascension of Jesus into heaven, "God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." He reigns over the nations and is highly exalted.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

Jesus, The Head Over All Things

The name of Jesus is above all names in every age — past, present and future. Our hope is in his calling of us and in him who is given all power and authority. There is no hope that could be greater than in this One who presides over heaven and earth, and is seated at God's right hand. The church is filled by him who is the all in all.

Gospel Reading: Luke 24:44-53

Jesus Ascends into Heaven

Jesus gives final instructions to his closest followers and then blesses them as they watch him ascend into the heavens before their very eyes. The disciples respond to this scene with joyous worship and return to the temple praising God for what he has done through his Son, Jesus, the Christ.

Suggestions for the Day:

Liturgical Color: White

During the Season of Easter:

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

There are some magnificent pieces of art that have been created over the years that depict Jesus' ascension. Consider creating a page of those images to show to children during worship so they can compare and contrast how various famous artists imagine the moment that Jesus ascended into heaven. Include Salvador Dali, Gustave Doré, and Catherine Andrews, and Brian Whelan (for something a bit different).

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending	27	---	336	435	---	---
Beautiful Savior	518	---	537	838	252	252
A Hymn of Glory	157	---	493	393	---	---
It is Well With My Soul	---	---	---	---	---	web
Shout to the Lord	---	---	---	821	24	24
Crown Him with Many Crowns	170	---	525	855	22	22
Blessed Assurance	---	699	---	638	190	190
Alleluia, Sing to Jesus	158	---	821	392	154	154
I Know that My Redeemer Lives	352	---	461	619	274	274
Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates	32	---	340	---	93	93

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

O Praise the Name (Anástasis)
(CCLI# 7037787)
You are My King (Amazing Love)
(CCLI# 2456623)
Only King Forever
(CCLI# 7011438)
The Lion and the Lamb
(CCLI# 7038281)
God of Wonders
(CCLI# 3118757)

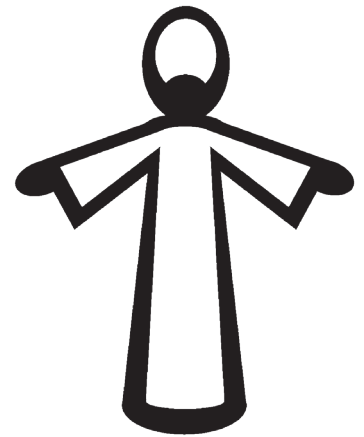
The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.

Easter 7

May 17, 2026

Seventh Sunday of Easter (Year A)

After Jesus ascended into heaven to sit at God's right hand, the eleven remaining disciples regrouped to carry on the mission of Christ on earth. Jesus' prayer for them was that they would be one — that their unity would be their defining quality as a group and would serve them well in the mission at hand. They must choose who will replace Judas among them; it must be one who shares the same Spirit.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Acts 1:12–26**The Choosing of Matthias**

As the disciples gather after Jesus' ascension, they have the task of choosing a replacement for Judas who was now dead. It must be one who was with them from Jesus' baptism to his resurrection. Two names are put forward: Justus and Matthias, with the lot falling to Matthias to be numbered among the original disciples.

Psalm 68:1–10**Sing Praises to God's Name**

The psalmist cries out that God will put an end to his enemies, but he will protect and lead those who praise his name. The God of Israel is the God who sojourns with his people through the desert, marching ahead of them in the wilderness, bringing them home.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 4:12–19; 5:6–11**Glorify God in Patient Suffering**

Peter reminds the Christians that they will surely share in the sufferings that Christ suffered. It is to be expected, so we should not at all be surprised when the tests and trials come like fire. Blessed are those who are insulted in the name of the Savior of the world; this degradation brings God's Spirit and glory to rest upon us.

Gospel Reading: John 17:1–11**That They May Be One**

Jesus prays what is known as his "high priestly prayer" in today's gospel lesson. He and the Father are one, and so he asks that all believers would also be one. Jesus prays for all those whom God has given him, those who have kept his holy word. The unity he prays for is the unity of a shared, common faith that binds us together.

Suggestions for the Day:*Liturgical Color: White**During the Season of Easter:*

- Use the Kyrie.
- Use the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Nicene Creed.

Through Jesus Christ, all who believe are made into one, just as the Father, Son and Spirit are One God. Consider singing the camp song, "We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord," and talking with children about the bond we have in Jesus Christ. What does that mean for us? Is it a responsibility or a duty? Is it a joy and privilege? Or is it all of those things? (This song is in public domain and can be found through a simple web search.)

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Blessed Be the Tie that Binds	370	---	649	656	48	48
The Church's One Foundation	369	---	644	654	88	88
Crown Him with Many Crowns	170	---	525	855	22	22
Alleluia, Sing to Jesus	158	---	821	392	---	web
Lord, You Give the Great Commission	---	756	---	579	---	---
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!	328	---	549	634	16	16
Savior, Again to Your Dear Name	262	---	917	534	57	57
Sent Forth By God's Blessing	221	---	643	547	58	58
When Peace Like a River	346	---	763	785	224	224
Blest Are They	---	764	---	728	---	---

*The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."*

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)
(CCLI# 6016351)
Hold On To Me
(CCLI# 7130439)
The Lord's Prayer (It's Yours)
(CCLI# 7200544)
King of My Heart
(CCLI# 7046145)
Yes and Amen
(CCLI# 7048885)

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