

SUNDAYS AND SEASONS

YEAR A 2023

Sundays and Seasons

2023, Year A

Guide to Worship Planning

The Sundays and Seasons family of resources

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All Creation Sings (Augsburg Fortress, 2020): "Variable Thanksgiving at the Table."

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Preparing for the Season: Yolanda Denson-Byers, Tuhina Verma Rasche, Chad Fothergill, Zach Busch (Advent, Christmas, Time after Epiphany); Darla DeFrance, Erik Doughty, John Jahr, Kristen Gilje (Lent, Three Days, Easter); Kevin Vandiver, Nikkeya Berryhill, Sally Messner, Laura Sasaki Norton (Summer, Autumn, November)

Seasonal Worship Texts: Jonathan Niketh (Advent), Melissa Bills (Christmas), Anna Mercedes (Time after Epiphany), Justin Lind-Ayres (Lent), Paul Hoffman (Easter), Liv Larson Andrews (Summer), Craig F. Simenson (Autumn), Jay C. Mitchell (November)

Seasonal Rites: Marissa Sotos (Advent prayers), Melody Eastman (Advent midweek series), Blake Scalet (Lenten midweek series), Chris Duckworth (resources for Memorial Day and Veterans Day), Rebecca Liberty (Thanksgiving services in multi-religious settings)

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Let the Children Come: Elizabeth Hood, Janelle Rozek Hooper, Adam Lefever Hughes, Claire Schoepp

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Introduction

Welcome to the 2023 edition

For twenty-eight years, *Sundays and Seasons* has been a trusted worship planning resource, guiding the church's leaders as they prepare for worship in their communities. Whether you are encountering *Sundays and Seasons* for the first time or it has been essential for you for many years, you are welcome here! As it has been from the beginning, the Sundays and Seasons family of resources continues to support week-by-week planning for Lutherans with content and ideas shaped by the Revised Common Lectionary, the church year, and the assembly gathered around word and sacrament. Its robust family of resources includes the online planning tool, sundaysandseasons.com.

Meet the 2023 artist

Artist Mary Button created the cover art as well as the black and white interior art for this year's edition. Mary is a native Texan and graduate of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University (BFA), the Candler School of Theology at Emory University (MTS), and United Lutheran Seminary (MDiv). She is a candidate for ordained ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. An artist and activist, Mary's work explores the connections between biblical narratives and contemporary social justice issues. Mary's work has been exhibited across the United States and the United Kingdom, with exhibitions at the Museum of Biblical Art, the Church Center of the United Nations, and Wesley House at Cambridge University. She has written curricula on a number of social justice issues. Her Stations of the Cross series have been shown in hundreds of churches and explore themes like mass incarceration, mental illness, climate change, migration, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. You can see her work at marybutton.com and you can read more about her process of creating the art for *Sundays and Seasons* on page 312 of this volume.

Updates to Assembly Song listings

In early 2021 we surveyed *Sundays and Seasons* users about the usefulness and organization of the assembly song suggestions. Hundreds responded with suggestions for improvement (thank you!). Based on your feedback, we have refreshed the content and organization of the assembly song listings.

We have *increased* the number of suggestions for the gathering, sending, and hymn of the day. Offering song suggestions are now provided *seasonally* (not weekly) on the first day of

each season. When a hymn relates closely to the day's readings or psalm, an abbreviation (1R, PS, 2R, or HG) is indicated to the left of the title. A key to those abbreviations is provided at the bottom of the page each week.

The Additional Assembly Songs heading organizes by title hymns and songs from many collections, sources, and styles, including two suggestions each day from one of five ecumenical hymnals: *Glory to God* (GTG, Presbyterian Church USA), *Worship*, Fourth Edition (W4, Roman Catholic), *Voices Together* (VT, Mennonite Church USA), *Lift Up Your Hearts* (LUYH, Christian Reformed Church in North America and Reformed Church in America), and *The New Century Hymnal* (NCH, United Church of Christ). As a reminder, *all* of the source, publisher, voicing, and instrumentation abbreviations in the music listings are decoded in the back of this volume (pp. 310–311).

Note that the suggestions under both the Additional Assembly Songs and Hymn of the Day headings could be used in another place in the service as desired and appropriate for your local context. In place of weekly psalmody and acclamation suggestions, an expanded essay in the front of this volume (pp. 16–19) provides guidance for singing the psalms and lists several psalmody resources to use throughout the year. The essay "Singing around the Table" (pp. 20–21) is updated from the volume *The Sunday Assembly* (Augsburg Fortress, 2008) and offers suggestions for communion song throughout the year from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and *All Creation Sings*.

All Creation Sings

All Creation Sings, the new worship and song supplement to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, was published in November 2020. This is the second edition of *Sundays and Seasons* to include references to *All Creation Sings* (abbreviated ACS). You will find references to its contents throughout this volume including in the topical essays, seasonal introductions, seasonal rites, and weekly assembly song suggestions. In addition, the midweek services offered for Advent (pp. 30–33) and Lent (pp. 105–109) build upon the Service of Word and Prayer in *All Creation Sings*. It is our hope that you and your assemblies will come to know the rich and timely contents of *All Creation Sings*.

With the whole church

Sundays and Seasons would not exist without the creative talents of many people across the church. Pastors, musicians,

deacons, members of worship committees and altar guilds, seminary professors, and visual artists contribute their wisdom and ideas. They work full-time, part-time, or are volunteers in their churches. They serve large and small congregations and campus ministries in rural areas, small towns, cities, and suburbs in the United States, Canada, and abroad. They come from various cultural contexts and with different approaches to worship in word and sacrament. Over the past twenty-eight years literally hundreds of people have contributed to *Sundays and Seasons*. Here's this year's group.

Topical essays

Matthew L. Skinner (Preaching Matthew in Year A) is professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul and scholar for adult education at Westminster Presbyterian in Minneapolis. He co-hosts a weekly podcast called Sermon Brainwave. **Cheryl Dieter** (Sing the Psalms!) served for more than 27 years as minister of worship and music at Trinity Lutheran in Valparaiso, Indiana, and now serves as business manager for the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. **Lorraine Brugh** (Singing around the Table) co-author of *The Sunday Assembly* and contributor to *Fully Conscious, Fully Active: Essays in Honor of Gabe Huck* (2020) is a senior research professor in the music department and adjunct theology professor at Valparaiso University.

Preparing for the season

Yolanda Denson-Byers (Advent/Christmas/Time after Epiphany preaching) is a missional leader with a heart for social justice issues who for more than twenty years has been exercising her gifts through the vocations of pastor, evangelist, campus minister, hospice chaplain, and bereavement counselor. **Tuhina Verma Rasche** (Advent/Christmas/Time after Epiphany intercessory prayer) has a complicated relationship with Jesus. She was a devout Hindu, is ordained in the ELCA, and is the small group minister at University AME Zion Church in Palo Alto. **Chad Fothergill** (Advent/Christmas/Time after Epiphany assembly song) lives on Shades Mountain, one of the southernmost ripples of the Appalachian chain near Birmingham, Alabama. When not studying, leading, or crafting assembly song, he may be found in the library or garden. **Zach Busch** (Advent/Christmas/Time after Epiphany worship space) serves as minister of liturgical worship at Bethel Lutheran in Madison, Wisconsin. **Darla DeFrance** (Lent/Three Days/Easter preaching) is the founding pastor of Columbia City Church of Hope, an ELCA congregation in Seattle. She lives in the neighborhood with her family. **Erik Doughty** (Lent/Three Days/Easter intercessory prayer) is a pastor and chaplain in Minneapolis. **John Jahr** (Lent/Three Days/Easter assembly song) serves as director of music and organist at Good Shepherd Lutheran in Raleigh, North Carolina. **Kristen Gilje** (Lent/Three Days/Easter worship space) paints large works on silk.

Her mission is to communicate the sacred presence of God in all creation by connecting images of nature with liturgical rites and rituals through art. She lives in Bellingham, Washington. Rev. **Kevin Vandiver** (Summer/Autumn/November preaching) is assistant to the bishop in the Metro New York Synod and a PhD student in practical theology with a specialization in homiletics at Princeton Theological Seminary. Rev. **Nikkeya Berryhill** (Summer/Autumn/November intercessory prayer) is a writer, life/grief coach, creator, justice-minded dreamer, wonderer, questioner, deep thinker, and deep laugh-er. She loves crafting rituals, writing liturgy, practicing embodiment, and helping people realize their connections to the Divine. **Sally Messner** (Summer/Autumn/November assembly song) serves as cantor at Holy Cross Lutheran in Livonia, Michigan, and is founding director of the Elm Ensemble, a liturgical project that aims to keep the church in dialogue with diverse voices. **Laura Sasaki Norton** (Summer/Autumn/November worship space), an artist from the Pacific Northwest, studies at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, exploring theology as expressed in bold calligraphy and activist art in the pursuit of liberating, loving justice.

Seasonal worship texts

Jonathan Niketh (Advent) has served as pastor of First Lutheran in Lynn, Massachusetts, since 2008 and is chair of the New England Synod's worship and music committee. **Melissa Bills** (Christmas) (she/her) is director of college ministries and college pastor at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. She is passionate about how thoughtful, creative worship and faith formation can empower the church to work for justice. **Anna Mercedes** (Time after Epiphany) is associate professor of theology at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. **Justin Lind-Ayres** (Lent) serves as co-pastor at Grace University Lutheran in Minneapolis and is grateful for the collaborative voices within this resource. **Paul Hoffman** (Easter) is a retired minister of word and sacrament living in Mukilteo, Washington. He serves as interim transition pastor at Luther Memorial Lutheran in Seattle. **Liv Larson Andrews** (Summer) is pastor of Salem Lutheran in the West Central neighborhood of Spokane. She lives in Spokane with her spouse and two sons. Rev. **Craig F. Simenson** (Autumn) lives in Minneapolis with his wife Hannah, daughters Leona and Ruth, and dog Óscar. He is a parent, chaplain, and member of his neighborhood church, Calvary Lutheran (ELCA). **Jay C. Mitchell** (November) is a baptized child of God serving as pastor of Christ Ascension in Philadelphia.

Liturgical, theological, and sensitivity review of the seasonal worship texts was provided by **Yolanda Denson-Byers**, pastor of Faith Lutheran in Becker, Minnesota, and **Jennifer Phelps**, pastor of Trinity Lutheran in Perkasio, Pennsylvania.

Seasonal rites

Chris Duckworth (resources for Memorial Day and Veterans Day) is pastor at New Joy Lutheran in Westfield, Indiana, and served as a chaplain in the Indiana Army National Guard for six years. He deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in 2019. **Melody Eastman** (Advent midweek service) has been pastoring congregations for 34 years and serves at Grace Lutheran in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. She enjoys tent camping, live music, and playing bodhrán at traditional Irish music sessions. **Rebecca Liberty** (Thanksgiving services in multi-religious settings) is a Lutheran pastor who lives with her family in Bangor, Maine. She is a discernment coach, group facilitator, speaker, writer, and adjunct faculty at the University of Maine in Orono. **Blake Scalet** (Lenten midweek service) is pastor of Saint John's Lutheran in Summit, New Jersey. **Marissa Sotos** (Advent prayers) is pastor/mission developer at Tree of Life Lutheran and liturgical design coordinator at Central Lutheran. She lives in Minneapolis with her wife Maggie and their menagerie.

Prayers of intercession

Marda Messick (Advent 1—Baptism of Our Lord) is a retired ELCA pastor living in Tallahassee, Florida, where she is a member of St. Stephen Lutheran. Her poetry has been published in *The Christian Century*. **Erica Gibson-Even** (Epiphany 2—Transfiguration) is pastor for discipleship and education at Christ Lutheran in Valparaiso, Indiana. She enjoys trying to keep up with her teenagers, music, books, gardening, and cooking. **Josh Evans** (he/they) (Ash Wednesday—Easter Day) serves as pastor of St. Philip Lutheran in Glenview, Illinois, and is director of communications for the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. Josh is also an active member of Proclaim. **Jessica Davis**, MA (Easter 2—Day of Pentecost), is a Christian educator, church consultant, and freelance writer and speaker living in the Philadelphia area. When not doing churchy things, she can be found knitting or working as a freelance makeup artist. **Javen Swanson** (Holy Trinity—Lectionary 13) serves as associate pastor at Gloria Dei Lutheran in St. Paul. Formed by liturgical and educational experiences in Minnesota and California, Dr. **Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero** (Lectionary 14—20) is assistant professor of worship and liturgy, and co-director of worship life at United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg and Philadelphia. Rev. **Carla Christopher Wilson** (Lectionary 21—26) serves as assistant to the bishop in charge of justice ministries for the Lower Susquehanna Synod. A former poet laureate and inclusion educator, Carla lives with her wife in Hanover, Pennsylvania. **Day Hefner** (Lectionary 27—30) is an LSTC alum, a former Peace Corps volunteer, and pastor of St. John's Lutheran in Schuyler, Nebraska. She's known for her laugh and her total lack of control around craft supplies. **Elizabeth Damico-Carper** (All Saints—Lectionary 34), a musician and pastor, has served at Holden Village, Westwood Lutheran in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, and now at Memorial Lutheran in

Afton, Minnesota. Elizabeth travels through life with daughter Micaela and husband Paul.

The prayers of intercession were reviewed by four liturgical, theological, and sensitivity reviewers: **John Weit** serves as executive for worship of the ELCA. A rostered deacon and a graduate of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, John previously served as musician for congregations in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. **Priscilla Paris-Austin** is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran in Seattle. Pastor **Jennifer Phelps** serves Trinity Lutheran in Perkasié, Pennsylvania. She served previously as associate for worship resources at the ELCA Churchwide Office and editor of *CrossAccent*, the journal of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. **David L. Nevergall** is senior pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran in Akron, Ohio. He is husband, father, grandfather, friend, preacher, prayer, musician, reader, writer, hiker, occasional fisherman, but mostly, Christ-follower.

Ideas for the day

Rev. Dr. **Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar** serves two ELCA congregations in Corydon, Indiana. Evangeline also taught courses on prophetic preaching, engaged solidarity, feminist theology, and hermeneutics for more than twenty years in four seminaries. **Michael Coffey** is pastor of First English Lutheran in Austin, Texas. He is the author of *Mystery without Rhyme or Reason: Poetic Reflections on the Revised Common Lectionary*. **Carolyn Albert Donovan** (she/her/hers) is a minister of word and sacrament and has a love of meaningful ritual, a passion for justice, and a slightly nerdy sense of humor. **Keith C. Fair** is pastor for faith formation and discipleship at St. Matthew Lutheran in York, Pennsylvania. In addition to writing, he enjoys cooking, carpentry, running, and being a dad and husband. **Brad Froslee** serves as senior pastor at St. Michael's Lutheran in Roseville, Minnesota. Interests include preaching, worship, justice work, traveling, genealogy, and poetry projects. He lives in Minneapolis with his husband and son. **Heidi Heimgartner** is senior pastor of First Lutheran in Blooming Prairie, Minnesota. She thanks all health care families for their incredible sacrifices for the common good. You are vessels of God's healing grace. **Jim Honig** is pastor of Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran in Door County, Wisconsin. Jim is also a writer and community activist, founding the Door County Housing Partnership to address local affordable housing challenges. **Alexandra Jacob** serves as associate pastor for families, youth, and children in Minneapolis, where she lives with her husband Andy. A former church musician, Alexandra enjoys exploring the intersections between worship and the arts. **Tamika Jancewicz** is associate pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran in Ellicott City, Maryland. **Henry Martinez** serves as pastor of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran in Beaverton, Oregon. He has recently taken up sketching as a hobby and enjoys time outdoors with his family. Pastor **Scott A. Moore**

is missionary and vicar at St. Michael's Church Thuringia, an Episcopal-Anglican Ministry in Weimar and Erfurt, Germany. He lives in Erfurt. **Joel Nau** is married to Annie and is the father of two adult children. He serves as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran in Bettendorf, Iowa. Rev. **Jacqueline Pagel** served an ELCA congregation for 10 years. Since 2019, she has served as bishop's associate in the Grand Canyon Synod strengthening the candidacy process there and throughout Region 2 and the wider ELCA. **Bristol Reading** is pastor of St. Luke Lutheran in St. Paul. She lives in the Twin Cities with her husband, Michael, and daughter, Magnolia. **Emily Stelling** is pastor of Bethany and Pilgrim Lutheran Parish in northwest Wisconsin. She was ordained March 14, 2020, just in time for the pandemic. Pastor **Beth Woodard** serves as a hospice chaplain in Newport News, Virginia.

Connections with creation

Rev. Dr. **Benjamin Stewart** (Advent 1—Transfiguration; Lectionary 22—Lectionary 34) is associate professor of worship at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and author of *A Watered Garden: Christian Worship and Earth's Ecology*. **Margaret Bullitt-Jonas**, PhD (Ash Wednesday—Easter 6), is an Episcopal priest, author, retreat leader, and climate activist. Her latest book (co-edited) is *Rooted & Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*. Website: RevivingCreation.org. Deacon **Sarah Delap Bowers** (Ascension—Lectionary 21) serves as creative director for the South Carolina Synod. Her other (unofficial) calling is to serve alongside her husband and two children as they own and operate their family's multispecies regenerative farm.

Let the children come

Elizabeth Hood (Advent—Transfiguration) serves as director of CYFM at Grace Lutheran in Palo Alto. She also serves as co-chair of the Synod Youth Team and is the hospitality lead for the Youth Ministry Extravaganza. Deaconess **Claire Schoepp** (Ash Wednesday—Easter 7) has served many years in children and family ministry and is enjoying a new project as director of operations at Holy Trinity Lutheran in Chicago. Look for her at the livestream desk. **Janelle Rozek Hooper** (Day of Pentecost—Lectionary 22) serves as pastor of faith formation at New Hope Lutheran in Missouri City, Texas as well as program director for ministry with children for the ELCA. She's a wife, mother, and aspiring children's book writer. **Adam Lefever Hughes** (Lectionary 23—Christ the King) serves as director of music at St. Peter's Lutheran in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Music suggestions

Julie Grindle (assembly song) is a lifelong Lutheran church musician, singer, and teacher serving as assistant to the bishop in the Upstate New York Synod. She also contributes to the Prelude Music Planner blog and other publications. **Daniel Schwandt** (assembly song) is a doctoral candidate at

the University of Notre Dame and is director of music at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic in Elkhart, Indiana. He's also university organist at Lawrence University, Appleton, Wisconsin. **David Bjorlin** (additional assembly songs) is a teaching fellow at North Park University and a worship pastor at Resurrection Covenant Church in Chicago. He is also a hymnwriter whose first collection, *Protest of Praise*, was published in 2020. **Justin Eller** (additional assembly songs) serves as assistant to the bishop for Latino Ministry Strategy in the Southeastern Synod and as associate pastor of Amazing Grace Lutheran in Lawrenceville, Georgia. Está agradecido por esta oportunidad de colaborar. **Stephanie Luedtke** (additional assembly songs) is a minister and teacher who is always looking for creative new ways to engage people in growing in their faith. She loves speculative fiction and dreams of the church of the future. **Justin Rimbo** (additional assembly songs) is a deacon in the ELCA and serves as director of worship arts at Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran in Prior Lake, Minnesota. He and his partner Angie are parents to Owen and Zoe. **Kevin Barger** (choral) is president of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. He serves as director of music and organist at Epiphany Lutheran in Richmond, Virginia. **Michael Schaner** (children's choir) serves as director of music ministries at St. Luke's Lutheran, and as collaborative keyboard artist and university organist at Carroll University, both in Waukesha, Wisconsin. **Shari Shull** (keyboard/instrumental), deacon, serves Agnus Dei Lutheran in Gig Harbor, Washington, as minister of music, organist on the new Fritts organ, Opus 47, and choir/handbell director. **Kathy Lowrie** (handbell) serves as handbell editor, publication designer, and instrumental music editor for Choristers Guild. She has worked in the field of church music for more than forty years.

You make it happen

Sundays and Seasons continues to be a collaborative endeavor each year. In our editorial conversations here at Augsburg Fortress we regularly evaluate the scope, format, and quality of the content provided in these pages. Your feedback—collected from you firsthand at events around this church, from postings in various forms of social media, from phone calls and emails to our sales and service representatives, and from surveys—helps us make decisions about how to adjust content so it is even more helpful. You, dear partners in ministry, make this resource happen. We welcome your ideas for future content, your suggestions for potential contributors (maybe you!), and your constructive feedback. Thank you for the trust you place in the changing roster of contributors who offer their time and talent to the whole church through *Sundays and Seasons*. Even more, thank you for the many and various ways in which you care for the Sunday assembly and its worship of the triune God.

Jennifer Baker-Trinity and Suzanne Burke, editors



Preparing for Advent

Preaching

Advent is a season of waiting. “Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord” (James 5:7, Advent 3). As we declare good news, let us encourage people to slow down, take notice, and wait. Is there teaching about meditation or prayer that can be included in your homilies? Would it be helpful to insert moments of silence into your preaching so that the congregation can hear and feel what silence “sounds” like?

As we remind people, “You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour” (Matt. 24:44, Advent 1), how might we inspire folks to prepare a radical welcome for Jesus in our homes, churches, and societies? Just as Joseph had to overcome disbelief and societal expectations to do as the angel commanded him, taking Mary as his wife (Matt. 1:24, Advent 4), how can we help our children, youth, and families prioritize Jesus during this Advent season?

Let us particularly honor children, not as the church of tomorrow, but of today. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of a baby who changed the world, how will our families “see the glory of the LORD, [and] the majesty of our God” (Isa. 35:2, Advent 3)? Perhaps you will uplift the prayer we offer for the newly baptized, “Sustain them with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence” (ELW, p. 231; Isa. 11:2-3, Advent 2).

As we reflect upon baptism, remember that we “proclaim Christ in word and deed, in care for others and the world God made, and in work for justice and peace (ELW, p. 228). Romans 15 says, “May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another. . . . Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” (Rom. 15:5, 7, Advent 2). As those who announce God’s word, let us entreat others to repent, confess, make reparation, and seek reconciliation. In the words of John the Baptist, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matt. 3:2, Advent 2). How is God challenging us to bravely resist the individual, corporate, and systemic sin that has so easily beset us in the form of racism, sexism, homophobia, and the like?

As preachers we must contextualize our prophetic witness to our neighborhoods. We are also entreated to speak boldly about how we have historically associated light with holiness and darkness with sin. You may use the entire Romans 13

pericope for fodder. For example, “For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:11-12, Advent 1). Let us contemplate how our Indigenous neighbors, and those of color, hear these kinds of messages during the Advent season. Is there a way to preach so that you intentionally extol *holy darkness* and the partnership of God’s darkness and light throughout the cosmos? Will you paint a picture of Jesus as a brown-skinned, Palestinian, Jewish baby boy? How might this imagery arouse your congregation to reimagine the unity of the human family and our obligations to one another?

Intercessory Prayer

Waiting is a long and arduous process. With waiting come anxiety, anticipation, and restlessness. Western civilization promotes a culture of immediacy, which can lead to such conflicted emotions in waiting. There are so many negative connotations to waiting, like waiting in line at the DMV, waiting for a diagnosis, waiting at the deathbed of a beloved, and waiting for the inevitable. How do we turn away from the idol of immediacy—a characteristic of white supremacy culture—and turn to the one for whom we wait in these in-between spaces? Taking time to be in prayer, to be in deep, intentional, and meaningful conversation with God is a way to embody this time of waiting. During this Advent season, taking the time in both worship and personal practice for intercessory prayer reveals that time is folded in upon itself as we pray in thanksgiving for those who have gone before and for those who are to come. Have the community take a deep, collective breath between intercessions. Do not be afraid to have extended pauses between intercessions. Such pregnant pauses embody a practice of waiting and anticipation.

As we pray for the coming of Emmanuel, we must also realize that how we pray and the words we use in prayer matter deeply. Words signifying dark/light and good/bad dichotomies do great harm to siblings of color. Advent is a reminder that there is sacredness in the dark. The darkness is good, beautiful, and holy—we must dare ourselves to pray boldly where the Holy fully and entirely resides, especially in dark sacred spaces. It is good to remember that Jesus, the savior of the world, was safely guarded in the darkness of Mary’s womb before entering

into the world filled with light that would also betray him in the light. If possible, dim the lights during intercessory prayer so worshippers may pray and ponder in semidarkness.

Advent is an opportunity to reset as we enter a new liturgical year. It is also a time to return to those beginning places that are bare and raw; this is a time to strip down our prayer language. Use words that you would use speaking to a close personal friend about joys, sorrows, and everything in between: “Help us, O God” could change to, “Hey, God, we need you.”

Preparation of intercessory prayers may include asking:

- Where are we waiting for God to show up?
- For what do we most yearn in our relationships with God and neighbor?
- What will bring about justice that blooms like Isaiah’s desert (Isa. 35:1-2, Advent 3)?

Advent reminds us that there are finite days in our finite lives until Christ comes again in Christ’s own infinite being. A seasonal reset paired with our finiteness leads to intercessions and responses that can be changed to reflect the newness and finiteness of this liturgical season, recognizing that our prayers are both for a moment in time and also connect us to the communion of saints beyond space and time.

Assembly Song

Before making plans about what your assembly will sing during Advent, it may be worthwhile—especially at the start of a new three-year lectionary cycle—to first consider some New (Liturgical) Year’s resolutions. As a season of promise and anticipation, Advent not only initiates the “Incarnation” cycle of the church year (Advent, Christmas, Time after Epiphany), but also prepares us to recognize the incarnation and manifestation of Jesus in our own lives and communities. How can worship planning move beyond casual “plug-and-play” approaches and embrace the formative and communal power of music described in resources such as *Principles for Worship*? How do songs—even those familiar “favorites”—point beyond themselves toward the full body of Christ and its myriad expressions? These are complex and unwieldy questions, but worthy of sustained attention by pastors, musicians, and all who participate in worship planning.

More practically, what would it look like for pastors, musicians, and worship leadership teams to begin planning by together reading and discussing the season’s lectionary texts and commentaries from *Sundays and Seasons: Preaching*? What would it look like for meetings, Bible studies, and other gatherings outside of worship to include singing? What songs bear the weight of repetition, preparing hearts and minds to welcome Jesus in all times and places? To adapt a familiar saying: we are what we sing, and the corporate body of the singing assembly requires a nourishing diet and regular exercise. Advent invites us to ponder repetition, patience, and all that is required for careful preparation (James 5:7-10, Advent 3).

Although “waiting” is a common Advent theme, careful reading of the year A texts reveals much movement: “Come, let us go” proclaims the prophet (Isa. 2:3, Advent 1); “come to Zion with singing” (Isa. 35:10, Advent 3); “Go and tell” (Matt. 11:4, Advent 3). Even the “stir up” prayers for each Sunday suggest that there’s more to the season than quietly waiting to sing Christmas carols. Consider songs such as “Freedom Is Coming” (ACS 903) that reflect this anticipatory sense of movement—of impatience, of stirring up, of praying with our feet. Perhaps “Many will come” (ACS 982) could be sung each week as the table is set, an allusion to the Isaiah reading on the first Sunday of Advent. In what other ways can your assembly move, branch out, and grow (Isa. 11:1, Advent 2) into its preparation for Christ’s coming?

Since the Name of Jesus will fall on Sunday, January 1, 2023, consider song choices that amplify or unpack the “names for our God” (ELW 524, st. 2) heard throughout the Advent readings—Emmanuel, Immanuel, Messiah, Branch, Root of Jesse. Perhaps the refrain “Come, Emmanuel” can be excerpted from “Come now, O God” (ACS 902) as a prayer response: a leader sings the first measure and all respond with the second measure, either in unison or in harmony.

Outside of worship, encourage the singing of shorter songs such as “Wait for the Lord” (ELW 262) or “He came down” (ELW 253) at staff meetings or in homes as Advent wreaths are lit. Equip children to help lead these songs. Preparation should not be confined to worship; we ready ourselves to respond to Christ’s coming in all times and places, in mysterious and unexpected ways. Come, Lord Jesus!

Worship Space

Advent is a compact and rich season, and its lectionary presents an array of themes and emotions. As you plan, consider how what you establish visually for the season of Advent can evolve into Christmas and the time after Epiphany. How can the worship space hold emotion, wonder, and prophecy, carrying them to birth in the season of Christmas, and into deeper manifestation after Epiphany? Some Advent themes are simpler and more easily understood: waiting, anticipation, preparation. Others are more complex and require more pondering: problematic interpretations of dark and light imagery, Mary’s call to justice, and hope in times of increasing peril. As we live into the endless unrolling of time as a human family and as God’s creation, we grow in our understanding of their nuances.

The psalms are so often our scriptural language for emotion, and joy shows up in the very first Sunday of Advent. The first verse of Psalm 122 gives us something to work with right away: “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD’” (ELW). How can our worship spaces inspire the kind of gladness the psalmist feels? Blue, the color for Advent, is a powerful, intriguing color, able to evoke diverse emotions. Use it liberally and make bold choices with bright, complex

hues such as turquoise, cerulean, aqua, indigo, and ultramarine. Add contrasting orange, gold, or pink accents to create a colorful display that dazzles the eye and inspires joy. Other possibilities:

- Add one or two bright fabric drapes to the altar and pulpit paraments.
- Add color and radiance to your worship space with tealights inside glass vessels of varying colors.
- Add colorful ribbons or fabric to your processional cross.
- Invite an intergenerational group to cut out lettering or paint a banner to display the first verse of Psalm 122.
- Movement can express joy: Fans can move fabric or ribbon hangings. Tambourines, shakers, drums, and bells add aural movement. If your musicians can be seen by the assembly, they could move in rhythm to the music, too. If it's not already in your usual worship practice, add a procession with cross and candles to the gathering song. Such a procession could culminate in lighting the Advent wreath.

Consider how to introduce darkness into your worship space, and how the assembly might embrace darkness as a mood, as an ambiance, and as a place where God dwells in beauty and mystery.

- Could your gathering song be sung without a printed or projected worship aid so that the gathering rite could occur in semidarkness? In many worship spaces, creating semidarkness in morning light is a challenge. Don't use the overhead lights; instead, use can uplights (a type of indoor spotlight) along the walls or behind the altar to create a gradation of light and bright focal points that throw darkened areas into contrast. If you use an Advent wreath, lighting it in a darkened part of the room will give it emphasis.
- A darkened space naturally invites silence. If you are using a confession and forgiveness during Advent, use it in dimmed light, and build in more silence than usual.
- If it is not your practice already, add a midweek evening worship service to this season to take advantage of a naturally darkened space. See the evening options in Holy Communion Setting 12 and the contemplative Service of Word and Prayer in *All Creation Sings* for some newer possibilities for such a service.
- If you are leaning into a theme of joy for the season and darkness feels too somber, create some blue light. Placing gel filter sheets over can lighting creates color and bedecks a darkened room like a jewel.

Seasonal Checklist

- Order candles and greens for the Advent wreath, or ask members of the congregation to make or donate these items. Consider a smaller, table-sized wreath for gatherings outside the principal worship space.
- Recruit volunteers of all ages to help prepare the worship space for Advent.
- Use the gathering song rubric in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* to help you plan your Advent liturgy: "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" (p. 98). This carefully crafted instruction invites flexibility and creativity in the liturgy. If lighting an Advent wreath is the only thing you do that is unique to the season, let this invitation tap into new possibilities.
- Work with children's and family ministries to prepare resources that support household prayer.
- Encourage the use of the O Antiphons (versified in "O come, O come, Emmanuel," ELW 257) at home from Saturday, December 17, until Friday, December 23. Sing the entire hymn on the fourth Sunday of Advent.
- Schedule time after the fourth Sunday of Advent to prepare the worship space for Christmas liturgies.



November 27, 2022

First Sunday of Advent

The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation. *Alleluia.* (Ps. 85:7)

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 2:1-5

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

Psalm 122

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." (Ps. 122:1)

Romans 13:11-14

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

Matthew 24:36-44

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

Preface Advent

Color Blue

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God of all, your children everywhere cry out for mercy. Awaken the global church to the urgent needs of our time. Break down barriers of culture and custom and unite people of all faiths in your redemptive and healing work. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of wonder, the earth's beauty and abundance is your gift. Teach us your ways of sharing resources and caring for life. Guard fragile habitats, preserve the wild places, and protect endangered plants and animals. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of peace, you judge the nations. Beat our weapons into tools for serving the neighbor. Strengthen the resolve of all who work for an end to war. We pray for lasting peace in the land of Jesus' birth (*other places of conflict may be named*). God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of lovingkindness, you desire fullness of life for everyone. Fill those who hunger. Comfort the grieving and attend to those near death. Bring help and hope to any who are sick or needing your care (*especially*). God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of community, you are present when we gather in your name. Guide congregations in transition or conflict (*especially*). Give wisdom to congregational councils, call committees, and ministry leaders. Keep us alert to unexpected opportunities for mission. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of promise, your goodness is everlasting. We give thanks for the lives of the faithful who now rest in you. We trust that you will bring us into the company of all the saints with rejoicing. God, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Ideas for the Day

- Time is a funny thing. The church isn't the only place we hear that the idea of linear time is too neat to meet the careening trajectory of human life and history. Fans of the BBC television series *Dr. Who* will recognize the Doctor fumbling to explain how their time-traveling police box works by saying time isn't linear but is rather "a big ball of wibbly-wobbly, timey-wimey stuff." More recently, on ABC's *The Good Place*, the strange but comical beings that inhabit the human afterlife explain that time isn't a line, but more of a "Jeremy Bearimy," since time actually moves in a wild curlicue that resembles a name written in cursive English. Where do we experience time that doesn't move in neat, even ticks of the clock?
- The liturgical year turns again. It is Advent. The church helps us remember that time is not linear, but a circle, a spiral. We move forward, and somehow we also return again and again to where we have been before. Near the end of his poetic work *The Four Quartets*, T. S. Eliot writes, "What we call the beginning is often the end / And to make an end is to make a beginning. / The end is where we start from" (in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 6th ed., vol. 2, ed. M. H. Abrams, New York: W. W. Norton, 1993, p. 2169). Arriving at this moment in the year, perhaps it is timely to offer space in worship where we are invited to see the nonlinear, messy timelines of our lives gathered afresh into God's time. Before we leap to the manger, we may do well to wonder for a moment what kind of ending we hope this new beginning will be.
- In the gospel, Jesus compares the Son of Man to a thief who is coming at an unexpected time. In an article titled "That Thieving Christ and Advent," Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber wonders if "maybe we should make Advent lists—kind of like Christmas lists, but instead of things we want Santa to bring us, we write down what we want Christ to take from us" (sojo.net/articles/thieving-christ-and-advent). Reflecting on time can bring us to a place of pain because, looking into the past, we may feel the weight of regret, shame, and trauma. How might we invite people to wait for Jesus, not in fear, but hoping he will come and steal everything holding us captive?

Connections with Creation

In ways more profound than many Christians today realize, the entire Christmas cycle pivots around winter solstice, the year's shortest day and longest night. The themes of darkness and night already appear in this first Sunday of Advent, weeks

before solstice: night far gone, waking from sleep, a thief in the night. In fact, winter solstice was the original Christmas Day. While solstice now occurs in Israel/Palestine and throughout Earth's northern hemisphere around December 21, when Christians first began celebrating Christmas, winter solstice was set on their calendar on December 25, making the longest night the center of the season. When we take care to subvert racially weaponized binaries, Advent can be a sacramental way to enter Earth's annual cycle of darkness. Earth and sky become expansive liturgical space, helping us ask: How shall we pray, wait, hope, and act with integrity as we move into our longest night and deepest darkness?

Let the Children Come

Beep! Beep! Beep! When we hear an alarm clock, it calls us to wake up. Sometimes it's easy to rise. Other times we want to stay asleep. Advent is a time to wake up and prepare for the birth of baby Jesus as we wait and wonder about Jesus' coming. Children learn how Advent wreaths and calendars help us see how much longer we need to wait. We can invite them to name what they are waiting for and acknowledge how waiting can be hard but also exciting. Waiting feels different when you know something special is coming.

Assembly Song Offering Song for Advent

Come now, O Prince of peace ELW 247, LS 13
 There is a longing in our hearts ACS 1078, sts. 1, 4
 Unexpected and mysterious ELW 258, sts. 1, 3
 Un nuevo amanecer/A dawn of hope LLC 469


Gathering

HG Lo! He comes with clouds descending ELW 435, LBW 27
 Come now, O God ACS 902
 HG Each winter as the year grows older ELW 252, WOV 628
 2RHG Awake, my soul, and with the sun ELW 557, LBW 269
 Fling wide the door ELW 259, LBW 32

Hymn of the Day

These suggestions reflect most closely the day's readings and themes and could be used as the hymn of the day or in another appropriate place in the service.

2RHG Wake, awake, for night is flying ELW 436, LBW 31 WACHET
 AUF
 HG Rejoice, rejoice, believers ELW 244, LBW 25 HAF TRONES LAMPA
 FÄRDIG
 HG My Lord, what a morning ELW 438, TFF 40, WOV 627
 BURLEIGH
 HG Come to be our hope, O Jesus/Tú, Jesús, nuestra esperanza
 ACS 904, GS2 18 JESUS NOSSA ESPERANÇA
 1R We are waiting for Jesus ACS 905, MSB2 S543 JESUS BRINGS
 PEACE

1R = relates to 1st reading 2R = relates to 2nd reading  = relates to hymn of the day
 PS = relates to psalm HG = relates to holy gospel P = available in Prelude Music Planner

Communion

- HG Creator of the stars of night ELW 245, LBW 323
In silence we wait ACS 998, SP 17

Sending

- 2R HG Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding! ELW 246, LBW 37
2R HG Keep your lamps trimmed and burning ACS 949
HG The King shall come ELW 260, LBW 33, LS 5
2R HG Rise, O Sun of righteousness ELW 657

Additional Assembly Songs

These suggestions are also suitable for the day or season and could be used as gathering, sending, offering, or communion song as appropriate.

- HG Now is the moment to wake from sleep MSB2 S537
Come by here TFF 42, 43
We are awaiting the coming MSB2 S536
Blessed is the one ACS 929
PS Me alegré cuando me dijeron LLC 413
Awaken, sleepers W4 393
HG The days are surely coming GTG 357
Advent of Our God (All Glory) (Grace/Coia, *Advent*)
thecalendaryears.com
Even So, Come (Tomlin/Ingram/Cates) CCLI
PS God of This City (Boyd/McCann/Jordan/Comfort/Kernohan/Bleakley) CCLI
1R Mountain (Torwalt/Wickham) CCLI
HG Soon (Ligertwood) CCLI
2R Wake Up (Leonard/Jordan/Chaffer) CCLI

Music for the Day

Choral

- P ♪ Bach, J. S. "Zion Hears the Watchmen Singing" from *Bach for All Seasons Choirbook*. U, kybd. AFP 9780800658540.
P ♪ Hobby, Robert A. "My Lord, What a Morning." SATB, solo, pno. MSM 50-6059.
P ♪ Miller, Aaron David. "Rejoice! Rejoice!" 2 pt mxd, pno. AFP 9780800678555.
P ♪ Nelson, Ronald A. "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers." SAB, pno or org, opt assembly. AFP 9781451424027.

Children's Choir

- P Helgen, John. "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning." U, pno, opt desc. AFP 9780800677497.
P Hopson, Hal H. "Prepare Ye the Way" from *Children Sing in Worship*, vol. 3. U/2 pt, kybd. AFP 9781451462548.
P Horman, John D. "Isaiah Had a Dream from God" from *Sing the Stories of God's People*. U, kybd. AFP 9780806698397.

Keyboard / Instrumental

- ♪ Bach, J. S. "Wachet auf" from *Schübler Chorales*. Org. Various editions.
P ♪ Billingham, Richard. "Burleigh" from *Augsburg Organ Library: Advent*. Org. AFP 9780800658953.
P ♪ Organ, Anne Krentz. "Burleigh" from *Piano Reflections on Advent Tunes*. Pno. AFP 9781451462647.
P ♪ Raabe, Nancy. "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" from *Grace & Peace, Volume 7: Hymn Portraits for the Christmas Cycle*. Pno. AFP 9781451499124.

Handbell

- P ♪ Ingram, Bill. "My Lord, What a Morning" from *Morning Songs*. 2-3 oct hb or hc, L1. CG CGB574.
P ♪ Larson, Katherine J. "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying." 4-5 oct, L4. AFP 9780806698076.
P ♪ Moklebust, Cathy. "Rejoice, Rejoice (Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers and O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)" from *Celebrate the Season*. 2-3 oct or 3-5 oct, L2. CG CGB785, CGB786.

Wednesday, November 30

Andrew, Apostle

Andrew was the first of the Twelve. He is known as a fisherman who left his net to follow Jesus. As a part of his calling, he brought other people, including Simon Peter, to meet Jesus. The Byzantine church honors Andrew as its patron and points out that because he was the first of Jesus' followers, he was, in the words of John Chrysostom, "The Peter before Peter." Together with Philip, Andrew leads a number of Greeks to speak with Jesus, and it is Andrew who shows Jesus a boy with five barley loaves and two fish. Andrew is said to have died on a cross saltire, an X-shaped cross.

Saturday, December 3

Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, died 1552

Francis Xavier (SAYV-yehr) was born in the Basque region of northern Spain. Francis's native Basque language is unrelated to any other, and Francis admitted that learning languages was difficult for him. Despite this obstacle he became a missionary to India, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Philippines. At each point he learned the local language and, like Martin Luther, wrote catechisms for the instruction of new converts. Another obstacle Francis overcame to accomplish his mission work was a propensity to seasickness. All his travels to the Far East were by boat. Together with Ignatius Loyola and five others, Francis formed the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Francis spoke out against the Spanish and Portuguese colonists when he discovered their oppression of the Indigenous people to whom he was sent as a missionary.

June 18, 2023

Time after Pentecost — Lectionary 11



Moses tells the Israelites that they are called to be a priestly kingdom and a holy people. Jesus sends out the disciples as laborers into the harvest. In baptism we too are anointed for ministry, sharing God's compassion with our needy world. From the Lord's table we go forth to proclaim the good news, to heal the sick, and to share our bread with the hungry.

Prayer of the Day

God of compassion, you have opened the way for us and brought us to yourself. Pour your love into our hearts, that, overflowing with joy, we may freely share the blessings of your realm and faithfully proclaim the good news of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. The kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news. *Alleluia.* (Mark 1:15)

Readings and Psalm

Exodus 19:2-8a

At Sinai God assured Israel, "You shall be my treasured possession," and commissioned them to serve as mediating priests for the nations. The people commit themselves completely to God's will.

Psalm 100

We are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture. (Ps. 100:3)

Romans 5:1-8

We are no longer God's enemies but have peace with God because we were brought into a right relationship with God through Christ's death.

Matthew 9:35—10:8 [10:9-23]

The mission of Jesus' followers is to continue the mission of Jesus himself. Here, he instructs his first disciples as to how they might proclaim the gospel through their words and deeds.

Semicontinuous Reading and Psalm

Genesis 18:1-15 [21:1-7]

God, in the form of three messengers, announces to Sarah and Abraham that they will have a child. Sarah, because of her advanced age, laughs at this seeming impossibility. But nothing is impossible for God, and in due course Isaac is born (Gen. 21:1-7). Now, Sarah confesses, everyone will share in her joyous laughter.

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

I will call on the name of the LORD. (Ps. 116:13)

Preface Sundays

Color Green

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence.

For the church here and around the world, we pray. Seek out disciples and send them out with authority to proclaim good news, bring healing where there is pain, and counter the forces of evil. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For the earth and all its creatures, we pray. Equip farmers, farm workers, and all who labor on the land to produce a harvest. Nourish crops with ample rainfall and abundant sunshine. Restore lands ruined by pollution or misuse. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those who govern, we pray. Empower those who seek peaceful solutions to conflict and embolden those who advocate for all who are oppressed. Work through systems of government to establish justice throughout the world. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For those who suffer, we pray. Accompany those who feel helpless, alone, or abandoned. Embrace any who long for successful treatment for mental illness or freedom from addiction. Heal those who are sick (*especially*). God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

For fathers and father figures, we pray. Console all who long to be fathers, children estranged from their fathers, anyone grieving the death of a father, and fathers who have lost a child. Draw near to all for whom this day stirs up difficult emotions. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

For all the saints, we give thanks. Receive into your eternal care all those who have died (*especially*) and fill us with hope that does not disappoint. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Ideas for the Day

- Throughout the Torah, God reminds the chosen people of Israel that they have been chosen in order to be a blessing to the world. The Israelites' status as "a priestly kingdom and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:6) is not a self-serving designation. Rather, their calling is to pursue justice and righteousness in order that the communities around them might also flourish. Similarly, in today's gospel, Jesus invites his disciples to turn outward and work for the healing of communities to which they travel. Invite worshipers to consider whether their own chosen communities exist primarily for the sake of their members, or if they extend outward into the wider world. Some communities are insular by necessity and design, but others might receive a challenge from today's readings to cultivate a wide welcome.
- In today's gospel, Jesus employs harvest imagery to describe the disciples' call to ministry. As you prepare for worship, consider how this image might sound to different members of your congregation. Are you in an agricultural or farming community where many members engage in the daily work of planting and harvesting? Are you in an urban area where members are very removed from the work of cultivating the land? How might the socio-economic demographics of your congregation's members affect how worshipers receive this image? Consider using a piece of art that depicts harvest-time as part of the worship service, perhaps as bulletin cover art or as an image projected on a screen. Search "harvest" on the Vanderbilt Divinity Library's Art in the Christian Tradition web resources (library.vanderbilt.edu).
- American writer and theologian Frederick Buechner (b. 1926) famously stated that Christian vocation is where one's deep gladness meets the world's deep hunger. In today's gospel, Jesus sends his disciples out, inviting them to fulfill their own vocation in the world by partnering with him in the work of healing and proclamation. For most of us, we do not receive a direct, audible call from God as the disciples did, instructing us to follow a particular vocational path. Rather, we listen intently to the Spirit's work in our lives, seeking out wise friends who help us to discern the way. This week, spend time thinking about vocation. What is your congregation's vocation, the place where its deep gladness meets your community's deep need? What does your community need to do in order to fulfill that vocational calling?

Connections with Creation

Jesus tells the disciples that the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. He then calls them together and sends them out. In baptism we are also called and sent to care for our neighbors, live out our faith, and labor in the field. This call continues to be an agricultural one. Food and water are necessities for human survival, yet many do not have access to clean drinking water or healthy food. The items most often donated to feeding ministries are highly processed with a long shelf life. Though great in a pinch, these are like an adhesive bandage on a broken bone. In the name of Jesus Christ we are called to radical love, not just enough love to get by. As people of faith, how can we work together toward sustainable agriculture that cares for the earth and for our neighbor, so that all have access to healthy and fresh food?

Let the Children Come

Name the twelve disciples of Jesus: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Thaddeus, Simon, and Judas. Point out any artwork, stained glass, or other items in your sanctuary depicting any disciples and discuss them with kids. Then wonder together whether the disciples knew some things about Jesus after spending so much time with him: "I wonder if they knew his favorite food. What about his favorite time of day?" There is power in wondering about (with no wrong answers) and imagining what life was like for Jesus and his twelve friends.

Assembly Song Gathering

PS All people that on earth do dwell ELW 883, LBW 245

HG God is here! ELW 526, WOV 719

HG Rise up, O saints of God ELW 669, LBW 383

1R O Holy Spirit, root of life ELW 399, WOV 688

For Such a Time as This ACS 1003

HG Oí la voz que decía/¿A quién he de enviar? LLC 484

Hymn of the Day

These suggestions reflect most closely the day's readings and themes and could be used as the hymn of the day or in another appropriate place in the service.

HG Lord, you give the great commission ELW 579, WOV 756

ABBOT'S LEIGH

HG In Christ called to baptize ELW 575 ST. DENIO

HG Hope of the world ACS 1085, LBW 493 DONNE SECOURS

HG The Son of God, our Christ ELW 584, LBW 434 SURSUM CORDA

We all are one in mission ELW 576, WOV 755 KUORTANE

Communion

HG I love to tell the story ELW 661, TFF 228, LBW 390, LS 154

HG Father, we thank you ELW 478, WOV 704

1R = relates to 1st reading

2R = relates to 2nd reading

♫ = relates to hymn of the day

PS = relates to psalm

HG = relates to holy gospel

P = available in Prelude Music Planner

Sending

- HG Hallelujah! We sing your praises/*Haleluya! Pelo tsa rona*
ELW 535, LLC 420, TFF 158, WOV 722
- HG O Zion, haste ELW 668, LBW 397
- HG Let us enter in ACS 985
- HG May the God of hope go with us/*Dios de la esperanza* ACS 984
- HG Anhelo trabajar por el Señor LLC 564

Additional Assembly Songs

These suggestions are also suitable for the day or season and could be used as gathering, sending, offering, or communion song as appropriate.

- 2R God forgave my sin in Jesus' name TFF 187
- PS Oh, sing jubilee to the Lord LBW 256
- HG Go in peace and serve the Lord W&P 46, LS 111
- HG Where cross the crowded ways of life/*Entre el vaivén de la ciudad* LLC 513
- HG Come, labor on NCH 532
- HG O Christ, who called the Twelve W4 768
- 2R By Grace We Have Been Saved (Rundman, *A Heartland Lit-urgy*) jonathanrundman.bandcamp.com
Ever (Heatherlyn) convergencemp.com
- 2R Grace Abounds (Fielding/Ussher) PraiseCharts
- PS We Belong to God (Witkowski) deannawitkowski.com
Who You Say I Am (Fielding/Morgan) PraiseCharts
- PS You Are Good (Houghton) CCLI

Music for the Day

Choral

- P ♪ Davis, Taylor. "Hope of the World." SAB, pno. AFP 9781451401004.
- P ♪ Martinson, Joel. "We All Are One in Mission" from *Augsburg Easy Choirbook*, vol. 2. 2 pt mxd, org. AFP 9780800677510.
- ♪ Pelz, Walter L. "The Son of God, Our Christ." SATB, kybd, C inst. CPH 984013.
- P Wold, Wayne L. "Enviado: The Lord Now Sends Us Forth." 2 pt, kybd, opt perc. AFP 97814506422022.

Children's Choir

- P Burrows, Mark. "Make a Joyful Noise." U/2 pt, pno, opt tpt. CG CGA1397.
- P Patterson, Mark. "Lord, We Give Thanks" from *ChildrenSing: Seven Anthems for Elementary Age Singers*. U, pno. AFP 9780800677695.
- P Shaw, Timothy. "A Psalm of Thanksgiving." U/2 pt, pno, opt C inst. CG CGA1321.

Keyboard / Instrumental

- ♪ Carter, John. "St. Denio" from *From the British Isles: Nine Traditional Melodies for Solo Piano*. Pno. MSM 15-851.
- P ♪ Childs, Edwin T. "By All Your Saints" from *Nordic Hymns for Organ*, vol. 2. Org. AFP 9781506447988.
- ♪ Hobby, Robert A. "Abbot's Leigh" from *Two English Hymn Tune Settings*. Org. MSM 10-856.
- P ♪ Raabe, Nancy. "Sursum corda" from *Grace & Peace, Volume 2: Hymn Portraits for Piano*. Pno. AFP 9780800679019.

Handbell

- P ♪ Krug, Jason W. "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" from *All Praise to Thee*, vol. 2. 12 bells (F5 to C7, 3 octaves), L2. CG CGB1018.
- P ♪ McChesney, Kevin. "All Things Bright and Beautiful and O Lord, Now Let Your Servant." 3-5 oct, L2+. AFP 1110687.
- P ♪ Page, Anna Laura. "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" from *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*. 12 bells (F5 to C7) 3 octaves, opt pno, L2. CG CGB1153.

Wednesday, June 21

Onesimos Nesib, translator, evangelist, died 1931

Onesimos Nesib (oh-NESS-ee-mus neh-SEEB) was born into the Oromo people of Ethiopia. He was captured by slave traders and taken from his homeland to Eritrea, where he was bought, freed, and educated by Swedish missionaries. He translated the Bible into Oromo and returned to his homeland to preach the gospel. His tombstone includes a verse from Jeremiah 22:29, "O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord!"

Saturday, June 24

John the Baptist

The birth and life of John the Baptist is celebrated exactly six months before Christmas Eve. For Christians in the Northern Hemisphere, these two dates are deeply symbolic. John said that he must decrease as Jesus increased. According to tradition, John was born as the days are longest and then steadily decrease, while Jesus was born as the days are shortest and then steadily increase. In many countries this day is celebrated with customs associated with the summer solstice.

Key to Hymn and Song Collections

All published by Augsburg Fortress unless otherwise indicated.

*Indicates resources whose hymns or psalm refrains are, at least in part, included in the online worship planning tool sundaysandseasons.com.

ACS*	All Creation Sings	LBW*	Lutheran Book of Worship	OBS*	O Blessed Spring: Hymns of Susan Palo Cherwien (vol. 1)
ASG*	As Sunshine to a Garden	LLC*	Libro de Liturgia y Cántico	OLS*	Of the Land and Seasons
CBM*	Come, Beloved of the Maker: Hymns of Susan Palo Cherwien (vol. 2)	LS*	LifeSongs	PBS*	Peace Be Still: Hymns of Susan Palo Cherwien (vol. 3)
DATH*	Dancing at the Harvest	LUYH	Lift Up Your Hearts (Faith Alive Christian Resources)	PPSJ*	Psalm Project: Shout for Joy
ELW*	Evangelical Lutheran Worship	MSB1*	Music Sourcebook for Lent and the Three Days	PPSR*	Psalm Project: Sharing the Road
GS1	Global Songs, Local Voices	MSB2*	Music Sourcebook for All Saints through Transfiguration	SC	Singing in Community
GS2*	Global Songs 2: Bread for the Journey	MSB3*	Music Sourcebook for Life Passages: Healing, Funeral, and Marriage	SP*	Singing Our Prayer: A Companion to Holden Prayer Around the Cross
GS3	Global Songs 3: Pave the Way	NCH	The New Century Hymnal (Pilgrim Press)	TFF*	This Far by Faith
GTG	Glory to God (Westminster John Knox)			VT	Voices Together (MennoMedia)
JBS*	Justice, Like a Base of Stone: Hymns of Hope and Transformation			W&P*	Worship & Praise
				W4	Worship, Fourth Edition (GIA)
				WOV*	With One Voice

Key to Music for Worship

acc	accompaniment	fl	flute	oct	octave	tbn	trombone
bar	baritone	glock	glockenspiel	opt	optional	timp	timpani
bng	bongos	gtr	guitar	orch	orchestra	tpt	trumpet
br	brass	hb	handbells	org	organ	trbl	treble
bsn	bassoon	hc	handchimes	perc	percussion	tri	triangle
cant	cantor	hp	harp	picc	piccolo	U	unison
ch	chimes	hpd	harpsichord	pno	piano	UE	upper elementary
cl	clarinet	hrn	horn	pt	part	vc	violoncello
cont	continuo	inst	instrument	qnt	quintet	vcs	voices
cym	cymbal	kybd	keyboard	qrt	quartet	vla	viola
DB	double or string bass	LE	lower elementary	rec	recorder	vln	violin
dbl	double	M	medium	sax	saxophone	wch	windchimes
desc	descant	MH	medium high	sop	soprano	ww	woodwind
div	divisi	ML	medium low	str	strings	xyl	xylophone
drm	drum	mxd	mixed	synth	synthesizer		
eng hrn	English horn	narr	narrator	tamb	tambourine		
fc	finger cymbals	ob	oboe	tba	tuba		

Key to Music Publishers

ABI	Abingdon	FLG	Flagstaff Publications	OCP	Oregon Catholic Press
AFP	Augsburg Fortress	FTT	From the Top Music	OXF	Oxford University Press
AG	Agape (Hope)	GIA	GIA Publications	PAR	Paraclete
AGEHR	American Guild of English Handbell Ringers	HAL	Hal Leonard	PET	C. F. Peters
ALF	Alfred	HIN	Hinshaw Music Co.	PRE	Presser
AUR	Aureole	HOP	Hope	RR	Red River Music
BAR	Bärenreiter	HWG	H.W. Gray (Warner)	RW	Ringing Word Publications
B&H	Boosey & Hawkes	INT	Integrity (Capitol CMG)	SEL	Selah
BP	Beckenhorst Press	JEF	Jeffers	SF	SoundForth Publications
CG	Choristers Guild	KJO	Kjos	SHW	Shawnee
CPH	Concordia	LOR	Lorenz	SMP	Sacred Music Press (Lorenz)
DUR	Durand (Presser)	MAR	Maranatha	WAL	Walton
EAR	EarthSongs	MFS	Mark Foster (Shawnee)	WCC	World Council of Churches
ECS	E. C. Schirmer (MorningStar)	MMP	Masters Music Publication	WJK	Westminster John Knox
FB	Fred Bock Music	MSM	MorningStar Music	WLP	World Library Publication
		NOV	Novello (Shawnee)		

A Note on Music Listings

Please note that some choral and instrumental music in the day listings may be out of print. We are unable to research whether musical pieces from other publishers are still available. Why do we still list music if it is out of print? Primarily because many music planners may have that piece in their files, and can consider it for use. If a planner wishes to use a piece that has gone out of print, that may still be possible. For Augsburg Fortress resources, call 800/421-0239 or email copyright@1517.media to inquire about onetime reprint rights or to see whether a piece may be available on preludemusicplanner.org, or by print on demand.



About the Art

It has been a joy to develop and create the visual art for this 3-year cycle of *Sundays and Seasons*. The cover artwork is inspired by worship in Lutheran communities. The 3-year series of artworks depicts joyous gatherings around the baptismal font (year A), around the communion table (year B), and around the proclamation of the word in preaching and song (year C). Created during the COVID-19 pandemic when worshiping communities were not able to gather in person or able to gather in limited and distanced ways, the artwork speaks to the incarnational nature of our gatherings around word and sacrament and our yearning for this way of being together.

My process for creating the cover artwork begins with simple black and white drawings on vellum tracing paper which I apply to a masonite panel with an acid-free adhesive. Then, I begin the process of adding collaged elements to the artwork. I have a large collection of handmade and hand dyed papers that I use for this step. The papers are cut to fit within the patterns of the vellum drawing and layered onto the panel. This process takes several days. The last step in the creation of the cover artworks is the application of alcohol inks. The tracing paper's vellum finish allows the ink to absorb slowly. I often use several different colors at one time which creates a lovely watercolor effect.

The cover artwork is an invitation to look deeper into the black and white interior line art. In each of the cover artworks you'll find the waves of baptismal waters, swirling patterns of the Holy Spirit, and sweeping tendrils of floating music. I drew on diverse sources of inspiration for the line art, including early Flemish crucifixes, first-century footwear, Roman coins, and the natural world. As a lifelong stargazer, you'll find that there are a lot of stars too! The Mexican muralist Diego Rivera's sketches of family life inspired the line art depicting a mother with her children. In drawing from so many sources, I hope that I have captured just a little bit of the majestic breadth and depth of God's incredible creation. I hope this art blesses you as much as it blessed me!

—Mary Button
marybutton.com