

# The Season of Easter

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®  
following the Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*

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# The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Dawn)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*  
*Evangelical Heritage Version*<sup>®</sup>

## First Reading

**Isaiah 25:6–9**

On 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 with the finest wines.

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

<sup>8</sup>He 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.

<sup>9</sup>On 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 Reading

**1 Corinthians 15:12–20**

Now 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? <sup>13</sup>If there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup>And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is pointless, and your faith is pointless too. <sup>15</sup>Then 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. <sup>16</sup>For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. <sup>17</sup>And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup>Then it also follows that those who fell asleep in Christ perished. <sup>19</sup>If our hope in Christ applies only to this life, we are the most pitiful people of all.

<sup>20</sup>But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

# 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. <sup>2</sup>So 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!”

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

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

<sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went back to their homes.

<sup>11</sup>But Mary stood outside facing the tomb, weeping. As she wept, she bent over, looking into the tomb. <sup>12</sup>She saw two angels in white clothes sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and one at the feet. <sup>13</sup>They 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.”

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

<sup>15</sup>Jesus 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.”

<sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

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

<sup>17</sup>Jesus 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.’”

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

# The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Day)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B  
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## First Reading

**Job 19:23–27**

Oh how I wish that my words were written down.  
Oh how I wish that they were inscribed in bronze,  
<sup>24</sup>that they would be engraved in rock forever  
with an iron tool and letters filled with lead.  
<sup>25</sup>As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and that at the end of time he will stand over the dust.  
<sup>26</sup>Then, even after my skin has been destroyed,  
nevertheless, in my own flesh I will see God.  
<sup>27</sup>I myself will see him.  
My own eyes will see him, and not as a stranger.  
My emotions are in turmoil within me.

## Second Reading

**1 Corinthians 15:19–26**

If our hope in Christ applies only to this life, we are the most pitiful people of all.  
<sup>20</sup>But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.  
<sup>21</sup>For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. <sup>22</sup>For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive. <sup>23</sup>But each in his own order: Christ as the firstfruits and then Christ's people, at his coming. <sup>24</sup>Then 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. <sup>25</sup>For he must reign "until he has put all his enemies under his feet." <sup>26</sup>Death 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. <sup>2</sup>Very early on the first day of the week, at sunrise, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup>They were saying to each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance to the tomb for us?" <sup>4</sup>When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

<sup>5</sup>As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup>He 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. <sup>7</sup>But

go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

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

# The Second Sunday of Easter

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*  
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## First Reading

**Acts 18:1–11**

After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. <sup>2</sup>There he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them. <sup>3</sup>Because he had the same occupation, he stayed and worked with them, for they were tentmakers by trade. <sup>4</sup>Every Sabbath he led a discussion in the synagogue, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks.

<sup>5</sup>When Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was entirely devoted to preaching the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. <sup>6</sup>But when they opposed Paul and slandered him, he shook out his clothes and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on, I will go to the Gentiles!”

<sup>7</sup>He left that place and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshipper of God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. <sup>8</sup>Crispus, the synagogue leader, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized.

<sup>9</sup>One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid, but keep on speaking, and do not be silent. <sup>10</sup>For I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you, because I have many people in this city.” <sup>11</sup>He stayed there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

## Second Reading

**1 John 1:1–4**

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—<sup>2</sup>the 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. <sup>3</sup>We 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. <sup>4</sup>We write these things to you so that our joy may be complete.

## Gospel

**John 20:19-31**

On 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!” <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. So the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

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

<sup>24</sup>But Thomas, one of the Twelve, the one called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So 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.”

<sup>26</sup>After 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. <sup>27</sup>Then 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.”

<sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

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

<sup>30</sup>Jesus, in the presence of his disciples, did many other miraculous signs that are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup>But 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.

# The Third Sunday of Easter

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## First Reading

**Acts 3:11–20**

While 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.

<sup>12</sup>When 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? <sup>13</sup>The 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. <sup>14</sup>You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you. <sup>15</sup>You killed the Author of Life, whom God raised from the dead. We are witnesses of this. <sup>16</sup>And 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.

<sup>17</sup>"Now brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, just like your leaders. <sup>18</sup>But in this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through the mouth of all the prophets: that his Christ would suffer. <sup>19</sup>Therefore repent and return to have your sins wiped out, <sup>20</sup>so that refreshing times may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you.

## Second Reading

**1 John 1:5–2:2**

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

<sup>2:1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the whole world.

## Gospel

**Luke 24:36–49**

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

<sup>37</sup>But they were terrified and frightened and thought they were looking at a ghost.



<sup>38</sup>He said to them, “Why are you troubled? Why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup>Look 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.” <sup>40</sup>When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. <sup>41</sup>While 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?”

<sup>42</sup>They gave him a piece of broiled fish and some honeycomb. <sup>43</sup>He took it and ate in front of them. <sup>44</sup>He 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.”

<sup>45</sup>Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup>He 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, <sup>47</sup>and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>Look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

# The Fourth Sunday of Easter

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*  
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## First Reading

**Acts 20:28–32**

“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. <sup>29</sup>I know that after my departure savage wolves, who will not spare the flock, will come in among you. <sup>30</sup>Even from your own group men will rise up, twisting the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. <sup>31</sup>Therefore be always on the alert! Remember that for three years, night and day, I never stopped warning each one of you with tears.

<sup>32</sup>“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 Reading

**1 John 4:1–6**

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. <sup>2</sup>This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, <sup>3</sup>and 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. <sup>4</sup>You 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. <sup>5</sup>They are from the world. That is why they speak from a worldly perspective and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup>We 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.

## Gospel

**John 10:11–18**

“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The 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. <sup>13</sup>Because he works for money, he does not care about the sheep.

<sup>14</sup>“I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me <sup>15</sup>(just as the Father knows me and I know the Father). And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I 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. <sup>17</sup>This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No 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.”

# The Fifth Sunday of Easter

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## First Reading

**Acts 4:32–37**

The 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. <sup>33</sup>The apostles continued to testify about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ with great power, and abundant grace was on all of them. <sup>34</sup>There 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, <sup>35</sup>and laid it at the apostles' feet. It was distributed to each one according to what anyone needed.

<sup>36</sup>Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated “son of encouragement”), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, <sup>37</sup>sold a field that belonged to him. He brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

## Second Reading

**1 John 3:18–24**

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

<sup>19</sup>This is how we know that we are of the truth and how we will set our hearts at rest in his presence: <sup>20</sup>If our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup>Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God. <sup>22</sup>We also receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commands and do what is pleasing in his sight. <sup>23</sup>This 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. <sup>24</sup>The 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. <sup>2</sup>Every 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.

<sup>3</sup>“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Remain 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.

<sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>If 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. <sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for

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

# The Sixth Sunday of Easter

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B  
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## First Reading

**Acts 9:36–42**

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was always doing good deeds and acts of charity. <sup>37</sup>At that time she became sick and died. After they had washed her, they laid her in an upstairs room. <sup>38</sup>Since 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!”

<sup>39</sup>Peter 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.

<sup>40</sup>After 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. <sup>41</sup>He gave her his hand and helped her stand up. After he called the saints and the widows, he presented her to them alive.

<sup>42</sup>This became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

## Second Reading

**1 John 4:7–11, 19–21**

Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>The one who does not love has not known God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>This 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. <sup>10</sup>This 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. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another.

<sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>If 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? <sup>21</sup>This then is the command we have from him: The one who loves God should also love his brother.

## Gospel

**John 15:9–17**

“As the Father has loved me, so also I have loved you. Remain in my love. <sup>10</sup>If 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. <sup>11</sup>I have told you these things so that my joy would continue to be in you and that your joy would be complete.

<sup>12</sup>“This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this: that someone lays down his life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you continue to do the

things I instruct you. <sup>15</sup>I 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. <sup>16</sup>You 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. <sup>17</sup>These things I am instructing you, so that you love one another.”

# The Ascension of Our Lord

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*  
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## First Reading

### Acts 1:1-11

I wrote my first book, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began doing and teaching <sup>2</sup>until the day he was taken up, after he had given instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After 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.

<sup>4</sup>Once, 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. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

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

<sup>7</sup>He said to them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

<sup>9</sup>After he said these things, he was taken up while they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>They were looking intently into the sky as he went away. Suddenly, two men in white clothes stood beside them. <sup>11</sup>They 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.”

## Second Reading

### Ephesians 4:7-16

But to each one of us grace was given, according to the measure of the gift from Christ. <sup>8</sup>That is why it says, “When he ascended on high, he took captivity captive and gave gifts to his people.” <sup>9</sup>Now what does it mean when it says “he ascended,” other than that he also had descended to the lower parts, namely, the earth? <sup>10</sup>He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things. <sup>11</sup>He himself gave the apostles, as well as the prophets, as well as the evangelists, as well as the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>for the purpose of training the saints for the work of serving, in order to build up the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup>This 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. <sup>14</sup>The 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. <sup>15</sup>Instead, speaking the truth in love, we would in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. <sup>16</sup>From 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

He 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.”

<sup>45</sup>Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup>He 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, <sup>47</sup>and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>Look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

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



# The Seventh Sunday of Easter

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## First Reading

**Acts 6:1–9, 7:2a, 51–60**

In those days, as the number of disciples was increasing, a complaint arose from the Greek-speaking Jews against the Hebrew-speaking Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.

<sup>2</sup>So the Twelve called together the whole group of disciples and said, “It is not right for us to neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup>Brothers, carefully select from among you seven men with good reputations, who are full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. We will put them in charge of this service. <sup>4</sup>But we will devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

<sup>5</sup>This proposal pleased the entire group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte from Antioch.

<sup>6</sup>They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

<sup>7</sup>The word of God kept on spreading, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly. Also a large group of priests became obedient to the faith.

<sup>8</sup>Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. <sup>9</sup>Some men who were from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia) rose up and disputed with Stephen.

<sup>7:2</sup>Stephen said, “Gentlemen, brothers and fathers, listen!

<sup>51</sup>“You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit! You are doing just what your fathers did. <sup>52</sup>Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who prophesied the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers—<sup>53</sup>you who received the law as transmitted by angels, but did not keep it.”

<sup>54</sup>When they heard these things, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup>But 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. <sup>56</sup>He said, “Look, I see heaven opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

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

<sup>59</sup>While they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” <sup>60</sup>Then 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 Reading

### 1 John 5:1–6

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

<sup>6</sup>This 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.

## 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. <sup>12</sup>While 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.

<sup>13</sup>“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. <sup>14</sup>I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the Evil One. <sup>16</sup>They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

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

# The Day of Pentecost

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 3-Year Lectionary, Year B*  
*Evangelical Heritage Version*<sup>®</sup>

## 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. <sup>2</sup>He had me pass through them and go all over among them. There were very many on the valley floor, and they were very dry.

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

<sup>5</sup>This is what the LORD God says to these bones.

I am about to make breath enter you so that you will live. <sup>6</sup>I 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.

<sup>7</sup>So 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. <sup>8</sup>As I watched, tendons were attached to them, then flesh grew over them, and skin covered them. But there was no breath in them.

<sup>9</sup>Then 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.”

<sup>10</sup>So 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.

<sup>11</sup>Then 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.’ <sup>12</sup>Therefore, 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. <sup>13</sup>Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and raise you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup>I 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 Reading

### Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup>Suddenly a sound like the rushing of a violent wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>They saw divided tongues that were like fire resting on each one of them. <sup>4</sup>They 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.

<sup>5</sup>Now there were godly Jewish men from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup>When this sound was heard, a crowd came together and was confused, because each one heard them

speaking in his own language. <sup>7</sup>They were completely baffled and said to each other, “Look, are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? <sup>8</sup>Then how is it that each of us hears them speaking in his own native language? <sup>9</sup>Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, and of Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya around Cyrene; visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes; <sup>11</sup>Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring in our own languages the wonderful works of God.” <sup>12</sup>They were all amazed and perplexed. They kept saying to one another, “What does this mean?” <sup>13</sup>But others mocked them and said, “They are full of new wine.”

<sup>14</sup>Then 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. <sup>15</sup>These men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day. <sup>16</sup>On the contrary, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup>This 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.

<sup>18</sup>Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup>I will show wonders in the sky above,

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and a rising cloud of smoke.

<sup>20</sup>The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

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

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

## Gospel

### John 15:26–27, 16:4b–11

“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. <sup>27</sup>And you also are going to testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.”

<sup>16:4</sup>“...I did not tell you these things from the beginning, because I was with you.

<sup>5</sup>“But now I am going away to him who sent me, and not one of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ <sup>6</sup>Yet because I have told you these things, sorrow has filled your heart. <sup>7</sup>Nevertheless, 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. <sup>8</sup>When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, about righteousness, and about judgment: <sup>9</sup>about sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup>about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; <sup>11</sup>about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.