

Where Two or Three are Gathered: Worship for Small Assemblies

Lent Year B

February 14, 2024 (Ash Wednesday) – March 17, 2024 (Fifth Sunday in Lent)

Planning Notes

The following includes an outline for Holy Communion, an outline for a Service of the Word, an outline for an Ash Wednesday service, with options for including parts of this service on the First Sunday of Lent, and Weekly Resources for each Sunday.

Worship space

If you can, consider moving the baptismal font to a central location, ideally a place where all can see it. The First Readings of Lent, centre around the covenants that God has made with God's people. These covenants call us to a remembrance of our baptismal life.

The liturgical colour of Lent is purple.

Readings

To keep the covenants that God has made with God's people as a focus during this season, the Second Readings are presented as optional in the Weekly Resources for each Sunday.

Hymns and Songs for the season

"Oh, Love, How Deep", ELW #322, is suggested as the Gathering Hymn for the entire season of Lent. This hymn tells the "whole story from creation to consummation, what God did and does 'for us' in Christ, narrated from beginning to end, and framed by God's love and our doxology to the 'Trinity whom we adore. "' (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Hymnal Companion, p. 111). Each week, the first and last verse are sung, along with one of the other verses. For the Fifth Sunday of Lent, the entire hymn is sung.

The suggested Liturgy is Setting 1. Feel free to use the liturgy that is most applicable in your context.

Suggestions

- Consider starting each service in silence, and also finishing quietly, without a Sending hymn.
- A prayer petition suggestion is provided for each week, themed on the covenants that God has made with us.

Preparation

- Ensure you have ashes prepared for Ash Wednesday. Many communities will burn leftover palm branches from the previous year.
- Order your Palm branches for Palm Sunday

Additional Resources

- Diaconal Sunday, February 25 - <https://elcic.ca/diaconal-sunday/>
 - o Includes a resource sheet, a sermon prepared by Deacon Gretchen Peterson (written and video)
- Building Faith - <https://buildfaith.org/lent/>
 - o Resources from Lifelong Learning at Virginia Theological Seminary
 - o Articles and activities to include the whole assembly (Lent and Easter at home; Lord's Prayer Tracing Cross; On not taking Lent out of our Bodies)
- True Freedom Devotion – WCC - <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/publications/true-freedom>
 - o A new global resource from The World Council of Churches and The Clewer Initiative, True Freedom is a six-week course for Lent. It draws on themes from the book of Galatians and encourages individuals and churches to respond to modern slavery in their communities.

Key

ELW – Evangelical Lutheran Worship

ACS – All Creation Sings

Outline for Holy Communion

The Holy Communion liturgy is for when an Ordained or Authorized Lay Minister is present to preside.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS, ELW p. 94, use alternate (right-side) words

Keeping our baptism and the promises of baptism central during this season, have the baptismal font or other baptismal symbol be placed where all can see.

GATHERING SONG – ELW #322, Oh, Love, How Deep

First Sunday of Lent, February 18 – Vs 1, 2, 7

Second Sunday of Lent, February 25 – vs 1, 3, 7

Third Sunday of Lent, March 3 – vs 1, 4, 7

Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 10 – vs 1, 5, 7

Fifth Sunday of Lent, March 17 – all verses

KYRIE, ELW Setting 1, p. 98

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Use the applicable Prayer of the Day for each Sunday in Lent, Year B, found on pp. 26-29 of the ELW, Pew Edition

WORD

PREPARE

As we gather this day, we hear and proclaim God's Word among us. Let us take a few moments of silence to prepare – to prepare our ears, to prepare our hearts, to prepare our very being – to listen.

Silence – each week, try to lengthen this time of silence.

FIRST READING – based on the Covenants that God has declared

PSALM

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION, ELW Setting 1, p. 103

GOSPEL

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

APOSTLES 'CREED

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus,
Let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation

We pray for creation, for the church, for peace and justice, for those in authority, for the sick, poor, oppressed, vulnerable, for special concerns. What is happening in your community that requires prayer for guidance in decision making, to raise awareness, to ask for forgiveness, to open our eyes to needs? Include these in this prayer of the worshiping assembly. You may also include the suggested prayers as found in the following document.

[A Lutheran-Anglican Full Communion Cycle of Prayer](#)

Response: Stir in us, we pray
Move within each heart
From ACS, 1077

PEACE

MEAL

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY SONG, ELW #186

OFFERING PRAYER, ELW Setting 1, p. 107, Holy, God, gracious and merciful ...

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Use Words of Institution (II) on p. 108, or the Thanksgiving at the Table (!V), p. 111

LORD'S PRAYER

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN(S)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION, ELW Setting 1, p. 114, O God, we give you thanks ...

SENDING

BLESSING, ELW Setting 1, p. 114

DISMISSAL, ELW Setting 1, p. 115

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Outline for Service of the Word

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS, ELW p. 94, use alternate (right-side) words

Keeping our baptism and the promises of baptism central during this season, have the baptismal font or other baptismal symbol be placed where all can see.

GATHERING SONG – ELW #322, Oh, Love, How Deep

First Sunday of Lent, February 18 – Vs 1, 2, 7

Second Sunday of Lent, February 25 – vs 1, 3, 7

Third Sunday of Lent, March 3 – vs 1, 4, 7

Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 10 – vs 1, 5, 7

Fifth Sunday of Lent, March 17 – all verses

KYRIE, ELW Setting 1, p. 98

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Use the applicable Prayer of the Day for each Sunday in Lent, Year B, found on pp. 26-29 of the ELW, Pew Edition

WORD

PREPARE

As we gather this day, we hear and proclaim God's Word among us. Let us take a few moments of silence to prepare – to prepare our ears, to prepare our hearts, to prepare our very being – to listen.

Silence – each week, try to lengthen this time of silence.

FIRST READING – based on the Covenants that God has declared

PSALM

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION, ELW Setting 1, p. 103

GOSPEL

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

APOSTLES 'CREED

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus,
Let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation

We pray for creation, for the church, for peace and justice, for those in authority, for the sick, poor, oppressed, vulnerable, for special concerns. What is happening in your community that requires prayer for guidance in decision making, to raise awareness, to ask for forgiveness, to open our eyes to needs? Include these in this prayer of the worshiping assembly. You may also include the suggested prayers as found in the following document.

[A Lutheran-Anglican Full Communion Cycle of Prayer](#)

Response: Stir in us, we pray
Move within each heart
From ACS, 1077

PEACE

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY SONG, ELW #186

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD, ELW p. 220, O God of justice and love, ...

LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING

BLESSING, ELW Service of the Word, p. 221

DISMISSAL, ELW Service of the Word, p. 222

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Outline for Ash Wednesday

For congregations that meet on Ash Wednesday, a simplified service outline is provided here, with the option of Holy Communion. For those congregations that do not meet on Ash Wednesday, parts of the Ash Wednesday liturgy can begin your Sunday worship on the First Sunday of Lent. These are marked with a “●”.

GATHERING

- *On this solemn day, encourage people to enter the worship space in silence. Omit a prelude.*
- Read together: Psalm 51
- Sing together: Kyrie, Setting 1, page 98 ELW, or another Kyrie familiar to the assembly

GREETING

PRAYER OF THE DAY: p. 26, ELW: Gracious God, out of your love and mercy

WORD

READINGS:

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Second Reading: 2 Cor. 5:20b-6:10

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – Sing or speak the Lent verse, Setting 1, page 103 ELW

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY:

321 ELW, Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church, OR

920 ACS, All Things of Dust to Dust Return

● **INVITATION TO LENT**

We are invited into the church's discipline of Lent, self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love, remembering that we are strengthened by the gifts of Word and Sacrament. If you have access to the ELW Leader's Edition, a prayer can be found on page 617.

● **CONFESSION OF SIN – ELW, p. 252**

● **IMPOSITION OF ASHES – ELW, p. 254**

*Silence may be kept, so that the minister's words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" can be heard throughout the assembly.
If you choose to sing, a simple chant such as ACS #919, Remember that you are dust, would be appropriate*

MEAL

A service with communion continues with the prayers of intercession, concluding with the following prayers, blessing and dismissal. Where there is no communion, continue as below:

CONCLUDING PRAYER – ELW, p. 254

LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING

BLESSING – ELW, p. 255

DISMISSAL– ELW, p. 255

As the service began in silence, it also comes to a close simply, without instrumental music.

Weekly Resources

Sunday, February 18, 2024 – First Sunday in Lent

Prayer of the Day – ELW, p, 27

Readings:

Genesis 9:8-17 – *The rainbow, sign of God's covenant*

Psalm 25:1-10

(opt. 1 Peter 3: 18-22)

Mark 1:9-15

Hymn Suggestions:

As your Spirit in the desert – ACS #923

Lord, keep us steadfast in your word – ELW #517

Thy holy wings – ELW #613

I want Jesus to walk with me – ELW #325

To you all hearts are open – ACS #1012

Prayer Suggestion: God made a covenant with “every living creature of all flesh”. Where in your community do organizations support the well-being of creation? Pray for those organizations that their work may flourish.

Sunday, February 25, 2024 – Second Sunday in Lent

Diaconal Sunday – see ELCIC resources: <https://elcic.ca/diaconal-sunday/>

Prayer of the Day – ELW, p, 27

Readings:

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 – *God blesses Abraham and Sarah*

Psalm 22:23-31

(opt. Romans 4:13-25)

Mark 8:31-38

Hymn Suggestions:

All my hope on God is founded – ELW #757

In a deep, unbounded darkness – ACS #1093

Around you, O Lord Jesus – ELW #468

O God, you search me – ACS #1082

Faith of our fathers – ELW #813

Prayer Suggestion: Include a prayer that connects obedience and trust, as Abraham demonstrated. One such prayer is found on p. 317, ELW, “O God, you have called your servants...”. First written by Eric Milner-White in 1941, it was originally titled “The Call of Abraham.” (notes adapted from Sundays and Seasons).

Sunday, March 3, 2024 – Third Sunday in Lent

Prayer of the Day – ELW, p. 28

Readings:

Exodus 20:1-17 – *The commandments are given at Sinai*

Psalm 19

(opt. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25)

John 2:13-32

Hymns:

Christ is made the sure foundation – ELW #645

Canticle of the Turning – ELW #723

O God, who gives us life – ACS #1086

God of grace and God of glory – ELW #705

When I survey the wondrous cross – ELW #803

Prayer Suggestion: Today's Gospel lesson tells the story of Jesus sharing "Big" feelings. Are there things in your community that are creating Big feelings that as a congregation you can pray for? Also pray for guidance on how-to live-in community, as instructed in the commandments.

Sunday, March 10, 2024 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

Prayer of the Day – ELW, p. 28

Readings:

Number 21:4-9 – *The lifting up of the serpent*

Psalm 107:1-3; 17-22

(opt. Ephesians 2:1-10)

John 3:14-21

Hymns:

Just as I am, without one plea – ELW #592

There in God's garden – ELW #342

God loved the world – ELW #323

We come to You for Healing, Lord – ELW #617

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound – ELW #779

Prayer Suggestion: Today, pray for caregivers and those who work in health care, doctors, nurses, therapists. Pray for their support and guidance, asking that they can find both the rest and the strength they need to provide healing in your community. Pray for your local clinics and hospitals, especially those that work with the most vulnerable.

Sunday, March 17, 2024 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Prayer of the Day – ELW, p. 29

Readings:

Jeremiah 31:31-34 – *A new covenant written on the heart*

Psalm 119:9-16

(opt. Hebrews 5:5-10)

John 12:20-33

Hymns:

My song is love unknown – ELW #343

Seed that in earth is dying – ELW #330

As the winter days grow longer – ACS#924

As the grains of wheat – ELW #465

Lord, dismiss us with your blessing – ELW #545

Prayer Suggestion: God has called us into community. Pray for your worshiping community and the community in which you live and work. Let the love (law) that God has placed in your heart, call you into caring for your community.

The 2024 Lent Resources have been prepared by Kathryn Smith, Eastern Synod, and a member of the Program Committee for Worship.