

The Season of Easter

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version[®]
following the Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*

Revised February 1, 2018

The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Sunrise)

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version[®]

Old Testament / First Reading

Exodus 15:1–11

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD. They said:

I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted.

The horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea.

²The LORD is my strength and song.

³The LORD is a warrior.

The LORD is his name.

⁴He has cast Pharaoh's chariots and his army into the sea.

His elite officers are drowned in the Red Sea.

⁵The deep waters covered them.

They sank down to the depths like a stone.

⁶LORD, your right hand is glorious in power.

LORD, your right hand has shattered the enemy.

⁷In your great majesty you overthrew those who opposed you.

You sent out your burning anger.

It consumed them like stubble.

⁸At the blast from your nostrils the waters piled up.

The flowing waters stood up like a dam.

The deep waters became solid in the heart of the sea.

⁹The enemy said, "I will pursue.

I will overtake. I will divide the plunder.

I will do whatever I want with them.

I will draw my sword,
and my hand will destroy them."

¹⁰But you blew with your breath,
and the sea covered them.

They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹LORD, who is like you among the gods?

Who is like you, glorious in holiness,
awesome in praise, working wonders?

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 5:6b–8

Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷Purge out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, just as you are unleavened. For our Passover lamb has been sacrificed, namely, Christ! ⁸So let us keep celebrating the festival, not with old yeast, not with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Holy 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)

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

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!”

Epistle / Second Reading

1 Corinthians 15:1–11

Brothers, I am going to call your attention to the gospel that I preached to you. You received it, and you took your stand on it. ²You are also being saved by that gospel that was expressed in the words I preached to you, if you keep your hold on it—unless you believed in vain. ³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received:

that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,
⁴that he was buried,
that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,
⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve.

⁶After that he appeared to over five hundred brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷Then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, he appeared also to me, the stillborn child, so to speak. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted God’s church. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not ineffective. On the contrary, I worked more than

all of them (and yet it wasn't my doing, but it was the grace of God, which was with me, that did it).
¹¹So whether it is I or they, that is what we preach, and that is what you believed.

Holy 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

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 4:32–35

³²The whole group of believers was one in heart and soul. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they held everything in common. ³³The apostles continued to testify about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ with great power, and abundant grace was on all of them. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them. For from time to time those who were owners of lands or houses sold them, brought the proceeds received from what was sold, ³⁵and laid it at the apostles' feet. It was distributed to each one according to what anyone needed.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 John 1:1–2:2

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have observed and our hands have touched regarding the Word of Life— ²the life appeared, and we have seen it. We testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³We are proclaiming what we have seen and heard also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We write these things to you so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we heard from him and proclaim to you: God is light. In him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say we have fellowship with him but still walk in darkness, we are lying and do not put the truth into practice. ⁷But if we walk in the light, just as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar, and his Word is not in us.

^{2:1}My children, I write these things to you so that you will not sin. If anyone does sin, we have an Advocate before the Father: Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ²He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the whole world.

Holy 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

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Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 3:11–21

¹¹While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people came running toward them in utter amazement in the area called Solomon's Colonnade.

¹²When Peter saw this, he addressed the people: "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Why are you staring at us, as if by our own power or godliness we have made this man walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and disowned in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. ¹⁴You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you. ¹⁵You killed the Author of Life, whom God raised from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶And on the basis of faith in his name, it is the name of Jesus that has strengthened this man, whom you see and know. This faith that comes through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

¹⁷"Now brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, just like your leaders. ¹⁸But in this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through the mouth of all the prophets: that his Christ would suffer. ¹⁹Therefore repent and return to have your sins wiped out, ²⁰so that refreshing times may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you. ²¹He must receive heaven until the times when everything will be restored, as God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets long ago."

Epistle / Second Reading

1 John 3:1–7

See the kind of love the Father has given us that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are! The world does not know us, because it did not know him. ²Dear friends, we are children of God now, but what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he is revealed we will be like him, and we will see him as he really is. ³Everyone who has this hope purifies himself just as Jesus is pure.

⁴Everyone who commits sin also commits lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness. ⁵You know that he appeared in order to take away our sins and in him there is no sin. ⁶Anyone who remains in him does not sin. The person who keeps on sinning has not seen him or known him.

⁷Dear children, do not let anyone deceive you. Whoever does what is right is righteous just as Jesus is righteous.

Holy 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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Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 4:1–12

As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the commander of the temple guard, and the Sadducees approached them. ²They were very upset because Peter and John were teaching the people and proclaiming the resurrection from the dead in connection with Jesus. ³They arrested them and put them in jail until the next day because it was already evening.

⁴But many of those who had heard the message believed, and the number of the men increased to about five thousand.

⁵The next day, the rulers, the elders, and the experts in the law assembled in Jerusalem ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all the rest of the high priest's family. ⁷After they made Peter and John stand in front of them, they began to question them: "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, ⁹if we are being questioned today for a kind act that was done for the lame man, as to how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that it was by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead! By him this man stands before you healed. ¹¹This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you builders, which has become the cornerstone.

¹²"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."

Epistle / Second Reading

1 John 3:16–24

¹⁶This is how we have come to know love: Jesus laid down his life for us. And we also should lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷Whoever has worldly wealth and sees his brother in need but closes his heart against him—how can God's love remain in him? 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.

Holy 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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Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 8:26–40

²⁶Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Get up and go south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” (This is an isolated area.) ²⁷So he got up and went. And there was a man, an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship. ²⁸He was on his way home, sitting in his chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹The Spirit told Philip, “Go over there and stay close to that chariot.” ³⁰Philip ran up to it and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet.

Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹The man replied, “How can I unless someone explains it to me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³²Now the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading was this:

He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who will talk about his generation?

For his life is taken from the earth.

³⁴The eunuch said to Philip, “I ask you, who is the prophet talking about—himself or someone else?” ³⁵Then Philip began to speak. Starting with that very passage of Scripture, he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were traveling along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What is there to prevent me from being baptized?”

³⁸He ordered the chariot to stop. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹When they stepped up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away. The eunuch did not see him anymore, but went on his way rejoicing.

⁴⁰Philip, however, found himself at Azotus. And as he went from place to place, he preached the gospel in all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 John 4:1–11 (12-21)

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.

¹²No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and his love has been brought to its goal in us. ¹³This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶We also have come to know and trust the love that God has for us.

God is love. Whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. ¹⁷In this way his love has been brought to its goal among us, so that we may have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are just like Jesus. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but complete love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who continues to be afraid has not been brought to the goal in love.

¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar. For how can anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, love God, whom he has not seen? ²¹This then is the command we have from him: The one who loves God should also love his brother.

Holy 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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Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 10:34–48

³⁴Then Peter began to speak: “Now I really am beginning to understand that God does not show favoritism, ³⁵but in every nation, anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. ³⁶He sent his word to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

³⁷“You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached. ³⁸God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the Devil, because God was with him.

³⁹“Indeed, we are witnesses of all the things he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem, yet they killed him by hanging him on a cross. ⁴⁰But God raised him on the third day and caused him to be seen, ⁴¹not by all the people, but by the witnesses God had already chosen—by us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴²He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify solemnly that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets testify about him that, through his name, everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins.”

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who were listening to the message. ⁴⁵All the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out, even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶For they heard them speaking in other languages and praising God.

Then Peter responded, ⁴⁷“Certainly no one can refuse water for baptizing these people! They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” ⁴⁸He gave directions that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for a few days.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 John 5:1–8

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the God who has given birth also loves one who has been born of him. ²This is how we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep his commands. ³In fact, this is love for God: that we keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴because everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith. ⁵Who is the one who overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

⁶This is the one who came by water and blood: Jesus Christ. He did not come by the water alone but by the water and by the blood. The Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷In fact, there are three that testify: ⁸the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are one.

Holy 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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Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 1:1-11

I wrote my first book, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began doing and teaching ²until the day he was taken up, after he had given instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³After he had suffered, he presented himself alive to the apostles with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and told them things about the kingdom of God.

⁴Once, when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for what the Father promised, which you heard from me. ⁵For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶So when they were together with him, they asked, “Lord, is this the time when you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But 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.”

⁹After he said these things, he was taken up while they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰They were looking intently into the sky as he went away. Suddenly, two men in white clothes stood beside them. ¹¹They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking up into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Epistle / Second Reading

Ephesians 1:15-23

¹⁵This is why, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶I never stop giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I keep praying that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, will give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in knowing Christ fully. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know the hope to which he has called you, just how rich his glorious inheritance among the saints is, ¹⁹and just how surpassingly great his power is for us who believe. ²⁰It is as great as the working of his mighty strength, which God worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion, and above every name that is given, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²God also placed all things under his feet and made him head over everything for the church. ²³The church is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Holy 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

Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
Evangelical Heritage Version®

Old Testament / First Reading

Acts 1:12–26

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain called the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

¹³When they entered the city, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. Peter and John were there, also James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴All of them kept praying together with one mind, along with the women, with Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

¹⁵In those days, when the group there numbered about 120 people, Peter stood up among the brothers and said, ¹⁶“Gentlemen, brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David about Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷Judas was counted as one of us and was given a share in this ministry.

¹⁸“Now this man acquired a field with what he was paid for his wicked act. When he fell headfirst, his middle burst open, and all his intestines spilled out. ¹⁹This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, and so in their own language that field was called Akeldema, which means Field of Blood.

²⁰Indeed, it is written in the book of Psalms:

May his residence be deserted.

Let there be no one dwelling in it.

And,

let someone else take his position.

²¹“Therefore it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us during the entire time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from his baptism by John until the day Jesus was taken up from us, become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

²³They proposed two: Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus) and Matthias. ²⁴Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place.”

²⁶Then they assigned lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias. So he was counted with the eleven apostles.

Epistle / Second Reading

1 John 5:9–15

⁹If we accept the testimony of people, God's testimony is even greater, because it is the testimony that God gave about his Son. ¹⁰The one who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in him, but the one who does not believe has made God out to be a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God gave about his Son. ¹¹This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God

does not have life. ¹³I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

¹⁴This is the confidence that we have before him: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we also know that we receive the things we have asked from him.

Holy 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

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year B
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Old Testament / First Reading

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.”

Epistle / Second Reading

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.”

Holy Gospel

John 15:26–27; 16:4b-15

²⁶“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father—he will testify about me. ²⁷And you also are going to testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.”

^{16:4b}“I did not tell you these things from the beginning, because I was with you.

⁵“But now I am going away to him who sent me, and not one of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶Yet because I have told you these things, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth: It is good for you that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, about righteousness, and about judgment: ⁹about sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰about

righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; ¹¹about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

¹²“I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own, but whatever he hears he will speak. He will also declare to you what is to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I said that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.”

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