**The Season of Easter**

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

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**The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Sunrise)**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Exodus 14:10-15:1**

10As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians marching after them. The Israelites were terrified and cried out to the Lord. 11They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you took us to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? 12Wasn’t this what we said to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone. Let us serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.”

13Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm, and see the salvation from the Lord, which he will perform for you today. For the Egyptians you see today, you will never see again. 14The Lord will fight for you. You must wait quietly.”

15The Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to set out. 16As for you, lift up your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide the sea so that the Israelites can go through the middle of the sea on dry ground. 17I myself will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go into the sea after them, and I will gain glory through Pharaoh and his entire army, through his chariots and his charioteers. 18The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory through Pharaoh, his chariots, and his charioteers.”

19Then the Angel of God, who was going in front of the Israelite forces, moved and went behind them. The pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and stood behind them. 20It went between the Egyptian forces and the Israelite forces. The cloud was dark on one side, but it lit up the night on the other. Neither group approached the other all night long.

21Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all night long the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned the sea into dry land. The waters were divided. 22The Israelites went into the middle of the sea on dry ground. The waters were like a wall for them on their right and on their left. 23The Egyptians pursued them, and all of Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his charioteers went after them into the middle of the sea. 24During the last watch of the night, the Lord looked down on the Egyptian forces from the pillar of fire and cloud. Then he confused the Egyptian forces. 25He jammed their chariot wheels, and they had difficulty driving them. The Egyptians said, “We must flee from Israel, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt!”

26Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, and the waters will come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their charioteers.” 27So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea returned to its normal place. While the Egyptians were fleeing from it, the Lord threw the Egyptians into the middle of the sea. 28The waters came back and covered the chariots and the charioteers, the entire army of Pharaoh that went into the sea after the Israelites. Not even one of them survived.

29But the Israelites went through the middle of the sea on dry land, and the waters were like a wall for them on their right and on their left. 30On that day the Lord saved Israel from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31Israel saw the mighty hand which the Lord put into action against the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

15:1Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord. They said:

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

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

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Corinthians 15:1-11**

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

that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

4that he was buried,

that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

5and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve.

6After that he appeared to over five hundred brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, but some have fallen asleep. 7Then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles. 8Last of all, he appeared also to me, the stillborn child, so to speak. 9For I am the least of the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted God’s church. 10But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not ineffective. On the contrary, I worked more than all of them (and yet it wasn’t my doing, but it was the grace of God, which was with me, that did it). 11So whether it is I or they, that is what we preach, and that is what you believed.

**Holy Gospel**

**John 20:1-18**

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

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

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

10Then the disciples went back to their homes.

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

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

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

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

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

16Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

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

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

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

**The Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter Day)**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 10:34-43**

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

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

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

*or*

**Jeremiah 31:1-6**

At that time, declares the Lord,

I will be the God of all the families of Israel,

and they will be my people.

2This is what the Lord says.

The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness.

Israel had continual rest.

3The Lord appeared to me from a distance, saying:

I have loved you with an everlasting love.

I have drawn you with mercy.

4I will build you up again,

and you will be built up, O Virgin Israel.

You will pick up your drums again,

and you will go out to dance with those who are joyful.

5Again you will plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria.

The planters will plant and will enjoy its fruit.

6For there will be a day

when the watchmen on the hills of Ephraim cry out,

“Come, let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God.”

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**Colossians 3:1-4**

Therefore, because you were raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things. 3For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

**Holy Gospel**

**Matthew 28:1-10**

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2Suddenly, there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and going to the tomb, he rolled away the stone and was sitting on it. 3His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. 4The guards were so terrified of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6He is not here. He has risen, just as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7Go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has risen from the dead! And look, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.’ See, I have told you!”

8They hurried away from the tomb, with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9Suddenly Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!”

They approached, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him.

10Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go, tell my brothers that they should go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”

**The Second Sunday of Easter**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 5:29-42**

29But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than men. 30The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you arrested and killed by hanging him on a cross. 31God exalted him to his right hand as Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins. 32We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”

33When they heard this, they were furious and began making a plan to put them to death. 34But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was highly respected by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while.

35Then he said to them, “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you are about to do with these men. 36Some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, all his followers were scattered, and it all came to nothing.

37“After him, Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and led many people in a revolt. He also was killed, and all his followers were scattered.

38“So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and leave them alone! For if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail. 39But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop them. Perhaps you might even be found to be fighting against God!”

40They were convinced by him. They summoned the apostles, beat them, ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were considered worthy to suffer shame for the Name. 42Every day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Peter 1:3-9**

3Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he gave us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4into an inheritance that is undying, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. 5Through faith you are being protected by God’s power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed at the end of time.

6Because of this you rejoice very much, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various kinds of trials 7so that the proven character of your faith—which is more valuable than gold, which passes away even though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

8Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not see him now, yet by believing in him, you are filled with a joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

**Holy Gospel**

**John 20:19-31**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**The Third Sunday of Easter**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 2:14a, 36-41**

14Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and spoke loudly and clearly to them:

36“Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

37Now when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Gentlemen, brothers, what should we do?”

38Peter answered them, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

40He testified solemnly with many other words and was appealing to them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”

41Those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added.

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Peter 1:17-25**

17If you call on the Father who judges impartially, according to the work of each person, conduct yourselves during the time of your pilgrimage in reverence, 18because you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, not with things that pass away, such as silver or gold, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, like a lamb without blemish or spot. 20He was chosen before the foundation of the world but revealed in these last times for your sake. 21Through him you are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

22Since you have purified your souls by obeying the truth, resulting in sincere brotherly love, love one another constantly from a pure heart. 23For you have been born again, not from perishable seed but from imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24For:

All flesh is like grass,

and all its glory is like a flower of the field.

The grass withers,

and the flower falls,

25but the word of the Lord endures forever.

And this is the word that was preached to you.

**Holy Gospel**

**Luke 24:13-35**

13Now, on that same day, two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. 14They were talking with each other about all of these things that had happened. 15While they were talking and discussing this, Jesus himself approached and began to walk along with them. 16But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17He said to them, “What are you talking about as you walk along?” Saddened, they stopped.

18One of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

19“What things?” he asked them.

They replied, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. 20The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be condemned to death. And they crucified him. 21But we were hoping that he was going to redeem Israel. Not only that, but besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. 22Also some women of our group amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning. 23When they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. 24Some of those who were with us went to the tomb. They found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.”

25He said to them, “How foolish you are and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and to enter his glory?” 27Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

28As they approached the village where they were going, he acted as if he were going to travel farther. 29But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, since it is almost evening, and the day is almost over.”

So he went in to stay with them. 30When he reclined at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and began giving it to them. 31Suddenly their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. Then he vanished from their sight. 32They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was speaking to us along the road and while he was explaining the Scriptures to us?” 33They got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and those who were with them assembled together. 34They were saying, “The Lord really has been raised! He has appeared to Simon.” 35They themselves described what had happened along the road, and how they recognized him when he broke the bread.

**The Fourth Sunday of Easter**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

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**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 2:42-47**

42They continued to hold firmly to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers. 43Awe came over every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45They were selling their possessions and property and were distributing the proceeds according to what anyone needed.

46Day after day, with one mind, they were devoted to meeting in the temple area, as they continued to break bread in their homes. They shared their food with glad and sincere hearts, 47as they continued praising God and being viewed favorably by all the people. Day after day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Peter 2:19-25**

19For this is favorable: if a person endures sorrows while suffering unjustly because he is conscious of God. 20For what credit is it to you if you receive a beating for sinning and patiently endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and endure it, this is favorable with God.

21Indeed, 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. 25For you were like sheep going astray, but you are now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

**Holy Gospel**

**John 10:1-10**

“Amen, Amen,[[1]](#footnote-1) I tell you: Anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the door, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2The one who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3The doorkeeper opens the door for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he has brought out all his own sheep, he walks ahead of them. The sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6Jesus used this illustration in speaking to the people, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

7So Jesus said again, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: I am the door for the sheep. 8All who came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9I am the door. Whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

10“A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

**The Fifth Sunday of Easter**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / 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.

2So 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. 3Brothers, 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. 4But we will devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

5This 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.

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

7The 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.

8Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. 9Some 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.

7:2Stephen said, “Gentlemen, brothers and fathers, listen!

51“You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit! You are doing just what your fathers did. 52Which 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— 53you who received the law as transmitted by angels, but did not keep it.”

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

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

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

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Peter 2:2-10**

2Like newborn babies, crave the pure milk of the word so that by it you may grow up with the result being salvation. 3Certainly you have tasted that the Lord is good!

4As you come to him, the Living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious, 5you also, like living stones, are being built as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, in order to bring spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6For it says in Scripture:

See, I lay a stone in Zion,

a chosen and precious cornerstone,

and the one who believes in him will certainly not be put to shame.

7Therefore, for you who believe, this is an honor. But for those who do not believe:

The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,

8and,

a stone over which they stumble

and a rock over which they fall.

Because they continue to disobey the word, they stumble over it. And that is the consequence appointed for them.

9But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the people who are God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10At one time you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. At one time you were not shown mercy, but now you have been shown mercy.

**Holy Gospel**

**John 14:1-14**

“Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2In my Father’s house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that you may also be where I am. 4You know where I am going, and you know the way.”

5“Lord, we don’t know where you are going,” Thomas replied, “so how can we know the way?”

6Jesus said to him, “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through me. 7If you know me, you would also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

8“Lord,” said Philip, “show us the Father, and that is enough for us.”

9“Have I been with you so long,” Jesus answered, “and you still do not know me, Philip? The one who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I am telling you I am not speaking on my own, but the Father who remains in me is doing his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me. Or else believe because of the works themselves.

12“Amen, Amen,[[2]](#footnote-2) I tell you: The one who believes in me will do the works that I am doing. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.13I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.”

**The Sixth Sunday of Easter**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 17:16-31**

16While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was very distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17So he led a discussion in the synagogue with the Jews and those who feared God, as well as with those who happened to be in the marketplace every day.

18Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also debated with him. Some said, “What is this seed picker trying to say?” Others said, “He seems to be someone who is proclaiming foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

19They took him and brought him to the council of the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new teaching is that you are talking about? 20You seem to be bringing in some ideas that are strange to our ears, so we want to know what these things mean.” 21(All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there enjoyed doing nothing more than telling or listening to something new.)

22Then Paul stood up in front of the council of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. 23For as I was walking around and carefully observing your objects of worship, I even found an altar on which had been inscribed, ‘To an unknown god.’ Now what you worship as unknown—this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

24“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples made with hands. 25Neither is he served by human hands, as if he needed anything, since he himself gives all people life and breath and everything they have. 26From one man, he made every nation of mankind to live over the entire face of the earth. He determined the appointed times and the boundaries where they would live. 27He did this so they would seek God and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 28‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘Indeed, we are also his offspring.’

29“Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by human skill and planning. 30Although God overlooked the times of ignorance, he is now commanding all people everywhere to repent, 31because he has set a day on which he is going to judge the world in righteousness by the man he appointed. He provided proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Peter 3:13-22**

13Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? 14But even if you should happen to suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. Do not be afraid of what they fear, and do not be troubled.

15But regard the Lord, the Christ, as holy in your hearts. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that is in you. 16But speak with gentleness and respect, while maintaining a clear conscience, so that those who attack your good way of life in Christ may be put to shame because they slandered you as evildoers.

17Indeed, 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.

**Holy Gospel**

**John 14:15-21**

15“If you love me, hold on to my commands. 16I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. 17He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it does not see him or know him. You know him because he stays with you and will be in you.

18“I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. 19In a little while the world will see me no longer, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21The one who has my commands and holds on to them is the one who loves me. And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father. I too will love him and show myself to him.”

**The Ascension of Our Lord**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 1:1-11**

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

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

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

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

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

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**Ephesians 1:15-23**

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

**Holy Gospel**

**Luke 24:44-53**

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

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

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

**The Seventh Sunday of Easter**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Acts 1:12-26**

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

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

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

18“Now this man acquired a field with what he was paid for his wicked act. When he fell headfirst, his middle burst open, and all his intestines spilled out. 19This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, and so in their own language that field was called Akeldema, which means Field of Blood. 20Indeed, it is written in the book of Psalms:

May his residence be deserted.

Let there be no one dwelling in it.

And,

let someone else take his position.

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

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

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

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**1 Peter 4:12-19, 5:6-11**

12Dear friends, do not be surprised by the fiery trial that is happening among you to test you, as if something strange were happening to you. 13Instead rejoice whenever you are sharing in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

14If you are insulted in connection with the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or as a meddler. 16But if you suffer for being a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God in connection with this name. 17For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God. Now if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who disobey the gospel of God? 18And if it is hard for the righteous to be saved, where will the ungodly sinner end up? 19So let those who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to their faithful Creator while doing what is good.

5:6Therefore humble yourselves under God’s powerful hand so that he may lift you up at the appointed time. 7Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. 8Have sound judgment. Be alert. Your adversary, the Devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. 9Resist him by being firm in the faith. You know that the same kinds of sufferings are being laid on your brotherhood all over the world.

10After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who called you into his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you. 11To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

**Holy Gospel**

**John 17:1-11**

After Jesus had spoken these things, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you. 2For you gave him authority over all flesh, so that he may give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. 4I have glorified you on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5Now, Father, glorify me at your own side with the glory I had at your side before the world existed.

6“I revealed your name to the men you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me, and they have held on to your word. 7Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8For I gave them the words you gave me, and they received them. They learned the truth that I came from you. They believed that you sent me.

9“I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, because they are yours. 10All that is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine. And I am glorified in them. 11I am no longer going to be in the world, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by your name, which you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.”

**The Coming of the Holy Spirit: The Day of Pentecost**

*Lutheran Service Book 3-Year Lectionary, Year A*

*Evangelical Heritage Version®*

**Old Testament / First Reading**

**Numbers 11:24-30**

24Moses went out and told the people the Lord’s words. He gathered seventy men from the elders of the people and had them stand all around the tent. 25The Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him. He took from the Spirit that was on Moses and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do it again.

26Two men, however, remained in the camp. The name of one was Eldad, and the name of the other was Medad. They were listed among the elders, but they had not gone out to the tent. The Spirit rested on them, and they prophesied back in the camp. 27A young man ran and reported this to Moses. He said, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!”

28Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ aide from his youth, answered, “My lord Moses, stop them!”

29Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? If only all of the Lord’s people were prophets so that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!” 30Then Moses returned to the camp along with the elders of Israel.

**Epistle / Second Reading**

**Acts 2:1-21**

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2Suddenly a sound like the rushing of a violent wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3They saw divided tongues that were like fire resting on each one of them. 4They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, since the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak fluently.

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

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

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

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

Your sons and your daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams.

18Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

19I will show wonders in the sky above,

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and a rising cloud of smoke.

20The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

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

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

**Holy Gospel**

**John 7:37-39**

37On the last and most important day of the festival, Jesus stood up and called out, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! 38As the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from deep within the person who believes in me.” 39By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were going to receive. For the Holy Spirit had not yet come, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1. Usually, people say Amen at the end of a prayer. But Jesus used this Hebrew word at the beginning of a statement, which was unique. The inspired writer simply transliterated the Hebrew word that Jesus spoke, instead of using a Greek term. This translation does the same in English. The basic meaning is I solemnly tell you the truth. For more information about this, see FAQ #1 at wartburgproject.org/faqs [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
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