

The Season of Easter

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version[®]
following the Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*

Revised February 1, 2018

The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Dawn)

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Lesson

Isaiah 12:1-6

In that day you will say:

I will give thanks to you, LORD,
for though you were angry with me,
your anger has turned away,
and you comfort me.

²Surely God is my salvation.

I will trust him and will not be afraid,
because Yah, the LORD,^a is my strength and song,
and he has become my salvation.

³Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

⁴In that day you will say:

Give thanks to the LORD! Proclaim his name.

Declare among the peoples what he has done.

Proclaim that his name is exalted!

⁵Sing to the LORD, for he has done amazing things!

Let this be known in all the earth!

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, daughter of Zion,
for the Holy One of Israel is great among you!

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

⁵¹Look, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴But once this perishable body has put on imperishability, and this mortal body has put on immortality, then what is written will be fulfilled:

Death is swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁵Death, where is your sting?

Grave, where is your victory?

⁵⁶The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

^a2 The Hebrew uses both forms of the divine name, the short form *Yah* and the full form *Yahweh*, which EHV usually translates *LORD*.

Gospel

John 20:1-18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ²So she left and ran to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,” she told them, “and we don’t know where they put him!”

³So Peter and the other disciple went out, heading for the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first. ⁵Bending over, he saw the linen cloths lying there, yet he did not go in.

⁶Then Simon Peter, who was following him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there. ⁷The cloth that had been on Jesus’ head was not lying with the linen cloths, but was folded up in a separate place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who arrived at the tomb first, also entered. He saw and believed. ⁹(They still did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise from the dead.)

¹⁰Then the disciples went back to their homes.

¹¹But Mary stood outside facing the tomb, weeping. As she wept, she bent over, looking into the tomb. ¹²She saw two angels in white clothes sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and one at the feet. ¹³They asked her, “Woman, why are you weeping?”

She told them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I don’t know where they have laid him.”

¹⁴After she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, though she did not know it was Jesus.

¹⁵Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?”

Supposing he was the gardener, she replied, “Sir, if you carried him off, tell me where you laid him, and I will get him.”

¹⁶Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned and replied in Aramaic, “*Rabboni!*” (which means, “Teacher”).

¹⁷Jesus told her, “Do not continue to cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father—to my God and your God.’”

¹⁸Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” She also told them the things he said to her.

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The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Day)

*Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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First Lesson

Isaiah 25:6-9

⁶On this mountain
the LORD of Armies will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food,
a banquet of aged wines,
with the best cuts of meat,
and the finest wines.

⁷On this mountain
he will destroy the shroud that covers all peoples,
the burial cloth stretched over all nations.

⁸He has swallowed up death forever!
The LORD God will wipe away the tears from every face.
He will take away the shame of his people throughout the earth.
For the LORD has spoken.

⁹On that day it will be said,
“Look, here is our God!
We waited for him, and he saved us!
This is the LORD!
We waited for him.
Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation!”

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:19–26

¹⁹If our hope in Christ applies only to this life, we are the most pitiful people of all.

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. ²²For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ as the firstfruits and then Christ’s people, at his coming. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has done away with every other ruler and every other authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign “until he has put all his enemies under his feet.” ²⁶Death is the last enemy to be done away with.

Gospel

Mark 16:1–8

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so they could go and anoint Jesus. ²Very early on the first day of the week, at sunrise, they

went to the tomb. ³They were saying to each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance to the tomb for us?” ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. ⁶He said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.’”

⁸They went out and hurried away from the tomb, trembling and perplexed. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

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The Second Sunday of Easter

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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First Lesson

Acts 26:19–29

¹⁹“Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰Rather, I first told those in Damascus and Jerusalem about it, and then throughout the entire country of Judea and also the Gentiles. I told them that they should repent and turn to God, while also doing works that are consistent with repentance. ²¹These are the reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.

²²“But I have had help from God right up to this day, and so I stand testifying to both small and great. I am saying nothing other than what the prophets and Moses said would happen, ²³that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light to our people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴While Paul was saying these things in his defense, Festus shouted, “Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you insane.”

²⁵But Paul replied, “I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but I am clearly speaking words that are true and sensible. ²⁶Certainly the king to whom I am freely speaking knows about these things. Indeed, I cannot believe that any of these things has escaped his notice, because this has not been done in a corner. ²⁷King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.”

²⁸Then Agrippa said to Paul, “In such a short time are you going to persuade me to become a Christian?”

²⁹Paul replied, “I pray God, that whether in a short time or a long time, not only you, but also all those who are listening to me today would become what I am, except for these chains.”

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 15:12–22

¹²Now if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how is it that some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³If there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is pointless, and your faith is pointless too. ¹⁵Then we are even guilty of giving false testimony about God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if it were true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then it also follows that those who fell asleep in Christ perished. ¹⁹If our hope in Christ applies only to this life, we are the most pitiful people of all.

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. ²²For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive.

Gospel

John 20:19-31

¹⁹On the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples were together behind locked doors because of their fear of the Jews. Jesus came, stood among them, and said to them, “Peace be with you!” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. So the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you! Just as the Father has sent me, I am also sending you.” ²²After saying this, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³Whenever you forgive people’s sins, they are forgiven. Whenever you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

²⁴But Thomas, one of the Twelve, the one called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples kept telling him, “We have seen the Lord!”

But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

²⁶After eight days, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them. “Peace be with you,” he said. ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and look at my hands. Take your hand and put it into my side. Do not continue to doubt, but believe.”

²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

²⁹Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

³⁰Jesus, in the presence of his disciples, did many other miraculous signs that are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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The Third Sunday of Easter

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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First Lesson

Acts 12:1–19

At about that time, King Herod laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church, in order to mistreat them. ²He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. ³When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter during the days of Unleavened Bread.

⁴After arresting Peter, Herod put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of four soldiers each to guard him. Herod intended to bring him before the people for trial after the Passover. ⁵So Peter was kept in prison, but the church earnestly offered up prayer to God for him.

⁶The very night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers. He was bound with two chains, while sentries were in front of the door, guarding the prison.

⁷Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood near him, and a light shone in the cell. The angel woke Peter up by striking him on the side, saying, “Quick, get up!” The chains fell from his wrists.

⁸Then the angel said to him, “Get dressed and put on your sandals.” So he did so. Then the angel told him, “Put on your cloak and follow me.” ⁹Peter went out, following the angel, but he did not realize that what the angel was doing was really happening. He thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰When they had passed through the first and second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city. It opened all by itself for them. They went outside, walked down one street, and immediately the angel left him.

¹¹When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I know for sure that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from everything the Jewish people were expecting.”

¹²When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who is also called Mark. Many had gathered there and were praying. ¹³When Peter knocked at the entrance gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer. ¹⁴She recognized Peter’s voice and was so overjoyed, she did not open the gate. Instead she ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.

¹⁵They told her, “You are out of your mind!” But she kept on insisting it was so, and they started saying, “It’s his angel.”

¹⁶Meanwhile, Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. ¹⁷Peter motioned to them with his hand to be silent and described to them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. He said, “Tell these things to James and to the brothers.” Then he left and went on to another place.

¹⁸At daybreak, there was no small commotion among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. ¹⁹After Herod searched for him and did not find him, he questioned the guards and ordered that they be executed.

Then Herod went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 2:12–3:6

¹²When I came to Troas to proclaim the gospel of Christ and a door was opened for me by the Lord, ¹³I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia.

¹⁴But thanks be to God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ and reveals the fragrance of his knowledge through us in every place. ¹⁵Yes, we are the fragrance of Christ for God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶To some we are the odor of death that is a prelude to death, to the others the fragrance of life that is a prelude to life. And who is qualified for these things? ¹⁷To be sure, we are not like many who peddle the word of God for profit. Instead, in Christ we speak with sincerity in the sight of God, as men from God.

^{3:1}Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? ²You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. ³It is clear that you are a letter from Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets, but on tablets that are hearts of flesh.

⁴Such is the confidence we have through Christ before God. ⁵Not that we are competent by ourselves to claim that anything comes from us; rather, our competence is from God. ⁶He also made us competent as ministers of a new testament (not of letter, but of spirit). For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

Gospel

Luke 24:36–49

³⁶As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

³⁷But they were terrified and frightened and thought they were looking at a ghost.

³⁸He said to them, “Why are you troubled? Why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” ⁴⁰When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹While they still did not believe it (because of their joy), and while they were still wondering, he said to them, “Do you have anything here to eat?”

⁴²They gave him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb. ⁴³He took it and ate in front of them. ⁴⁴He said to them, “These are my words, which I spoke to you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.”

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He said to them, “This is what is written and so it must be: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹Look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

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The Fourth Sunday of Easter

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First Lesson

Acts 20:28–32

²⁸“Always keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. ²⁹I know that after my departure savage wolves, who will not spare the flock, will come in among you. ³⁰Even from your own group men will rise up, twisting the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. ³¹Therefore be always on the alert! Remember that for three years, night and day, I never stopped warning each one of you with tears.

³²“And now I entrust you to God and to the word of his grace, which has power to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

Second Lesson

1 Peter 5:1–4

Therefore, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and as one who also shares in the glory that is about to be revealed, I appeal to the elders among you: ²Shepherd God’s flock that is among you, serving as overseers, not grudgingly but willingly, as God desires, not because you are greedy for money but because you are eager to do it. ³Do not lord it over those entrusted to your care, but be examples for the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive an unfading crown of glory.

Gospel

John 10:11–18

¹¹“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired man, who is not a shepherd, does not own the sheep. He sees the wolf coming, leaves the sheep, and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the sheep and scatters them. ¹³Because he works for money, he does not care about the sheep.

¹⁴“I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me ¹⁵(just as the Father knows me and I know the Father). And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I also have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. Then there will be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it up again. This is the commission I received from my Father.”

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The Fifth Sunday of Easter

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First Lesson

Acts 16:11–15

¹¹After we put out to sea from Troas, we sailed straight to Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis. ¹²From there we went to Philippi, which is a leading city in that part of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We stayed in this city for a number of days.

¹³On the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate alongside the river, where we thought there was a place of prayer. We sat down and began to talk to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴A woman named Lydia, who worshipped God, was listening. She was a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira. The Lord opened her heart to pay close attention to what Paul was saying. ¹⁵When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, “If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

Second Lesson

1 John 3:18–24

¹⁸Dear children, let us love not only with word or with our tongue, but also in action and truth.

¹⁹This is how we know that we are of the truth and how we will set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God. ²²We also receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commands and do what is pleasing in his sight. ²³This then is his command: that we believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and that we love one another just as he commanded us. ²⁴The one who keeps his commands remains in God and God in him. This is how we know that he remains in us: We know it from the Spirit, whom he has given to us.

Gospel

John 15:1–8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he is going to cut off. And he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will bear more fruit.

³“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I am going to remain in you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Likewise, you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵“I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him is the one who bears much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers. Such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for

you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this: that you continue to bear much fruit and prove to be my disciples.”

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The Sixth Sunday of Easter

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First Lesson

Acts 9:36–42

³⁶In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was always doing good deeds and acts of charity. ³⁷At that time she became sick and died. After they had washed her, they laid her in an upstairs room. ³⁸Since Lydda is near Joppa, when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, who urged him, “Come to us without delay!”

³⁹Peter got up and went with them. When he arrived, they led him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing him the robes and clothing that Dorcas made while she was still with them.

⁴⁰After Peter sent them all outside, he got down on his knees and prayed. Then he turned toward the body and said, “Tabitha, get up!” She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹He gave her his hand and helped her stand up. After he called the saints and the widows, he presented her to them alive.

⁴²This became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Second Lesson

1 John 4:1–11

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³and every spirit who does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and is already in the world. ⁴You are from God, dear children, and you have overcome the false prophets, because the one in you is greater than the one in the world. ⁵They are from the world. That is why they speak from a worldly perspective and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. That is how we can distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸The one who does not love has not known God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God’s love for us was revealed: God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we may live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another.

Gospel

John 15:9–17

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so also I have loved you. Remain in my love. ¹⁰If you hold on to my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have held on to my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you these things so that my joy would continue to be in you and that your joy would be complete.

¹²“This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this: that someone lays down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you continue to do the things I instruct you. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because everything that I heard from my Father, I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will endure, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷These things I am instructing you, so that you love one another.”

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The Ascension of Our Lord

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First Lesson

Deuteronomy 33:26–29

²⁶There is no one like the God of Jeshurun,
who rides through the heavens to help you.

In his majesty he rides through the clouds.

²⁷The everlasting God is a dwelling place,
and his eternal arms are under you.

He drove out the enemy in front of you,
and he said, “Destroy!”

²⁸So Israel settled down in safety.

Jacob dwelt in security
in a land of grain and fresh wine,
and, yes, its heavens dropped down dew.

²⁹How blessed are you, O Israel!

Who is like you?

You are a people saved by the LORD,
the shield who gives you help,
the sword who gives you majesty.

Your enemies will come cringing before you,
and you will trample on their high places.

Second Lesson

Ephesians 4:7–16

⁷But to each one of us grace was given, according to the measure of the gift from Christ. ⁸That is why it says, “When he ascended on high, he took captivity captive and gave gifts to his people.”

⁹Now what does it mean when it says “he ascended,” other than that he also had descended to the lower parts, namely, the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the

heavens, so that he might fill all things. ¹¹He himself gave the apostles, as well as the prophets, as well as the evangelists, as well as the pastors and teachers, ¹²for the purpose of training the saints for the work of serving, in order to build up the body of Christ. ¹³This is to continue until we all reach

unity in the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, resulting in a mature man with a stature reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴The goal is that we would no longer be little children, tossed

by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, when people use tricks and invent clever ways to lead us astray. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we would in all things grow up into

Christ, who is the head. ¹⁶From him the whole body, being joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows in accordance with Christ’s activity when he measured out each individual part. He causes the growth of the body so that it builds itself up in love.

Gospel

Luke 24:44-53

⁴⁴He said to them, “These are my words, which I spoke to you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.”

⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶He said to them, “This is what is written and so it must be: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹Look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰He led them out as far as the vicinity of Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹And while he was blessing them, he parted from them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵²So they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³They were continually in the temple courts, praising and blessing God. Amen.

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The Seventh Sunday of Easter

Christian Worship: Supplement 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

First Lesson

Acts 7:54–60

⁵⁴When they heard these things, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. ⁵⁵But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed up into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶He said, “Look, I see heaven opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

⁵⁷But they screamed at the top of their voices, covered their ears, and rushed at him with one purpose in mind. ⁵⁸They threw him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses laid their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” ⁶⁰Then he fell to his knees and cried out in a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” After he said this, he fell asleep.

Second Lesson

Hebrews 7:11–27

¹¹So if everything could have been brought to its goal through the Levitical priesthood (for the people received the law on the basis of that priesthood), what further need was there for another priest to arise who was like Melchizedek, yet not said to be like Aaron? ¹²For when the priesthood is changed, by necessity a change in the law also happens. ¹³Yet these things are said about the one who belonged to another tribe, from which no one had served at the altar. ¹⁴It is certainly clear that our Lord is descended from Judah. Moses said nothing about priests in connection with that tribe.

¹⁵And this becomes even clearer if another priest arises like Melchizedek, ¹⁶who became a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement about physical descent, but on the basis of the power of an endless life. ¹⁷For it has been testified in Scripture about him:

You are a priest forever, like Melchizedek.

¹⁸To be sure, the former requirement is annulled, because it was weak and useless— ¹⁹for the law did not bring anything to its goal—but now a better hope is introduced, by which we approach God.

²⁰And something like this did not happen without an oath. Indeed, others who became priests did so without an oath, ²¹but this one became a priest with an oath, through the one who said to him:

The Lord has sworn an oath
and will not change his mind:
“You are a priest forever.”

²²In this way, Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

²³There were many who became priests because death prevented any of them from continuing to remain in office. ²⁴But because this one endures forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵So for this reason he is able to save forever those who come to God through him, because he always lives to plead on their behalf.

²⁶This is certainly the kind of high priest we needed: one who is holy, innocent, pure, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices on a daily basis, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. In fact, he sacrificed for sins once and for all when he offered himself.

Gospel

John 17:11b–19

“Holy Father, protect them by your name, which you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I kept those you gave me safe in your name. I protected them and not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

¹³“But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so that they may be filled with my joy. ¹⁴I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵I am not asking that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the Evil One. ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

¹⁷“Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸As you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world. ¹⁹I sanctify myself for them, so they also may be sanctified by the truth.”

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The Coming of the Holy Spirit: The Day of Pentecost

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First Lesson

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the LORD was upon me. He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley, which was full of bones. ²He had me pass through them and go all over among them. There were very many on the valley floor, and they were very dry.

³He said to me, “Son of man, can these dry bones live?” I answered, “LORD God, you know.” ⁴Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.’”

⁵This is what the LORD God says to these bones.

I am about to make breath enter you so that you will live. ⁶I will attach tendons to you. I will put flesh back on you. I will cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you will live.

Then you will know that I am the LORD.

⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I was prophesying there was a noise, a rattling, as the bones came together, one bone connecting to another. ⁸As I watched, tendons were attached to them, then flesh grew over them, and skin covered them. But there was no breath in them.

⁹Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the wind. Prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind that this is what the LORD God says. From the four winds, come, O wind, and breathe into these slain so that they may live.”

¹⁰So I prophesied as he commanded me. Breath entered them, and they came back to life. They stood on their feet, a very, very large army.

¹¹Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They are saying, ‘Our bones are dried up. Our hope is lost. We have been completely cut off.’ ¹²Therefore, prophesy and say to them that this is what the LORD God says. My people, I am going to open your graves and raise you up from your graves and bring you back to the soil of Israel. ¹³Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and raise you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live. I will settle you on your own land, and you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.”

Second Lesson

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly a sound like the rushing of a violent wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

³They saw divided tongues that were like fire resting on each one of them. ⁴They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, since the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak fluently.

⁵Now there were godly Jewish men from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶When this sound was heard, a crowd came together and was confused, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷They were completely baffled and said to each other, “Look, are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? ⁸Then how is it that each of us hears them speaking in his own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, and of Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya around Cyrene; visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes; ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring in our own languages the wonderful works of God.” ¹²They were all amazed and perplexed. They kept saying to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³But others mocked them and said, “They are full of new wine.”

¹⁴Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and spoke loudly and clearly to them: “Men of Judea, and all you residents of Jerusalem, understand this, and listen closely to my words. ¹⁵These men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶On the contrary, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷This is what God says will happen in the last days:

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

Your sons and your daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

¹⁹I will show wonders in the sky above,
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and a rising cloud of smoke.

²⁰The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹And this will happen: Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Gospel

John 14:25–27

²⁵“I have told you these things while staying with you. ²⁶But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I told you.

²⁷“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not let it be afraid.”

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