

The Season of Lent

*Scripture Selections from the Evangelical Heritage Version®
following the Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary*

Revised October 12, 2021

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Ash Wednesday

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Joel 2:12-19

Even now, declares the LORD,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting and weeping and grief.

¹³Tear your heart and not your clothing.

Return to the LORD your God,
for he is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and abounding in mercy,
and he relents from sending disaster.

¹⁴Who knows?

He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing—
grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.

¹⁵Blow the ram's horn in Zion.

Set aside a day for fasting.

Call a solemn convocation.

¹⁶Gather the people.

Consecrate the assembly.

Bring together the elders.

Gather the children, even those nursing at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

¹⁷Let the priests, who minister before the LORD,
weep between the temple porch and the altar.

Let them say:

Have compassion on your people, O LORD.

Do not subject the inheritance you have given us to the scorn of the nations.

Do not make us notorious among the nations as an object of ridicule.

Why should they say among the peoples,

“Where is their God?”

¹⁸The LORD is zealous for his land,
and he will take pity on his people.

¹⁹The LORD will respond to them:

I am sending you grain, new wine, and fresh oil,
enough to satisfy you fully.

Never again will I subject you to scorn among the nations.

Second Reading

1 John 1:5–9

This 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.

Gospel

Matthew 6:16-21

“Whenever you fast, do not make yourself look sad like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces to show everyone that they are fasting. Amen I tell you: They have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that it is not apparent to people that you are fasting, but only to your Father who sees what is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

¹⁹“Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹Because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The First Sunday in Lent (Invocavit)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Genesis 3:1-19

Now the serpent was more clever than any wild animal which the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Has God really said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees of the garden, ³but not from the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden. God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it. You shall not touch it, or else you will die.’”

⁴The serpent said to the woman, “You certainly will not die. ⁵In fact, God knows that the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was appealing to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate. She gave some also to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷The eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for their waists. ⁸They heard the voice of the LORD God, who was walking around in the garden during the cooler part of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

⁹The LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

¹⁰The man said, “I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself.”

¹¹God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?”

¹²The man said, “The woman you gave to be with me—she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³The LORD God said to the woman, “What have you done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent:

Because you have done this,
you are cursed more than all the livestock,
and more than every wild animal.
You shall crawl on your belly,
and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.

¹⁵I will put hostility between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her seed.
He will crush your head,
and you will crush his heel.

¹⁶To the woman he said:

I will greatly increase your pain in childbearing.

With painful labor you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
but he will rule over you.

¹⁷To Adam he said:

Because you listened to your wife's voice
and ate from the tree about which I commanded you,
"You shall not eat from it,"
the soil is cursed on account of you.
You will eat from it with painful labor all the days of your life.

¹⁸Thorns and thistles will spring up from the ground for you,
but you will eat the crops of the field.

¹⁹By the sweat of your face you will eat bread
until you return to the soil,
for out of it you were taken.
For you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 6:1-10

As fellow workers we also urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ²For he says:

At a favorable time I listened to you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you.

Look, now is the favorable time! See, now is the day of salvation!

³We are giving no one a reason to stumble in any way, so that our ministry will not be blamed.

⁴Rather, in every way we show ourselves to be God's ministers: in great endurance, in troubles, in hardships, in difficulties, ⁵in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in hard work, in sleepless nights, in times of hunger; ⁶in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in sincere love, ⁷in the word of truth, in the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness on the right and on the left; ⁸through glory and dishonor, through bad report and good report; treated as deceivers yet being honest, ⁹treated as unknown and yet being well known; as dying, and yet look—we live; as punished yet not put to death; ¹⁰as grieving yet always rejoicing; as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing yet possessing everything.

Gospel

Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. ²After he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The Tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become bread."

⁴But Jesus answered, "It is written:

Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God."

⁵Then the Devil took him into the holy city. He placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶and he said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written:

He will command his angels concerning you.

And they will lift you up in their hands,

so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷Jesus said to him, “Again, it is written:

You shall not test the Lord your God.”

⁸Again the Devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹He said to him, “I will give you all of these things, if you will bow down and worship me.”

¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

¹¹Then the Devil left him, and just then angels came and served him.

The Second Sunday in Lent (Reminiscere)

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Genesis 32:22-32

He got up that night and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of the Jabbok. ²³He took them and sent them across the stream, and he also sent his possessions across. ²⁴Jacob was left alone, and he wrestled with a man there until daybreak. ²⁵When the man saw that he could not defeat him, he touched the socket of his thigh, and the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated as he wrestled. ²⁶The man said, "Let me go. It's daybreak."

Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."

²⁷Then he said to him, "What is your name?"

He said, "Jacob."

²⁸Then he said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have fought with God and with men, and you have won."

²⁹Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name."

He said, "Why do you ask what my name is?" Then he blessed him there.

³⁰Jacob named the place Peniel, because he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life has been spared." ³¹The sun rose as he crossed over at Peniel, and he was limping because of his thigh. ³²For that reason, to this day the people of Israel do not eat the tendon of the hip that is on the socket of the thigh, because God touched the socket of Jacob's thigh on the tendon of the hip.

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

Therefore, beyond this, brothers, just as you received instruction from us about how you are to walk so as to please God (as indeed you are doing), we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that you do so even more. ²To be sure, you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³Indeed, this is God's will: that you be sanctified, namely, that you keep yourselves away from sexual immorality. ⁴He wants each of you to learn to obtain a wife for yourself in a way that is holy and honorable, ⁵not in lustful passion like the heathen, who do not know God. ⁶No one is to overstep and take advantage of his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we said previously and solemnly testified to it. ⁷For God did not call us for uncleanness, but in sanctification.

Gospel

Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus left that place and withdrew into the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²²There a Canaanite woman from that territory came and kept crying out, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! A demon is severely tormenting my daughter!"

²³But he did not answer her a word.

His disciples came and pleaded, "Send her away, because she keeps crying out after us."

²⁴He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

²⁵But she came and knelt in front of him, saying, "Lord, help me."

²⁶He answered her, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

²⁷"Yes, Lord," she said, "yet the dogs also eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, your faith is great! It will be done for you, just as you desire." And her daughter was healed at that very hour.

The Third Sunday in Lent (Oculi)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Jeremiah 26:1-15

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, the following word came from the LORD.

²This is what the LORD says. Stand in the courtyard of the LORD's house, and speak to people from the cities and towns of Judah who have come to worship at the House of the LORD. Tell them everything I have commanded you to tell them. Do not hold back a single word. ³Maybe they will listen, and everyone will turn from his evil way. Then I will relent and not bring about the disaster that I was planning because of the evil things they have done.

⁴You are also to say this to him.

This is what the LORD says. If you will not listen to me and follow my law, which I have set before you, ⁵and if you do not listen to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I have sent to you again and again (but you have not listened), ⁶then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make the name of this city a curse word for all the nations of the earth.

⁷The priests, the prophets, and all the people listened as Jeremiah spoke these words at the House of the LORD. ⁸When Jeremiah had finished saying everything the LORD had commanded him to say to all the people, then the priests, the prophets, and all the people seized him and said, "You must die! ⁹Why do you prophesy in the name of the LORD that this house will be like Shiloh and that this city will be desolate with no one living here?" All the people crowded around Jeremiah in the House of the LORD.

¹⁰When the officials of Judah heard about these things, they came up from the king's house to the House of the LORD and sat in the entrance of the New Gate of the LORD's house.

¹¹Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death because he has been prophesying against this city, as you heard with your own ears."

¹²Then Jeremiah said to all the officials and to all the people, "The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the things that you have heard. ¹³Now reform your ways and your actions, and obey the LORD your God. Then the LORD will relent and not bring about the disaster he has pronounced against you. ¹⁴But as for me, look, I am in your hands. Do with me whatever seems good and right in your eyes. ¹⁵But you can be certain of this. If you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and on those who live here, for it is true that the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing."

Second Reading

Ephesians 5:1-9

Therefore, be imitators of God as his dearly loved children. ²And walk in love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³But do not let sexual immorality, any kind of impurity, or greed even be mentioned among you, as is proper for saints. ⁴Obscenity, foolish talk, and coarse joking are also out of place. Instead, give thanks. ⁵Certainly you are aware of this: No immoral, impure, or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, who is God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words. It is because of these things that the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. ⁷So do not share in what they do.

⁸For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, ⁹for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Gospel

Luke 11:14-28

Jesus drove out a demon, which was mute. After the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed. ¹⁵But some of them said, “He drives out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.” ¹⁶Others were testing him by demanding of him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷But he knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed. And a house divided against itself falls. ¹⁸If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? You say that I drive out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹But if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons drive them out? So they will be your judges. ²⁰Yet if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

²¹“When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. ²²But when someone stronger attacks him and defeats him, he takes away that man’s full armor, in which he had trusted, and divides up his plunder.

²³“The one who is not with me is against me. The one who does not gather with me scatters. ²⁴When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places, seeking rest, but does not find any. Then it says, ‘I will return to my house, the one I left.’ ²⁵When it returns, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and dwell there. The last condition of that man becomes worse than the first.”

²⁷While he was saying these things, a woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that carried you, and the breasts at which you nursed!”

²⁸But he said, “Even more blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it.”

The Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetare)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Isaiah 55:1–7

Hey, all of you who are thirsty, come to the water,
even if you have no money!
Come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.
²Why do you spend money on something that is not bread?
Why do you waste your labor on something that does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good.
Satisfy your appetite with rich food.
³Turn your ear toward me, and come to me.
Listen, so that you may continue to live.
Yes, I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
the faithful mercies promised to David.
⁴Look, I appointed him as a witness for peoples,
a leader and commander of peoples.
⁵Look, you will call out to a nation you do not know,
and a nation that does not know you will run to you,
on account of the LORD your God,
because of the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.
⁶Seek the LORD while he may be found!
Call on him while he is near!
⁷Let the wicked man abandon his way.
Let an evil man abandon his thoughts.
Let him turn to the LORD,
and he will show him mercy.
Let him turn to our God,
because he will abundantly pardon.

Second Reading

Galatians 4:21-31

Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you really listening to the law? ²²For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman, and one by the free woman. ²³However, the son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but the son by the free woman was born through a promise. ²⁴These things can be used as an illustration; namely, the women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children into slavery. This is Hagar. ²⁵You see, this

Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and she corresponds to present-day Jerusalem, because Jerusalem is in slavery along with her children. ²⁶But the Jerusalem that is above is free. She is our mother. ²⁷For it is written:

Rejoice, barren woman who does not give birth. Break forth and shout for joy, woman who does not suffer birth pains, because the barren woman has more children than does the woman who has a husband.

²⁸Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of the promise. ²⁹But just as back then the one who was born according to the flesh persecuted the one who was born according to the Spirit, so this is also the case now. ³⁰But what does the Scripture say? “Throw out the slave woman and her son, because the son of the slave woman will certainly not receive the inheritance with the son of the free woman.” ³¹For this same reason, brothers, we are not children of a slave woman, but of the free woman.

Gospel

John 6:1-15

After this, Jesus crossed over to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). ²A large crowd followed him because they saw the miraculous signs he was performing on those who were sick. ³Jesus went up on the hillside and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

⁵When Jesus looked up and saw a huge crowd coming toward him, he asked Philip, “Where can we buy bread for these people to eat?” ⁶But Jesus was saying this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do.

⁷Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to have just a little.”

⁸One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, ⁹“There’s a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what is that for so many people?”

¹⁰Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, so they sat down. There were about five thousand men.

¹¹Then Jesus took the loaves and, after giving thanks, he distributed pieces to those who were seated. He also did the same with the fish—as much as they wanted.

¹²When the people were full, he told his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over so that nothing is wasted.” ¹³So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with pieces from the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

¹⁴When the people saw the miraculous sign Jesus did, they said, “This really is the Prophet who is coming into the world.”

¹⁵When Jesus realized that they intended to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

The Fifth Sunday in Lent (Judica)

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Genesis 22:1-14

Some time later God tested Abraham. He called to him, “Abraham!”

Abraham answered, “I am here.”

²God said, “Now take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains there, the one to which I direct you.”

³Abraham got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, along with Isaac his son. Abraham split the wood for the burnt offering. Then he set out to go to the place that God had told him about. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.

⁵Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey. The boy and I will go on over there. We will worship, and then we will come back to you.” ⁶Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and loaded it on Isaac his son. He took the firepot and the knife in his hand. The two of them went on together.

⁷Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father?”

He said, “I am here, my son.”

He said, “Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

⁸Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So the two of them went on together. ⁹They came to the place that God had told him about. Abraham built the altar there. He arranged the wood, tied up Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. ¹⁰Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

¹¹The Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, “Abraham, Abraham!”

Abraham said, “I am here.”

¹²He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy. Do not do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

¹³Abraham looked around and saw that behind him there was a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴Abraham called the name of that place “The LORD Will Provide.” So it is said to this day, “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.”

Second Reading

Hebrews 9:11-15

¹¹But when Christ appeared as the high priest of the good things that were coming, he went through the greater and more complete tent, which was not made by human hands (that is, it is not part of this creation). ¹²He entered once into the Most Holy Place and obtained eternal redemption, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood. ¹³Now if the blood of goats and bulls and

the ashes of a heifer, sprinkled on those who were unclean, sanctifies them so that their flesh is clean, ¹⁴how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works, so that we worship the living God?

¹⁵For this reason, he is the mediator of a new covenant. A death took place as payment for the trespasses committed under the first covenant, so that those who are called would receive the promised eternal inheritance.

Gospel

John 8:46-59

“Who of you can convict me of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me? ⁴⁷Whoever belongs to God listens to what God says. The reason you do not listen is that you do not belong to God.”

⁴⁸The Jews responded, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

⁴⁹Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon. On the contrary, I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰I do not seek my own glory. There is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹Amen, Amen, I tell you: If anyone holds on to my word, he will certainly never see death.”

⁵²So the Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets. Yet you say, ‘If anyone holds on to my word, he will certainly never taste death.’ ⁵³You are not greater than our father, Abraham, are you? He died. And the prophets died. Who do you think you are?”

⁵⁴Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, about whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ ⁵⁵Yet you do not really know him, but I do know him. If I said, ‘I do not know him,’ I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I hold on to his word. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham was glad that he would see my day. He saw it and rejoiced.”

⁵⁷The Jews replied, “You aren’t even fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?”

⁵⁸Jesus said to them, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Before Abraham was born, I am.” ⁵⁹Then they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden and left the temple area.

The Sixth Sunday in Lent—Palm Sunday

Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Zechariah 9:9-12

Rejoice greatly, Daughter of Zion!

Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!

Look! Your King is coming to you.

He is righteous and brings salvation.

He is humble and is riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the horse from Jerusalem.

The battle bow will be taken away,
and he will proclaim peace to the nations.

His kingdom will extend from sea to sea,
from the River to the ends of the earth.

¹¹As for you,
because of the blood of my covenant with you,

I will release your prisoners from the waterless pit.

¹²Return to the stronghold, you prisoners who have hope.
This very day I declare that I will restore double to you.

Second Reading

Philippians 2:5-11

Indeed, let this attitude be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. ⁶Though he was by nature God, he did not consider equality with God as a prize to be displayed, ⁷but he emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant. When he was born in human likeness, and his appearance was like that of any other man, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel

Matthew 21:1-9

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²telling them, “Go to the village ahead of you. Immediately you will find a donkey tied there along with her colt. Untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.”

⁴This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

⁵Tell the daughter of Zion: Look, your King comes to you, humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

⁶The disciples went and did just as Jesus commanded them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their outer clothing on them, and he sat on it. ⁸A very large crowd spread their outer clothing on the road. Others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them out on the road. ⁹The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed kept shouting,

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest!

Monday in Holy Week

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Isaiah 50:5–10

The LORD God opened my ear,
and I myself was not rebellious.

I did not turn back.

⁶I submitted my back to those who beat me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard.
I did not hide my face from disgrace and from spit.

⁷The LORD God will help me,
so I will not be disgraced.

Therefore I have made my face hard like flint.

I know that I will not be put to shame.

⁸The one who will acquit me is near!

Who can accuse me?

Let us take our stand.

Who can pass judgment on me?

Let him approach me.

⁹Look, the LORD God will help me.

Who then can declare me guilty?

Look, all of them will wear out like a garment.

A moth will consume them.

¹⁰Who among you worships the LORD
and listens to the voice of his servant?

Anyone who walks in darkness

and who has no bright light—

let him trust in the name of the LORD,

and let him lean on his God.

Second Reading

1 Peter 2:21–24

Indeed, you were called to do this, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you would follow in his steps. ²²He did not commit a sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. ²³When he was insulted, he did not insult in return. When he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴He himself carried our sins in his body on the tree so that we would be dead to sins and alive to righteousness. By his wounds you were healed.

Gospel

John 12:1–36

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, the hometown of Lazarus, who had died, the one Jesus raised from the dead. ²They gave a dinner for him there. Martha was serving, and Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with him.

³Then Mary took about twelve ounces of very expensive perfume (pure nard) and anointed Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

⁴But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was going to betray him, said, ⁵“Why wasn't this perfume sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶He did not say this because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief. He held the money box and used to steal what was put into it.

⁷Jesus replied, “Leave her alone. She intended to keep this for the day of my burial. ⁸Indeed, the poor you always have with you, but you are not always going to have me.”

⁹A large crowd of the Jews learned that he was there. They came not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom he raised from the dead. ¹⁰So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus too, ¹¹because it was on account of him that many of the Jews were leaving them and believing in Jesus.

¹²The next day, the large crowd that had come for the Festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³Taking palm branches, they went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!”

¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written:

¹⁵Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.

Look! Your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt.

¹⁶At first, his disciples did not understand these things. But when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and that they did these things for him.

¹⁷The crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead kept telling what they had seen. ¹⁸This is another reason a crowd met him: They heard he had done this miraculous sign.

¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see? You are accomplishing nothing. Look! The world has gone after him.”

²⁰Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Festival. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we want to see Jesus.” ²²Philip went to tell Andrew. Andrew came with Philip and told Jesus.

²³Jesus answered them, “The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it continues to be one kernel. But if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵Anyone who loves his life destroys it. And the one who hates his life in this world will hold on to it for eternal life. ²⁶If anyone serves me, let him follow me. And where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷“Now my soul is troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, this is the reason I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name!”

A voice came from heaven: “I have glorified my name, and I will glorify it again.”

²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said it thundered. Others said an angel talked to him.

³⁰Jesus answered, “This voice was not for my sake but for yours.

³¹“Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be thrown out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³He said this to indicate what kind of death he was going to die.

³⁴The crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Scriptures that the Christ will remain forever. So how can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”

³⁵Then Jesus told them, “The light will be with you just a little while longer. Keep on walking while you have the light, so that darkness does not overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become sons of light.”

Jesus spoke these words, and then went away and was hidden from them.

Tuesday in Holy Week

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Jeremiah 11:18–20

The LORD revealed their plot to me so I became aware of it. He showed me what they were doing. ¹⁹I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. I had not realized that they had plotted against me. They were saying:

“Let us destroy the tree along with its fruit.
Let us cut him off from the land of the living,
so that his name will no longer be remembered.”

²⁰But, LORD of Armies, you judge righteously.

You test the heart and mind.

Let me see your vengeance on them,
for I have presented my case to you.

Second Reading

1 Timothy 6:12–14

Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of eternal life, to which you were called and about which you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who made a good confession as a witness before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴that you keep this command without spot and without fault, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

Mark 14:1–15:47

It was two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the experts in the law were looking for some deceptive way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ²“Certainly not during the Festival,” they said, “or there will be a riot among the people.”

³While Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made from pure nard. She broke the alabaster jar and poured it over his head. ⁴But there were some who were indignant and said to one another, “Why has this perfume been wasted? ⁵Certainly this perfume could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor!” And they began to scold her.

⁶But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing for me. ⁷In fact, you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you are not always going to have me. ⁸She did what she could. She anointed my body beforehand for burial. ⁹Amen I tell you: Wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman did will also be told in memory of her.”

¹⁰Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹When they heard this, they were glad and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

¹²On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples asked him, “Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹³He sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and there a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴Wherever he enters, tell the owner of the house that the Teacher says, ‘Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ ¹⁵He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.”

¹⁶His disciples left and went into the city and found things just as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷When it was evening, he arrived with the Twelve.

¹⁸While they were reclining and eating, Jesus said, “Amen I tell you: One of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.”

¹⁹They began to be sorrowful and said to him one by one, “Surely not I?”

²⁰He said to them, “It is one of the Twelve, one who is dipping bread with me in the dish. ²¹Indeed, the Son of Man is going to go just as it has been written about him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

²²While they were eating, Jesus took bread. When he had blessed it, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “Take it. This is my body.”

²³Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them. They all drank from it. ²⁴He said to them, “This is my blood of the new testament, which is poured out for many. ²⁵Amen I tell you: I will certainly not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” ²⁶After they sang a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

²⁷Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me. For it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’ ²⁸But after I am raised, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

²⁹But Peter said to him, “Even if all fall away, I will not.”

³⁰Jesus said to him, “Amen I tell you: Today—this very night—before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.”

³¹But Peter kept saying emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you.” And they all said the same thing.

³²They went to a place named Gethsemane. Jesus told his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” ³³Then he took Peter, James, and John along with him and began to be troubled and distressed. ³⁴He said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow, even to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.”

³⁵Going forward a little, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶He also said, “*Abba*, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

³⁷When he returned to the disciples, he found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not strong enough to keep watch for one hour? ³⁸Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹Again he went away and prayed, saying the same thing. ⁴⁰When he returned, he found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. They did not know what they should answer him. ⁴¹He returned the third time and said to them, “Are you going to continue sleeping and resting? It is enough. The

hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Rise, let us go. Look, my betrayer is near.”

⁴³Just then, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. A crowd was with him, armed with swords and clubs. They were from the chief priests, the experts in the law, and the elders. ⁴⁴Now his betrayer had given them a signal, saying, “The one I kiss is the man. Arrest him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵He went right to Jesus and said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶They laid hands on him and arrested him. ⁴⁷But one of those who stood nearby drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

⁴⁸Jesus responded by saying to them, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to capture me as you would a criminal? ⁴⁹Day after day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But this happened so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰Then the disciples all left him and fled.

⁵¹A certain young man was following him, wearing just a linen cloth over his naked body. They seized him, ⁵²but he left behind the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

⁵³They led Jesus away to the high priest. All the chief priests, the elders, and the experts in the law gathered together. ⁵⁴Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. He was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire.

⁵⁵The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶Many testified falsely against him, but their testimonies did not agree. ⁵⁷Some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.’ ” ⁵⁹Yet even on this point, their testimony did not agree.

⁶⁰The high priest stepped forward and questioned Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is this they are testifying against you?”

⁶¹But Jesus was silent and did not answer anything.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?”

⁶²“I am,” Jesus said. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³The high priest tore his robes and said, “Why do we need any more witnesses? ⁶⁴You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think?”

They all condemned him as being worthy of death. ⁶⁵Then some began to spit on him. They covered his face and struck him with their fists, saying, “Prophesy!” The guards also took him and beat him.

⁶⁶While Peter was in the courtyard below, one of the servant girls of the high priest came there. ⁶⁷When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked directly at him and said, “You were also with the Nazarene, Jesus!”

⁶⁸But he denied it, saying, “I don’t know or understand what you are saying,” and he went out to the entryway. Then a rooster crowed.

⁶⁹When the servant girl saw him, once more she began to tell those standing there, “This is one of them.”

⁷⁰But again he denied it. After a little while those who were standing there said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, because you are a Galilean.”

⁷¹But he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know this man you are talking about!” ⁷²Just then, the rooster crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him: “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

^{15:1}As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, along with the elders, the experts in the law, and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. ²Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

He answered him, “It is as you say.”

³The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴Pilate questioned him again, “Are you not going to answer anything? See how many charges they are bringing against you!”

⁵But Jesus still did not answer anything, so Pilate was amazed.

⁶At each Festival, Pilate used to release to the people one prisoner whom they requested. ⁷There was one named Barabbas, who was imprisoned with the rebels and had committed murder in the rebellion. ⁸The crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹Pilate replied, “Do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you?” ¹⁰In fact, he knew that it was because of envy that the chief priests had handed him over.

¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas to them instead.

¹²Again, Pilate replied to them, “Then what do you want me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?”

¹³“Crucify him!” they shouted back.

¹⁴But Pilate said to them, “Why? What has he done wrong?”

But they shouted even louder, “Crucify him!”

¹⁵Since he wanted to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. After he had Jesus flogged, he handed him over to be crucified.

¹⁶The soldiers led him away inside the palace, which is the Praetorium, and called together the whole cohort of soldiers. ¹⁷They put a purple robe on him, twisted together a crown of thorns, and put it on him. ¹⁸The soldiers began to salute him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” ¹⁹They kept hitting him on the head with a reed and spitting on him. They also knelt down to pay homage to him.

²⁰When they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothing on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹A certain man, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), was passing by on his way in from the country. They forced him to carry Jesus’ cross. ²²They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means, “The place of a skull.” ²³They tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴They crucified him. And they divided his garments, casting lots for them to decide what each of them would take.

²⁵Now it was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶The superscription stating the charge against him read, “The King of the Jews.” ²⁷They also crucified two criminals with him, one on his right and one on his left.

²⁹Those who passed by ridiculed him, shaking their heads and saying, “Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰save yourself! Come down from the cross!”

³¹In the same way, the chief priests along with the experts in the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said. “He cannot save himself. ³²Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross so that we may see and believe!”

Those who were crucified with him also insulted him.

³³When it was the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴At the ninth hour Jesus shouted with a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

³⁵When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah!”

³⁶Someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. They said, “Leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down.”

³⁷Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last. ³⁸The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he cried out and breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

⁴⁰There were also women watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹When he was in Galilee, they followed him and served him. Many other women also came up with him to Jerusalem.

⁴²It was already evening, and since it was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath), ⁴³Joseph from Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had been dead for a long time. ⁴⁵When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶Joseph bought a linen cloth, took him down, and wrapped him in the linen cloth. He laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of rock, and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were watching where the body was laid.

Wednesday in Holy Week

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Isaiah 62:11–63:7

Listen, the LORD is making a proclamation to the end of the earth.

Tell the daughter of Zion:

“Look, your salvation is coming.

Look, his reward is with him,
and his compensation is out in front of him.”

¹²Then they will be called holy people,
the redeemed of the LORD.

Then you will be called Sought After,
A City Not Abandoned.

^{63:1}Who is this coming from Edom, with bright red garments?

Who is this coming from Bozrah, clothed majestically,
marching out with great strength?

It is I, the one who speaks in righteousness.

It is I, the one who is mighty to save.

²Why is your clothing so red?

Why are your garments like those of someone
who has been trampling grapes in a winepress?

³I have trodden the winepress alone,
and from the peoples there was no one with me.

So I stomped on them in my anger,
and I trampled them in my wrath,
and their juice splattered on my garments.

I stained all my clothing.

⁴For the day for vengeance was in my heart,
and the year for my redemption has come.

⁵I looked intently but there was no helper.
I was shocked that no one supported me.

My arm delivered me,
and my wrath supported me.

⁶I trampled the peoples in my anger.
I made them drunk in my wrath,
and I will pour out their juice onto the ground.

⁷I will tell about the LORD’s mercies,
about the praises of the LORD,
about all that the LORD has done for us,

about his great goodness to the house of Israel,
which he performed for them according to his abundant compassion,
and according to his great mercy.

Second Reading

Revelation 1:5b–7

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his own blood and made us a kingdom and priests to God his Father—to him be the glory and the power forever. Amen.

⁷Look, he is coming with clouds,
and every eye will see him,
including those who pierced him.
And all the nations of the earth will mourn because of him.
Yes. Amen.

Gospel

Luke 22:1–23:56

The Festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. ²The chief priests and the experts in the law were trying to find some way to put Jesus to death, because they were afraid of the people. ³Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, who was one of the Twelve. ⁴He went away and spoke with the chief priests and officers of the temple guard about how he could betray Jesus to them. ⁵They were glad and agreed to give him money. ⁶He promised to do it and was looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus to them away from the crowd.

⁷The day of Unleavened Bread arrived, when it was necessary to sacrifice the Passover lamb. ⁸Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it.”

⁹They said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?”

¹⁰He told them, “Just as you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters. ¹¹Tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’” ¹²He will show you a large, furnished upper room. Make preparations there.” ¹³They went and found things just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁴When the hour had come, Jesus reclined at the table with the twelve apostles. ¹⁵He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, ¹⁶for I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁷He took a cup, gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves, ¹⁸for I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

¹⁹He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰In the same way, he took the cup after the supper, saying, “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is being poured out for you.

²¹“But look, the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. ²²The Son of Man is going to go as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”

²³They began to discuss with one another which of them it was who was going to do this.

²⁴A dispute arose among the disciples about which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵But he told them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are called Benefactors. ²⁶But it is not to be that way with you. Instead, let the greatest among you become like the youngest, and the one who leads like the one who serves. ²⁷For who is greater, one who reclines at the table or one who serves? Isn’t it the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸You are those who have remained with me in my trials. ²⁹I am going to grant a kingdom to you, just as my Father granted to me, ³⁰so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. And you will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

³¹The Lord said, “Simon, Simon, pay attention: Satan has asked to have you all, so that he may sift you as wheat. ³²But I prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brothers.”

³³He said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!”

³⁴But Jesus replied, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you deny three times that you know me.”

³⁵He said to them, “When I sent you out without money bag, traveler’s bag, and sandals, did you lack anything?”

“Nothing,” they said.

³⁶Then he told them, “But now, let the one who has a money bag take it, and likewise a traveler’s bag. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘He was counted with transgressors.’ Indeed, what is written about me is going to have its fulfillment.”

³⁸They said, “Lord, look, here are two swords.”

He said to them, “That is enough.”

³⁹Jesus left and went out to the Mount of Olives, as was his custom. His disciples followed him. ⁴⁰When he reached the place, he told them, “Keep praying that you may not enter into temptation.”

⁴¹He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed, ⁴²“Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.”

⁴³An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴As he was in agony, he prayed more fervently. His sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground.

⁴⁵When he rose from prayer, he went to the disciples and found them sleeping as a result of sorrow. ⁴⁶He said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and keep praying so that you may not enter into temptation.”

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd appeared, and the man called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He came near to Jesus to kiss him. ⁴⁸But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

⁴⁹When those who were around him saw what was about to happen, they said to him, “Lord, should we strike with a sword?” ⁵⁰Then one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹But Jesus responded, “Stop! No more of this!” Then he touched the servant’s ear and healed him. ⁵²Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come out against him, “Have you come out as you would against a robber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour—when darkness rules.”

⁵⁴Then they seized him, led him away, and brought him into the high priest's house.

Peter followed at a distance. ⁵⁵When they had lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. ⁵⁶A servant girl saw him sitting near the light. She looked closely at him and said, "This man also was with him."

⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him."

⁵⁸After a little while someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them!"

But Peter answered, "Man, I am not!"

⁵⁹After about one hour had passed, someone else was firmly insisting, "Truly this man was with him too, because he is a Galilean!"

⁶⁰But Peter said, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about!" At that very moment, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the Lord's word, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today you will deny me three times." ⁶²He went outside and wept bitterly.

⁶³The men who were holding Jesus in custody mocked him while they were beating him. ⁶⁴They blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" ⁶⁵And they went on saying many other blasphemous things against him.

⁶⁶As soon as it was day, the council of the elders of the people met together, both the chief priests and experts in the law. They brought him into their Sanhedrin and said, ⁶⁷"If you are the Christ, tell us."

But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, ⁶⁸and if I ask you, you will not answer me or release me. ⁶⁹But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

⁷⁰They all said, "Are you then the Son of God?"

He said to them, "I am what you are saying."

⁷¹Then they said, "Why do we need any more testimony? For we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth!"

^{23:1}The whole group of them got up and brought him before Pilate. ²They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this fellow misleading our nation, forbidding the payment of taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

³Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

"It is as you say," Jesus replied.

⁴Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for a charge against this man."

⁵But they kept insisting, "He stirs up the people, teaching all through Judea, beginning from Galilee all the way here."

⁶When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man was a Galilean. ⁷When he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem during those days.

⁸When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad. For a long time, he had wanted to see him, because he had heard many things about him. He hoped to see some miracle performed by him. ⁹He questioned him with many words, but Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the experts in the law stood there, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹Herod, along with his soldiers, treated him with contempt and ridiculed him. Dressing him in bright clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. ¹²Herod and Pilate became friends with each other on that day. Before this they had been enemies of each other.

¹³Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, ¹⁴and said to them, “You brought this man to me as one who is misleading the people. Look, I have examined him in your presence. I have found in this man no basis for the charges you are bringing against him. ¹⁵Herod did not either, for he sent him back to us. See, he has done nothing worthy of death. ¹⁶So I will have him flogged and release him.”

¹⁷Pilate needed to release one prisoner to them at the Festival. ¹⁸But they all shouted together with one voice: “Take him away! Release Barabbas to us!” ¹⁹Barabbas had been thrown in prison for a rebellion in the city and for murder.

²⁰Pilate addressed them again, because he wanted to release Jesus. ²¹But they kept shouting, “Crucify! Crucify him!”

²²He said to them the third time, “Why? What evil has he done? I have found no grounds for sentencing him to death. So I will whip him and release him.” ²³But they kept pressuring him with loud voices, demanding that he be crucified. And their voices were overwhelming. ²⁴So Pilate decided that what they demanded would be done. ²⁵He released the one they had asked for, who had been thrown in prison for rebellion and murder, but he handed Jesus over to their will.

²⁶As they led him away, they seized Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country. They placed the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. ²⁷A large crowd of people was following him, including women who were mourning and wailing for him. ²⁸Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. ²⁹Be sure of this: The days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never gave birth, and the breasts that never nursed.’ ³⁰Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ ³¹For if they do these things to the green wood, what will happen to the dry?”

³²Two other men, who were criminals, were led away with Jesus to be executed.

³³When they came to the place called The Skull, they crucified him there with the criminals, one on his right and the other on his left.

³⁴Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

They cast lots to divide his garments among them. ³⁵The people stood watching. The rulers were ridiculing him, saying, “He saved others. Let him save himself, if this is the Christ of God, the Chosen One!”

³⁶The soldiers also made fun of him. Coming up to him, they offered him sour wine, ³⁷saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!”

³⁸There was also an inscription written above him: “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹One of the criminals hanging there was blaspheming him, saying, “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God, since you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹We are punished justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom.”

⁴³Jesus said to him, “Amen I tell you: Today you will be with me in paradise.”

⁴⁴It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵while the sun was darkened. Then the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶Jesus cried out with

a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!” When he had said this, he breathed his last.

⁴⁷When the centurion saw what had happened, he began to glorify God, saying, “This man really was righteous.” ⁴⁸When all the groups of people who had gathered to see this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their chests. ⁴⁹All those who knew Jesus, and the women who followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

⁵⁰Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea, who was a member of the Council, a good and righteous man. ⁵¹He had not agreed with their plan and action. He was looking forward to the kingdom of God. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body. ⁵³He took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and placed it in a tomb that was cut out of rock, where no one had yet been laid. ⁵⁴It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed after Joseph, and they observed the tomb and how his body was laid there. ⁵⁶Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Holy Thursday

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
Evangelical Heritage Version®*

First Reading

Exodus 12:1-14

The LORD told Moses and Aaron this in the land of Egypt:

²This month is to be the beginning of your calendar. It is to be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the entire Israelite community that on the tenth day of this month, they are to take a lamb or a kid goat for themselves, according to their fathers' households, one lamb per household. ⁴But if the household is too small for a whole lamb, then that person and his neighbor next door to him must select one, based on the number of people. Determine what size lamb is needed according to how much each person will eat.

⁵Your lamb must be unblemished, a year-old male. You may take it from the sheep or the goats. ⁶You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of this month. Then the whole assembly of the Israelite community is to slaughter the lambs at sunset. ⁷They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses where they eat the lamb. ⁸That night they shall eat the meat that has been roasted over a fire, along with unleavened bread. They shall eat it with bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over a fire—with its head, its legs, and its internal organs. ¹⁰You shall not leave any of it until the morning. Whatever remains until the morning, you shall burn in the fire. ¹¹This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt ready for travel, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover.

¹²For on that night I will pass through the land of Egypt. I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both people and animals. Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment. I am the LORD. ¹³The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. When I see the blood, I will pass over you. There will be no plague among you to destroy you, when I strike down the land of Egypt.

¹⁴This day shall be a memorial for you, and you are to celebrate it as a festival to the LORD. Throughout your generations you must celebrate it as a permanent regulation.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 11:23-32

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way, after the meal, he also took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new testament in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

²⁷Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the Lord's body and blood. ²⁸Instead, let a person examine himself and after

doing so, let him eat of the bread and drink from the cup. ²⁹For if anyone eats and drinks in an unworthy way because he does not recognize the Lord's body, he eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰Because of this, many among you are weak and sick, and quite a few have fallen asleep. ³¹But if we judged ourselves, we would not be undergoing judgment. ³²However, when we undergo judgment, we are being disciplined by the Lord so that we may not be condemned with the world.

Gospel

John 13:1-15

Before the Passover Festival, Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved those who were his own in the world, he loved them to the end.

²By the time the supper took place, the Devil had already put the idea into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.

³Jesus knew that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God. ⁴He got up from the supper and laid aside his outer garment. He took a towel and tied it around his waist. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

⁶He came to Simon Peter, who asked him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷Jesus answered him, "You do not understand what I am doing now, but later you will understand."

⁸Peter told him, "You will never, ever, wash my feet!"

Jesus replied, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹"Lord, not just my feet," Simon Peter replied, "but also my hands and my head!"

¹⁰Jesus told him, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet, but his body is completely clean. And you are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹Indeed, he knew who was going to betray him. That is why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After Jesus had washed their feet and put on his outer garment, he reclined at the table again. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me Teacher and Lord. You are right, because I am. ¹⁴Now if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵Yes, I have given you an example so that you also would do just as I have done for you.

Good Friday

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Look, my servant will succeed.

He will rise. He will be lifted up. He will be highly exalted.

¹⁴Just as many were appalled at him—

his appearance was so disfigured that he did not look like a man,
and his form was disfigured more than any other person—

¹⁵so he will sprinkle many nations,

and kings will shut their mouths because of him,

because they will see something they had never been told before,
and they will understand something they had never heard before.

^{53:1}Who has believed our report,

and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

²He grew up before him like a tender shoot

and like a root from dry ground.

He had no attractiveness and no majesty.

When we saw him, nothing about his appearance made us desire him.

³He was despised and rejected by men,

a man who knew grief,

who was well acquainted with suffering.

Like someone whom people cannot bear to look at,

he was despised,

and we thought nothing of him.

⁴Surely he was taking up our weaknesses,

and he was carrying our sufferings.

We thought it was because of God

that he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted,

⁵but it was because of our rebellion that he was pierced.

He was crushed for the guilt our sins deserved.

The punishment that brought us peace was upon him,

and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶We all have gone astray like sheep.

Each of us has turned to his own way,

but the LORD has charged all our guilt to him.

⁷He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,

yet he did not open his mouth.

Like a lamb he was led to the slaughter,

and like a sheep that is silent in front of its shearers,
he did not open his mouth.

⁸He was taken away without a fair trial and without justice,
and of his generation, who even cared?

So, he was cut off from the land of the living.

He was struck because of the rebellion of my people.

⁹They would have assigned him a grave with the wicked,
but he was given a grave with the rich in his death,
because he had done no violence,
and no deceit was in his mouth.

¹⁰Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him
and to allow him to suffer.

Because you made his life a guilt offering, he will see offspring.

He will prolong his days,
and the LORD's gracious plan will succeed in his hand.

¹¹After his soul experiences anguish, he will see the light of life.

He will provide satisfaction.

Through their knowledge of him, my just servant will justify the many,
for he himself carried their guilt.

¹²Therefore I will give him an allotment among the great,
and with the strong he will share plunder,
because he poured out his life to death,
and he let himself be counted with rebellious sinners.

He himself carried the sin of many,
and he intercedes for the rebels.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:14–21

For the love of Christ compels us, because we came to this conclusion: One died for all; therefore, all died. ¹⁵And he died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves but for him, who died in their place and was raised again.

¹⁶As a result, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we knew Christ according to the flesh, we no longer know him that way. ¹⁷So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. The new has come! ¹⁸And all these things are from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. ¹⁹That is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them. And he has entrusted to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, inasmuch as God is making an appeal through us. We urge you, on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him, who did not know sin, to become sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Gospel

John 18:1-19:42

After saying these things, Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden. He and his disciples went into it.

²Now Judas, who was betraying him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³So Judas took the company of soldiers and some guards from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

⁴Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, “Who are you looking for?”

⁵“Jesus the Nazarene,” they replied.

“I am he,” Jesus told them.

Judas, the betrayer, was standing with them. ⁶When Jesus told them, “I am he,” they backed away and fell to the ground.

⁷Then Jesus asked them again, “Who are you looking for?”

“Jesus the Nazarene,” they said.

⁸“I told you that I am he,” Jesus replied. “So if you are looking for me, let these men go.” ⁹This was to fulfill the statement he had spoken: “I did not lose any of those you have given me.”

¹⁰Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

¹¹So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into its sheath. Shall I not drink the cup my Father has given me?”

¹²Then the company of soldiers, their commander, and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus and bound him. ¹³First they led him to Annas, because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. ¹⁴Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews, “It is better that one man die for the people.”

¹⁵Simon Peter and another disciple kept following Jesus. That disciple was known to the high priest, so he went into the high priest’s courtyard with Jesus. ¹⁶But Peter stood outside by the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out and talked to the girl watching the door and brought Peter in.

¹⁷“You are not one of this man’s disciples too, are you?” the girl at the door asked Peter.

“I am not!” he said.

¹⁸The servants and guards were standing around a fire of coals that they had made because it was cold. While they warmed themselves, Peter was standing with them, warming himself too.

¹⁹The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

²⁰Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world. I always taught in a synagogue or at the temple, where all the Jews gather. I said nothing in secret. ²¹Why are you questioning me? Ask those who heard what I told them. Look, they know what I said.”

²²When he said this, one of the guards standing there hit Jesus in the face. “Is that how you answer the high priest?” he demanded.

²³“If I said something wrong,” Jesus answered, “testify about what was wrong. But if I was right, why did you hit me?”

²⁴Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

²⁵Simon Peter continued to stand there warming himself. So they said to him, “You are not one of his disciples too, are you?”

He denied it, saying, “I am not!”

²⁶One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, “Didn’t I see you with him in the garden?”

²⁷Peter denied it again, and just then a rooster crowed.

²⁸Early in the morning, the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium. They did not enter the Praetorium themselves, so that they would not become ceremonially unclean. (They wanted to be able to eat the Passover meal.) ²⁹So Pilate went out to them and said, “What charge do you bring against this man?”

³⁰They answered him, “If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.”

³¹Pilate told them, “Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.”

The Jews said, “It’s not legal for us to put anyone to death.” ³²This happened so that the statement Jesus had spoken indicating what kind of death he was going to die would be fulfilled.

³³Pilate went back into the Praetorium and summoned Jesus. He asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

³⁴Jesus answered, “Are you saying this on your own, or did others tell you about me?”

³⁵Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?”

³⁶Jesus replied, “My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight so that I would not be handed over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here.”

³⁷“You are a king then?” Pilate asked.

Jesus answered, “I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.”

³⁸“What is truth?” Pilate said to him.

After he said this, he went out again to the Jews and told them, “I find no basis for a charge against him. ³⁹But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at the Passover. So do you want me to release the King of the Jews for you?”

⁴⁰Then they shouted back, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” (Now Barabbas was a rebel.)

^{19:1}Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. ²The soldiers also twisted together a crown of thorns and placed it on his head. Then they threw a purple robe around him. ³They kept coming to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they kept hitting him in the face.

⁴Pilate went outside again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him.”

⁵So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”

⁶When the chief priests and guards saw him, they shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”

Pilate told them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no basis for a charge against him.”

⁷The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.”

⁸When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹He went back inside the palace again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?”

But Jesus gave him no answer.

¹⁰So Pilate asked him, “Are you not talking to me? Don’t you know that I have the authority to release you or to crucify you?”

¹¹Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over me at all if it had not been given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin.”

¹²From then on Pilate tried to release Jesus. But the Jews shouted, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar! Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar!”

¹³When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside. He sat down on the judge’s seat at a place called the Stone Pavement, or Gabbatha in Aramaic. ¹⁴It was about the sixth hour on the Preparation Day for the Passover. Pilate said to the Jews, “Here is your king!”

¹⁵They shouted, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!”

Pilate said to them, “Should I crucify your king?”

“We have no king but Caesar!” the chief priests answered.

¹⁶So then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus away. ¹⁷Carrying his own cross, he went out to what is called the Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. ¹⁸There they crucified him with two others, one on each side, and Jesus in the middle.

¹⁹Pilate also had a notice written and fastened on the cross. It read, “Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews.”

²⁰Many of the Jews read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek.

²¹So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that ‘this man said, “I am the King of the Jews.”””

²²Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

²³When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier. They also took his tunic, which was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. ²⁴So they said to one another, “Let’s not tear it. Instead, let’s cast lots to see who gets it.” This was so that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says:

They divided my garments among them

and cast lots for my clothing.

So the soldiers did these things.

²⁵Jesus’ mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene were standing near the cross.

²⁶When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son!” ²⁷Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother!” And from that time this disciple took her into his own home.

²⁸After this, knowing that everything had now been finished, and to fulfill the Scripture, Jesus said, “I thirst.”

²⁹A jar full of sour wine was sitting there. So they put a sponge soaked in sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.

³⁰When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished!” Then, bowing his head, he gave up his spirit.

³¹Since it was the Preparation Day, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses over the Sabbath (because that Sabbath was a particularly important day). They asked Pilate to have the men’s legs broken and the bodies taken away. ³²So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who was crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other man.

³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear. Immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵The one who saw it has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. ³⁶Indeed, these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, “Not one of his bones will be broken.” ³⁷Again another Scripture says, “They will look at the one they pierced.”

³⁸After this, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him remove Jesus’ body. When Pilate gave him permission, he came and took Jesus’ body away. ³⁹Nicodemus, who earlier had come to Jesus at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-two pounds.

⁴⁰They took Jesus’ body and bound it with linen strips along with the spices, in accord with Jewish burial customs.

⁴¹There was a garden at the place where Jesus was crucified. And in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴²So they laid Jesus there, because it was the Jewish Preparation Day, and the tomb was near.

Holy Saturday

*Christian Worship: Hymnal (2021) 1-Year Lectionary
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First Reading

Daniel 6:1–24

It seemed like a good plan to Darius to appoint one hundred twenty satraps over the kingdom. They were to rule throughout the kingdom. ²Above them there would be three supervisors (Daniel was one of them) to whom these satraps would report, so that the king would not suffer any loss. ³It came about that this Daniel distinguished himself above the supervisors and satraps, because there was an outstanding spirit in him. So the king intended to promote him so that he would be in charge of the entire kingdom.

⁴Then the supervisors and satraps kept trying to find a basis for an accusation against Daniel in regard to his administration of the kingdom. However, they were unable to come up with an accusation or any evidence of corruption, because he was trustworthy and no neglect of duty or evidence of corruption could be found against him. ⁵Then these men said, “We will not find any accusation to bring against this Daniel unless we find something against him concerning the law of his God.”

⁶So these supervisors and satraps came as a group to the king and said this to him, “Darius, Your Majesty, may you live forever! ⁷All the supervisors of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the advisors and the governors advise the king to establish and enforce a decree that prohibits anyone to pray a prayer to any god or person for thirty days except to you, Your Majesty. Anyone who does so will be thrown into the den of lions. ⁸Now Your Majesty, please establish the decree and sign a document that cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians that cannot be revoked.”

⁹That is why King Darius signed the written decree.

¹⁰Now, when Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house. It had windows on its upper story that opened toward Jerusalem. Three times each day he would get on his knees and pray and offer praise before his God. He continued to do that, just as he had been doing before this. ¹¹Then these men came as a group and found Daniel praying and seeking favor from his God.

¹²They then went and asked the king about the decree. “Your Majesty, did you not sign a decree that anyone who prays to any god or person for thirty days except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the den of lions?”

The king answered, “Indeed I did. The order is established as a law of the Medes and the Persians that cannot be revoked.”

¹³Then they responded to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, does not pay attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree that you signed. Instead, three times each day he is praying his prayers.”

¹⁴When the king heard this report, he was very upset about it, but he was determined to save Daniel. So until sunset he worked hard to rescue him. ¹⁵Then these men came as a group to the king

and kept saying to the king, “You know, Your Majesty, that it is the law of the Medes and the Persians that every decree or statute that the king establishes cannot be changed.”

¹⁶Then the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you.” ¹⁷A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the pit. The king sealed it with his signet ring and the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing could be changed with regard to Daniel’s situation. ¹⁸Then the king went to his palace. He spent the night without food, and no entertainment was brought before him. But he could not sleep.

¹⁹At dawn the king arose as soon as it was light and hurried to the lions’ den. ²⁰As he came near the pit, he cried out in a fearful voice. The king said to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God, whom you serve continually, able to rescue you from the lions?”

²¹Then Daniel spoke with the king. “Your Majesty, may you live forever! ²²My God sent his angel and shut the mouth of the lions. They have not hurt me because he found me innocent in his presence. Also before you, Your Majesty, I have committed no crime.”

²³Then the king was very glad and said that Daniel should be brought up from the pit. So Daniel was brought up from the pit, and he was unharmed because he trusted in his God.

²⁴The king gave the order, and those men who maliciously accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the lions’ den—they, their children, and their wives. They had not reached the bottom of the pit when the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

Second Reading

1 Peter 3:17–22

Indeed, it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil, ¹⁸because Christ also suffered once for sins in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in flesh but was made alive in spirit, ¹⁹in which he also went and made an announcement to the spirits in prison. ²⁰These spirits disobeyed long ago, when God’s patience was waiting in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In this ark a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. ²¹And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the body but the guarantee of a good conscience before God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. ²²He went to heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Gospel

Matthew 27:57–66

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered that it be given to him. ⁵⁹Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰and laid it in his own new tomb that he had cut in the rock. He rolled a large stone over the tomb's entrance and left. ⁶¹Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there sitting opposite the tomb.

⁶²On the next day, which was the day after the Preparation Day, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered in the presence of Pilate ⁶³and said, "Sir, we remembered what that deceiver said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴So give a command that the tomb be made secure until the third day. Otherwise his disciples might steal his body and tell the people, 'He is risen from the dead.' And this last deception will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵Pilate said to them, "You have a guard. Go, make it as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and posting a guard.