

## Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Worship for Small Assemblies

Easter Year A, April 2023

Easter Sunday – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Prepared by Lorraine Reinhardt, BC Synod

Easter – the ongoing celebration of Jesus' resurrection.

### **Worship Notes**

*Alleluia! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

*This is the Day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!*

In the Season of Easter we are reminded of the faithfulness of God and the power of God. We tell again the story of Christ's dying and rising, of Christ's teaching, of Christ's love for people – for us.

**Visuals** – The colour for the Easter season is white. A grouping of green plants around the baptismal font reminds us it is a season of living and growing. Potted plants speak to growing in faith, being rooted in Christ. Cut flowers speak to Christ's sacrifice. White fabrics could be hung or draped on the cross, or puddled around the font. Provide white streamers (ribbons, perhaps tied or stapled to short sticks/dowels) for people so they can wave them every time they hear or speak an 'Alleluia!'. Random bursts of 'Alleluia!', especially on Easter Sunday, can add to the sense of unexpected joy that the first disciples must have experienced upon finding the tomb empty, and meeting Jesus, newly alive. Display extra candles and tea lights, perhaps creating a grouping of candles and plants and flowers and fabric.

**Leader Preparation** – Leading worship is a kind of theatre. The drama unfolds through the reading, praying, and singing. Know the cue for your lines; anticipate what is coming next in the order of worship. Lead from a place of knowing the whole script, not just your part. Readers of lessons or other text are encouraged to read their script out loud in preparation, to be sure of pronunciations of unusual names or words, and to speak in a way that conveys the meaning of the words to the listeners. Singing leaders are encouraged to sing the hymns and songs and liturgical music several times in the week prior to the service. The preparation of those who lead will help the gathered faithful to hear the Word of God, spoken and sung, instead of having them focus on the uncertainty of leadership.

### **Order of Service**

The Order of Service should reflect the community that gathers for worship. Choose liturgical settings and hymns that are familiar, or new ones that can be introduced by someone who has practiced them ahead of time.

The following orders of service outline the usual pattern as presented in Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). In each of the settings in ELW there are instructions and suggestions given (rubrics) for each part of the service. You will note that some parts of the service may be substituted or omitted. May God grant you inspiration to create a meaningful, Christ-centred worship experience.

*Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,  
Christ to comfort and restore me. (from ELW 450)*

## **Service of Holy Communion**

*For use when an ordained pastor or authorized lay minister is presiding.*

### GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness or Thanksgiving for Baptism (optional)

Gathering Song

Invocation

Hymn of Praise (optional)

Prayer of the Day

### WORD

First lesson, Psalm, Second lesson

Gospel acclamation/Gospel lesson

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

Nicene Creed

Prayers of Intercession

Sharing the Peace

### MEAL

Offering/Offering Prayer

Great Thanksgiving

Sanctus (Holy, holy, holy)

Eucharistic prayer/Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Communion

Lamb of God

Prayer after Communion

### SENDING

Blessing

Sending Song

Dismissal

## **Service of the Word**

### GATHERING

Confession and Forgiveness or Thanksgiving for Baptism (optional)

Gathering Song

Invocation

Hymn of Praise (optional)

Prayer of the Day

## WORD

First lesson, Psalm, Second lesson

Gospel Acclamation/Gospel lesson

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

Nicene Creed

Prayers of Intercession

Sharing the Peace

## THANKSGIVING

Offering/Offering Prayer

Canticle of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving for the Word

Lord's Prayer

## SENDING

Blessing

Sending Song

Dismissal

### **Gathering Rite** (optional) – Lorraine Reinhardt

God of the universe, we praise you.

#### **Alleluia!**

God of the resurrected Christ, we worship you.

#### **Alleluia!**

God of self-emptying love, we adore you.

#### **Alleluia!**

Turn our mourning into dancing and our spears into pruning hooks,

Guide our feet onto the way of the cross.

Give us a thirst for peace and justice, for we cannot have one without the other.

God, you are our light and our salvation,

You are glory and splendour.

Turn us always and again back to you, our rock and our Redeemer.

#### **Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

### **Easter Day April 9**

Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Colossians 3:1-4

Matthew 28:1-10

## HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Jesus Christ is Risen Today ELW 365

Christ the Lord is Risen Today ELW 369

Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds ELW 367  
The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing ELW 531  
Bread of Life From Heaven ELW 531  
We Will Go With God ACS 990

### **Second Sunday of Easter April 16**

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Psalms 16

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

#### HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain ELW 363  
Now the Green Blade Rises ELW 379  
Alleluia! Christ is Arisen ELW 375  
We Walk By Faith ELW 635  
The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing ELW 531  
Christ Has Risen While Earth Slumbers ACS 938

### **Third Sunday of Easter April 23**

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalms 116:1-4, 12-19

1 Peter 1:17-23

Luke 24:13-35

#### HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Alleluia! Jesus is Risen ELW 377  
Day of Arising ELW 374  
Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ ELW 674  
Now We Join in Celebration ELW 462  
Look Who Gathers at Christ's Table ACS 977

### **Fourth Sunday of Easter April 30**

Acts 2:42-47

Psalms 23

1 Peter 2:19-25

John 10:1-10

#### HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing ELW 385  
I Know that My Redeemer Lives ELW 619  
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us ELW 481  
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart ELW 484  
Build a Longer Table ACS 1062