



Holy Week

March 20-27, 2016

This photo was taken on our trip to Columbia in 2014 on the underground Salt Cathedral of Zipaquita.

Location: Salt Cathedral of Zipaquirá, Columbia

Photography by: Bonnie Karhukangas

From the ELCIC Revised Common Lectionary weekly Bulletin series available for order at <http://www.churchbulletins.ca/>

Readings for Holy Week, year C

+ Passion Sunday - Sunday, March 20, 2016 (S/P)

Luke 19:28-40 (Processional Gospel)

Isaiah 50:4-9a / Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11 / Luke 22:14—23:56 or Luke 23:1-49

Monday in Holy Week - Monday, March 21, 2016 (S/P)

Isaiah 42:1-9 / Psalm 36:5-11

Hebrews 9:11-15 / John 12:1-11

Tuesday in Holy Week - Tuesday, March 22, 2016 (S/P)

Isaiah 49:1-7 / Psalm 71:1-14

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 / John 12:20-36

Wednesday in Holy Week - Wednesday, March 23, 2016 (S/P)

Isaiah 50:4-9a / Psalm 70

Hebrews 12:1-3 / John 13:21-32

Maundy Thursday - Thursday, March 24, 2016 (S/W)

Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14 / Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 / John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Good Friday - Friday, March 25, 2016 (No Colour)

Isaiah 52:13—53:12 / Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 / John 18:1—19:42

++ Easter Vigil - Saturday/Sunday, March 26/27, 2016 (W/GO)

Genesis 1:1—2:4a and Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26

Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13 and Psalm 46

Genesis 22:1-18 and Psalm 16

Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 and Exodus 15:1b-13, 17-18
Isaiah 55:1-11 and Isaiah 12:2-6
Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6 or Baruch 3:9-15, 32—4:4 and Psalm 19
Ezekiel 36:24-28 and Psalm 42 and 43
Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Psalm 143
Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Psalm 98
Jonah 1:1—2:1 and Jonah 2:2-3 (4-6) 7-9
Isaiah 61:1-4, 9-11 and Deuteronomy 32:1-4, 7, 36a, 43a
Daniel 3:1-29 and The Song of the Three Children 35-65
Romans 6:3-11 / Luke 24:1-12 or John 20:1-18

+ Easter Day - Sunday, March 27, 2016 (W/GO)

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 65:17-25 / Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15:19-26 or Acts 10:34-43 / John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12

Connecting Words

The earth quakes, an angel appears like lightning and white as snow, guards shake and fall like dead men. But the angel tells the Marys not to be afraid, Jesus has been raised! and to go quickly and tell his disciples. As they go, Jesus meets them and they worship him. Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia! Meet and welcome and worship the risen Jesus! Welcome all!

Alternate Prayers of the Day:

Holy Week - Three Days

Almighty God,
your name is glorified
even in the anguish of your Son's death.
Grant us the courage
to receive your anointed servant
who embodies a wisdom and love
that is foolishness to the world.
Empower us in witness
so that all the world may recognize
in the scandal of the cross
the mystery of reconciliation. Amen

Other Thematic Prayers:

Faithful Midwife,
as you delivered the Hebrews safely
out of the long labor of slavery,
so, morning by morning,
you draw us forth into the new day.
Surround us with a cloud of witnesses,
and sustain us by your powerful word,
that, in the night of loneliness and fear,
we, being weary, may not lose heart
but push toward the joy that is to come,
laboring with Christ
to give birth to your promised kingdom. Amen.

Creator of the Universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war, and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Christ our God,
your love is poured out in death for our sakes.
Hold us in your embrace
as we wait for Easter's dawn.
Comfort us with the promise
that no power on earth, not even death itself,
can separate us from your love;
and strengthen us to wait
until you are revealed to us
in all your glory. Amen

Holy Thursday

God of the covenant,
as we celebrate the beginning of the paschal feast,
we come to the table of the Lord
in whom we have salvation, life, and resurrection.
Renew the power of this mystery
in our service to one another and to you,
so that with Christ we may pass from this life
to the glory of your kingdom. Amen.

The Resurrection of the Lord Easter Day

Mighty God,
in whom we know the power of redemption,
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning
when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,
we will share in his resurrection,
redeemed and restored to the fullness of life
and forever freed to be your people. Amen

Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

Good Friday

We veil our faces before your glory,
O Holy and Immortal One,
and bow before the cross of your wounded
Christ.
With angels and archangels,
we praise you, our Mercy,
and we bless you, our Companion,
for in our brokenness
you have not abandoned us.
Hear us as we pray through Jesus, our high
priest:
heal all division,
reconcile the estranged,
concole the suffering,
and raise up to new life
all that is bound by death. Amen.

We exult in your love,
O God of the living,
for you made the tomb of death
the womb from which you bring forth your Son,
the first-born of a new creation,
and you anointed the universe
with the fragrant Spirit of his resurrection.
Make us joyful witnesses to this good news,
that all humanity may one day
gather at the feast of new life
in the kingdom where you reign
for ever and ever. Amen.

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All communities of the ELCIC are encouraged to acknowledge the traditional first nation's lands on which they gather. If this has not been your community's practise, Advent may be a time to begin. An ELCIC resource for identifying connections with first nation's communities in your area is at: <http://www.elcic.ca/reconciliation/>

Various forms of acknowledgement are possible: a simple form can be spoken and printed in the Sunday Bulletin such as: We acknowledge with respect and gratitude that we gather on the traditional lands of:

Liturgical Possibilities

1. **Since pussy willows** are readily available in most of Canada at this time of year, try using willow branches instead of palms for Palm (Willow) Sunday. And speaking of willows, I have seen them used in a cumulative way during the season of Lent. Fashion the willows into a "wreath shape" (looks like a crown of thorns) and hang them over purple fabric. One week add black ribbon, or during Holy Week add a strip of red ribbon. Another week add a willow cross. Bring willow branches inside towards the end of Lent and force them to "bloom" for Easter. Talk to the children about this death to life image. For Easter Sunday, hang a long piece of white fabric behind the wreaths and replace the red and black ribbon with a long piece of gold fabric looped over the willow wreath.
2. **Growing Easter grass:** 2 weeks before Easter hand out small baggies filled with seeds (wheat, barley or grass) and directions (ie: choose a pot or bowl, fill with soil, sprinkle seeds on top, cover with thin layer of soil and water carefully so as not to disturb the seeds. Place in sunny window and water or mist each day.) Grass should appear within 3-4 days. Bring your pots of Easter grass to church on Easter morning. Nothing beats the new growth green.
3. **Easter Vigil:** Consider making this an ecumenical service. Invite other congregations to attend. Invite your colleagues in ministry to participate in the planning. They bring a richness and newness to the liturgy with their contributions. Each portion of the liturgy can be layered with words and symbols and movement and song. Begin early in the evening so that it is family friendly. Retell the stories in a creative way using presenters from each of the churches and including storytellers of different ages. Involve the children in the storytelling, in the procession of gifts, raising the alleluia banner, filling the font with water. It won't be perfect but through fire and water and storytelling and feasting you will experience the risen Christ like never before.
4. A **"better late than never" idea** but food for thought for next year. Make an Alleluia banner out of white fabric. (I have used half a twin bed sheet.) In large letters print "Alleluia" down one side of the banner. On the Sunday prior to Lent, place the banner and felt pens on a table. Ask everyone to "sign" the banner, not with their name, but with the word "Alleluia". On Shrove Tuesday bury the banner (in the ground or, if you live in a cold region "bury" it in a box inside) and refrain from saying the "A" word during Lent. (This is especially hard during worship planning.) It's a good exercise in helping one to remember the different feeling of the Lenten season. At Easter Vigil or Easter morning, raise the Alleluia banner and sing the word over and over again.

Songs

For Consideration in Holy Week and the Season of Easter

The Sunday of the Passion inevitably sets our feet on the path to Jerusalem and into the very heart of the gospel story of the suffering and death of Jesus.

There are many fine hymns included in Evangelical Lutheran Worship to aid us in this journey. And, we have some Canadian contributions to the collection that you may wish to consider.

Ride On, Ride On in Majesty (#346) with text by British poet, Henry Milman and tune by Canadian, Graham George, is a strong pairing of text and tune, juxtaposing the irony of majesty of Christ's triumphal entry with the steady sure procession to death and suffering. George was born in Norwich, and immigrated to Canada at the age of 16. He was a composer, music theorist, organist, choir conductor, and music educator. An associate of the Canadian Music Centre,

his compositional output consists largely of choral works written in the 20th-century Anglican style. He also wrote three ballets, four operas, and some symphonic music. Following his doctoral studies at the University of Toronto he held posts in Montreal & Sherbrooke, Quebec as organist and choirmaster. In 1946 he began a long tenure at Queens University where he was esteemed for his teaching and his writing. The music library at Queens bears his name.

Bless Now O God, the Journey (#326) set to the traditional Welsh tune, *Llangloffan*, is a text written by one of Canada's most talented hymn-writers, Sylvia Dunstan. There are 4 Dunstan texts in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* – which is testimony to the quality of her work. Sylvia Dunstan was born in 1955, and was ordained as a minister of the United Church of Canada. She served as a minister, a prison chaplain and editor of the Canadian worship resource journal, *Gathering*. Tragically, Sylvia died prematurely at the age of 38. We can only begin to imagine what the body of her hymnody would have been had she lived a full life span.

Some of the best hymnody of our tradition can be found in the Holy Week offerings. Hymns such as **O Sacred Head Now Wounded (#351/2)** and **Ah Holy Jesus (#349)** are of such stature that they simply must find a place in our Holy Week liturgies, usually on Good Friday. The music for Good Friday should be spare and unadorned. These chorales shine as examples of texts so intimately wedded to tune that help to capture the “gravitas” of the day. A worthy supplement to these texts can be found in the hymn, **There in God's Garden (#342)**, which blends a 16th century text with a contemporary tune. The haunting text by Hungarian poet, Kiraly Imre von Pecsely embodies a breathtaking scriptural sweep of the text, moving from Genesis to Revelation in the opening two lines. The tune by American composer, K. Lee Scott is a good pairing of tune to text and has been called one of the most important hymn settings of our time.

Another significant addition to our Holy Week hymnody is **When Twilight Comes (#566)**. In the image of a mother hen taking her brood under her wings, this evening hymn from the Philippines connects farmyard experience and Jesus' lament over Jerusalem. The composer has described the tune as being like a bird jumping from branch to branch. The text of this hymn is particularly appropriate for a Maundy Thursday gathering.

Easter hymnody is a rich collection of well-loved hymns, ancient and new and everything in-between, including the likes of text-writers Charles Wesley (Jesus Christ is Risen Today #365), John of Damascus (The Day of Resurrection #361)& Martin Luther (Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands #370) and composers of the pedigree of George Frederic Handel (Thine is the Glory #376), Michael Praetorius (That Easter Day with Joy was Bright, #384) and Ralph Vaughan Williams (*Hail Thee, Festival Day #394).

Into this worthy collection, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* brings some offerings, including another Canadian hymn, **The Risen Christ (#390)**. This hymn was written by Nigel Weaver, a United Church minister, currently serving in Amherst, Nova Scotia, for the meeting of the Hymn Society in Toronto in 1993. Weaver set his text to the tune “Woodlands”, composed by British composer, Walter Greatorex. This tune is best known for its pairing with the text “Tell Out my Soul”. Greatorex was a well-known organist and teacher, whose career was spent at Greshams' School in Holt, Norfolk, where his students included the likes of Benjamin Britten and W. H. Auden. The Second Sunday of Easter may be especially appropriate for the insertion of this hymn with John's gospel calling us to behold the wounds of the Risen Christ.

Give thought to including **Hail Thee Festival Day (#394)** on Easter Sunday. This hymn is exactly what it purports to be – a great festival hymn. With a sweeping tune by Ralph Vaughan Williams, the hymn provides verse-specific options for Easter, Ascension & Pentecost. If the hymn is new to your congregation, this gives you three opportunities to sing this hymn on Sundays within a short frame of time and embed it into the congregational memory.

The resource *Sundays & Seasons* suggests the hymn **Although I Speak with Angel's Tongue (#644)** as an offertory hymn for the Fifth Sunday of Easter. This paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13, again is a Canadian contribution to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* with text by Andrew Donaldson. Andrew is a prolific Canadian composer of hymnody and was

instrumental in the formation of the United Church of Canada hymnal, *Voices United*. His website describes him in the following way: Andrew's passion is writing, learning, and leading people in singing their faith. To his music he brings an infectious joy and a deep sense of music as ministry." We are well-advised to seek out Donaldson's hymns as good representations of the Canadian contribution to hymnody.