

Introduction

Of the Land and Seasons is intended for quarterly use, once each season. It is not intended to displace the liturgy and propers on most Sundays or on festival days. Based upon the ancient church tradition of quarterly observances known as the Ember Days, which celebrate the cycle of agricultural seasons, the themes and images developed in this service are those of life on the land: tending, shepherding, planting, nurturing, protecting, reaping, training. These observances affirm the sacredness of the farm, orchard, and ranch, and the holiness of the calling to tend God's garden and produce food for the world. At the same time, those whose callings lie elsewhere are reminded of the commission shared by all Christians to be diligent in the preparation of soil and training of branches to plant the word, to nurture growth in grace, and to be good stewards of the gifts of the Spirit, as well as of the land.

This is a revised edition of the resource first published in 1990. The pattern and language have been reshaped to coordinate with the liturgies of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Mark W. Oldenburg has written new thanksgivings at the table and some other resources for each season. Musical settings have been revised so that they may more easily be played with traditional folk music instruments, and a second canticle of praise has been added. A more diverse list of suggested hymns has been prepared. Beth Bergeron Folkemer and Herman G. Stuempfle Jr. (†2007) have written the texts of the liturgical song paraphrases. Traditional tunes were researched by Beth Folkemer and selected and arranged by Stephen and Beth Folkemer. New music was composed and arranged and the entire project coordinated by Stephen P. Folkemer, who also wrote the seasonal confessional prayers, prayers of the day, and proper prefaces, as well as the offering prayer and prayer after communion, and who selected the suggested readings.

It is suggested that a parish gathering, including a meal, a hymn sing, and devotions, take place during the week prior to the eucharistic celebration employing *Of the Land and Seasons*. A community meal focuses attention on the fruits of God's gracious providence. A songfest following the meal provides an opportunity for learning or review of the assembly's songs in *Of the Land and Seasons*. (It is preferable for parish musicians and choirs to lead this activity. A few well-known hymns relevant to the particular seasonal observance may be an effective warm-up.)

Suggested hymns for use in the seasonal Holy Communion services follow. All numbers refer to hymns in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

<i>For winter</i>	447	O Blessed Spring
	478	Father, We Thank You
	507	O God of Light
	513	Listen, God Is Calling
	583, 685	Take My Life, That I May Be
	714	O God of Mercy, God of Light
	745	Lord, Teach Us How to Pray Aright
	772	Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways
	796	How Firm a Foundation
	800	Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart
	804	Come Down, O Love Divine
	867	In Thee Is Gladness
	<i>For spring</i>	266
363		Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain
379		Now the Green Blade Rises
394		Hail Thee, Festival Day!
508		As Rain from the Clouds
516		Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast
547		Sent Forth by God's Blessing
661		I Love to Tell the Story
680, 681		We Plow the Fields and Scatter
837		Many and Great, O God
876		Let the Whole Creation Cry
879		For the Beauty of the Earth
880		O God beyond All Praising
881	Let All Things Now Living	
<i>For summer</i>	502	The King of Love My Shepherd Is
	508	As Rain from the Clouds
	557	Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun
	605	Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive
	712	Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service
	729	The Church of Christ, in Every Age
	767	Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me
	769	If You But Trust in God to Guide You
778	The Lord's My Shepherd	

781 Children of the Heavenly Father
782 My Shepherd, You Supply My Need
789 Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us
833 Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices
842 Oh, Worship the King

For fall

465 As the Grains of Wheat
486 God Extends an Invitation
523 Let Us Go Now to the Banquet
655 Son of God, Eternal Savior
679 For the Fruit of All Creation
686 We Give Thee But Thine Own
689 Praise and Thanksgiving
693 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
694 Sing to the Lord of Harvest
695 As Saints of Old
733 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
734 God, Whose Farm Is All Creation
839, 840 Now Thank We All Our God
858, 859 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty



Gathering

Confession and Forgiveness

The service may begin with confession and forgiveness, which may be led at the baptismal font.

The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

In the name of the Father,
and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

OR

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.

Winter

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.

We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,

by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

We have rejected your discipline.

We have avoided your pruning of our cluttered lives.

**We have failed to maintain the tools of stewardship, outreach, and witness
you have provided for the nurture of your church.**

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.

Forgive us, train us, and redirect us,

so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways,

to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Gathering Song

The time of gathering song may be brief or extended, and may include one or more of the following: hymns, psalms, a Kyrie, a canticle of praise.

During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

This Kyrie may be sung in dialogue between a soloist or small group of singers and the assembly.

Slowly (♩ = 76)

Cantor

D D A7 G D A

We pray for peace, O Lord, make plow-shares of our swords, make

D G D A D Bm A7 D

plow-shares of our swords: hear us when we cry to you.

Assembly

D A7 D G D A

Lord, have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us, Lord, have

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer
Music: MY FATHER, HOW LONG, African American spiritual
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Second Reading

Suggested readings:

Winter: Hebrews 12:3-15 *God's discipline yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness*

Spring: Romans 8:18-25 *Creation waits with eager longing*

Summer: Romans 8:35-39 *Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God*

Fall: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 *God will increase the harvest of righteousness*

The reading may be announced and concluded in the same way as the first reading.

Gradual Hymn

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel, singing this hymn.

$\text{♩} = 86$

D B m7 Em7 G

1 O God, whose word well - plant - ed yields fruit a hun - dred -
2 O God of seed and har - vest, of sun and soil and
3 O God, your fi - nal har - vest of his - t'ry's an - cient

fold, we praise your grac - es grant - ed to
rain, at - tend the word we sow, lest its
field will test with truth the proud - est that

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr.

Music: ABIDING PRESENCE, Stephen P. Folkemer

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Meal

Offering

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

During this time, the table is set. Assembly song or other music may accompany or follow the gathering of the offering.

After the offering is gathered, the assembly stands. Bread, wine, money, and other gifts may be brought forward.

♩ = 82

D Bm7 G A

1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your
2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good
3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be -

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer
Music: BARBRY ELLEN, traditional Appalachian
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We remember, therefore,
his prodigal planting of your word by his teaching,
his abundant giving of your food and health by his miracles,
his gracious offering of your forgiveness by his welcome.
We proclaim the passage of his last passover,
when for our sake he passed through death into life,
and sealed with the Spirit our own place as his companions.

Send your Spirit upon this meal,
that again we may pass through death into eternal life.
By your Spirit, unite us with all whom you have called into your light,
and strengthen us for service in the light of your love, as the body of your Son,
through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God,
with your Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now and forever.
Amen.

Summer

You are indeed holy, God of power and might,
and your glory fills the whole earth.
You created all that exists: stars and suns;
flowing streams and ripening grain;
abundance stored in the ground and beneath it;
the richness of life of plants and animals.
You created humans to care for and enjoy your creation,
and to give words to its song of praise.

When humanity fell into sin,
you were faithful to the promise of your covenant.
Through the ages you nurtured and nourished your chosen people,
using prophets and judges, story and poetry to guide and guard them.
And at the midsummer of the ages,
you sent your Son to bring your life to your people and your creation.

We Praise You for the Life That Stirs (first tune)

J = 140

G **Em7** **C** **G**

1 We praise you for the life that stirs when spring-time warms the
 praise you for the sum-mer sun, for rip'n-ing grain and
 sing your praise for au-tumn's glow, for har-vest yield from
 sing your praise through win-ter's night, when earth in fro-zen
 praise the Fa-ther, praise the Son, and praise the Spir-it,

Am **G** **C** **D** **G** **Em7**

sleep-ing earth; but most, we praise the grace that lures our
 length-ened days; but most, we praise you for the Son whose
 spring-time seed; up-on our hearts your grace be-stow till
 si-lence lies, for prom-ise of re-turn-ing light, for
 with the thron of saints and an-gels, joined as one in

C **G** **Am** **D** **G** **Em**

slum-b'ring souls to love and mirth, our slum-b'ring souls to
 light brings heal-ing in his rays, whose light brings heal-ing
 faith bears fruit in lov-ing deed, till faith bears fruit in
 life in Christ that nev-er dies, for life in Christ that
 grate-ful, ev-er-last-ing song, in grate-ful, ev-er-

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr.

Music: THE GLORIOUS HILL, Stephen P. Folkemer

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