

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

Pentecost Sunday May 19, 2024 - Sixth Sunday after Pentecost June 30, 2024

Year B

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### **Introduction**

A little background, with excerpts from **Keeping Time: The Church's Years** by Gail Ramshaw and Mons Tieg Copyright © 2009 Augsburg Fortress, pp 65 - 126.

“Christian faith claims that Christ’s resurrection is the grounding of the life of the baptized, and so Christians assemble at the outset of each week to hear the word for their lives, exchange with one another God’s peace, share in the meal of the risen Christ, and join together in the tasks of spreading God’s mercy throughout the world. The ritual of gathering with the body of Christ at the beginning of each week renews our centering in the faith of the resurrection.

God is praised for creating light on the first day of the week. The Spirit hovers over the assembly and Christ shines as light for our day — Sun-day.

Early Christians referred to baptism as enlightenment, and so Sunday is the weekly day to renew one’s life in the light of new life. Early Christians also had a strong sense that the resurrection of Christ inaugurated a new day. By referring to Sunday as the “eighth day”, they expressed their faith that the baptized community was embarking on a new world in which sin and death had already been vanquished. The assembly gathers in the hope that the Spirit of God is present to transform human beings and recreate the world.

Sometimes the Sundays following Pentecost Sunday are called ‘Ordinary Time’. Ordinary time means that the Sundays are ‘ordered’ - counted, numbered as opposed to plain and ordinary.

Week in and week out the church gathers to worship the triune God, sometimes to enact how a specific event in the life of Christ calls forth a festival celebration in the baptized community, but often to enact how word and sacrament inspire the assembly in its life of faith. Every Sunday, winter, spring, summer, and autumn we proclaim Christ, the wounds on his hands illumining our year like the stars in the sky.

The celebration of Easter concludes with the Eighth Sunday of Easter, the Day of Pentecost. Just as Sunday is the eighth day, the new day for the Christian life, so Pentecost is the eighth Easter, Christ’s giving over of his Spirit to the church.”

Also in **Keeping Time: The Church's Years**, the end of chapter 3, *Sundays and Principal Festivals*, is a good reminder for us as worship planners, and points our worship to God.

“Martin Luther reminds us never to claim too much for the church’s worship. Our faith is not our efforts, but rather God, will save the world. Yet such a gift of salvation deserves our best attempts at praise and proclamation. As we pray in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* thanksgiving at the table 1, “We give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able.” In gratitude, we worship more deeply and widely and fully each year.” (p.130)

## **May 19 – Pentecost Sunday**

### **Dressing your Worship Space**

~There are several vivid images for Pentecost:

*Fire and flame* — God sends tongues of fire.

*Wind and breath* — God breathes into the dry bones, and us, the breath of life.

*Miraculous speech* — God enables people of many languages to hear the gospel spoken in words they understand.

~The colour for the day is red.

~Light candles, lots of them, and perhaps red ones.

— Pentecost is the last Sunday when the paschal candle is lighted, because its symbolism points to Christ’s resurrection.

~Red paraments and other hangings in flame colours.

~Some of the profusion of flowers associated with Easter, since this is also ‘Easter’.

### **Other notes**

You might provide a tea light or taper to each person. Light these candles from the Paschal candle for the Acts reading, or the reading of the gospel lesson. Or light them before the singing of a hymn such as ELW 677 *This Little Light of Mine*.

*Thanksgiving for Baptism* is very appropriate, either as part of the Gathering Rite or following the Hymn of the Day, before the creed.

*Holy Communion* is most appropriate for Pentecost Sunday. However, if your congregation does not have an Ordained or Authorized Lay Minister to preside, you would use Thanksgiving for the Word instead.

The *Nicene Creed* is appropriate for this day.

## Readings

~The list of readings is found in ELW p. 36 Day of Pentecost Year B

First Reading — Acts 2:1-21 *A sound like the rush of a mighty wind. Divided tongues, as of fire rested on each of them. The Holy Spirit filled them and they began to speak in other languages. Peter addresses the crowd.* (Sometimes this lesson is read simultaneously by several people in as many languages as your people can speak.)

OR Ezekiel 37:1-14 *“Mortal, can these bones live?” The bones came together, the breath came into them and they lived.*

If you choose this lesson, you may also choose an option of a dramatic reading by two people, or one person with the congregation speaking the voice of God. You can find this dramatic reading here: [http://www.worship.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Where-Two-or-Three-Are-Gathered\\_-Worship-for-Small-Assemblies-Ash-Wednesday-and-Sundays-in-Lent-Year-A.pdf](http://www.worship.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Where-Two-or-Three-Are-Gathered_-Worship-for-Small-Assemblies-Ash-Wednesday-and-Sundays-in-Lent-Year-A.pdf). This reading was prepared by Rev. Kathy Calkins from the ABT Synod. Scroll down to find Lent 5 and the Ezekiel reading on pp. 33-35  
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b *Send forth your spirit and renew the face of the earth.*

Second Reading — Romans 8:22-27 *The Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.*

OR Acts 2:1-21

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts | of your faithful, / and kindle in us the fire | of your love. *Alleluia.*

*Options for how to use the Gospel Acclamation.*

Everyone sings an Alleluia of your choice. It could come from one of the Settings of the Liturgy (note that some of the Settings have the option to use a Proper Verse); or it could be a hymn (see especially hymns ELW 168 - 175). Then one person, or all the people, speak or sing the Proper Verse, followed by everyone singing the Alleluia again.

Gospel — John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15 *Jesus will return to the Father and will send the Spirit of truth who will guide you into all the truth.*

## Hymn Suggestions

ELW 804 Come Down O Love Divine

ELW 399 O Holy Spirit Root of Life

ELW 407 O Living Breath of God

ELW 577/578 Creator Spirit, Heavenly Dove

*Option for ELW 577-578 — One person (or two) sings vs 1 of ELW 577. The congregation joins in singing vs 2-6 of ELW 578. The cantor sings vs 7 of ELW 577.*

ELW 481 Come to the Table

ELW 403 Like the Murmur of a Dove's Song  
ELW 180 The Spirit Intercedes for Us  
ACS 945 When You Send Forth Your Spirit  
ACS 980 Come, Holy Spirit  
ACS 941 Breathe On Us, Breath of God

## **May 26 - The Holy Trinity**

~Readings found at ELW p. 37

Isaiah 6:1-8 - *I saw the LORD sitting on a throne, high and lofty. Seraphs called to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts." The voice of the LORD says, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"*

Psalm 29 - *Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*

Romans 8:12-17 - *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.*

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* Holy, holy, holy is the | Lord of hosts; / God's glory fills | the whole earth. *Alleluia.*

John 3:1-17 - *Jesus said, "No one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above. For God so loved the world."*

## **Hymn Suggestions**

ELW 410 All Glory Be to God on High  
ELW 412 Come, Join the Dance of Trinity  
ELW 413 Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty  
ELW 415 Father Most Holy  
ELW 527 Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now  
ACS 943 As the Wind Song  
ACS 947 Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud  
ACS 948 Womb of Life and Source of Being

## **The Green Season — Ordinary Time**

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

## **Dressing Your Worship Space**

~Paraments and other fabric — if you have options, you might start the season with lighter coloured green paraments and shift to darker green ones later in the season. You may also have some green fabric yardage to puddle or drape around the baptismal font or elsewhere in your space.

~This is a season of growing in faith. Ask people to share a green plant for a Sunday or two. Encourage a rotating collection of greenery, indicating that we are not standing still but learning and growing as God's people.

### **Other notes**

~If you have access to outdoor space, either near your church building, or in a nearby park, or in a parishioner's back yard, consider holding worship outdoors on occasion. Then enjoy a picnic or potluck meal together.

~On a Sunday with no Holy Communion consider *Service of the Word* ELW p. 210, or *Morning Prayer* ELW p. 298.

~To celebrate the summer solstice, consider a late evening service using *Night Prayer* ELW p. 320.

~The *Apostles' Creed* is appropriate for this season.

### **June 2 - 2nd Sunday after Pentecost**

~Readings found at ELW p. 38

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 - *Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy.*

Psalms 81:1-10 - *Sing with joy to God our strength.*

2 Corinthians 4:5-12 - *We do not proclaim ourselves: we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord.*

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* Your word, O | Lord, is truth; / sanctify us | in the truth.  
*Alleluia.*

Mark 2:23—3:6 - *The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath.*

### **Hymn Suggestions**

ELW 389 Holy Spirit, Truth Divine

ELW 468 Around You, O Lord Jesus

ELW 520 Dearest Jesus, at Your Word

ELW 521 O Day of Rest and Gladness

ELW 523 Let Us Go Now to the Banquet

ELW 524 What Is This Place

ELW 610 O Christ, the Healer, We Have Come

ELW 614 There is a Balm in Gilead

ACS 1020 Let My Spirit Always Sing

### **June 9 - 3rd Sunday after Pentecost**

~Readings found at ELW p. 39

Genesis 3:8-15 - *Adam and Eve hide from God because they had eaten the forbidden fruit.*

Psalms 130 - *Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD. O LORD, hear my voice!*

2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1 - *What can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.*

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* The ruler of this world will be | driven out. / And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people | to myself. *Alleluia.*

Mark 3:20-35 - *People will be forgiven for their sins; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness.*

### **Hymn Suggestions**

ELW 303 Rise, Shine, You People!

ELW 505 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

ELW 860 I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me

ELW 768 Lead Me, Guide Me

ELW 785 When Peace Like a River

ELW 828 Alleluia! Voices Raise

ACS 961 Come to the Table

ACS 1016 Cast Out, O Christ

ACS 1075 O God, We Call

### **June 16 - 4th Sunday after Pentecost**

~Readings found at ELW p. 39

Ezekiel 17:22-24 - *I myself will take a sprig. I will plant it in order that it may produce boughs and fruit, and become a mighty cedar.*

Psalms 92:1-4, 12-15 - *The righteous shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.*

2 Corinthians 5:6-10(11-13)14-17 - *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* Welcome with meekness the im-| planted word / that has the power to | save your souls. *Alleluia.*

Mark 4:26-34 - *The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how.*

### **Hymn Suggestions**

ELW 465 As the Grains of Wheat

ELW 508 As Rain from the Clouds

ELW 516 Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast

ELW 551 The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

ELW 690 We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord

ACS 1063 God of the Fertile Fields

## **June 23 - 5th Sunday after Pentecost**

~Readings found at ELW p. 40

Job 38:1-11 - *Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.*

Psalms 107:1-3, 23-32 - *You stilled the storm to a whisper and silenced the waves of the sea.*

2 Corinthians 6:1-13 - *Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation!*

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* Now is the acceptable time; / now is the day | of salvation. *Alleluia.*

Mark 4:35-41 - *Jesus stills the storm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid?"*

### **Hymn Suggestions**

ELW 763 My Life Flows On in Endless Song

ELW 767 Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

ELW 773 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

ELW 775 Jesus, Priceless Treasure

ELW 785 When Peace Like a River

ELW 870 We Praise You, O God

ACS 947 Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud

ACS 1024 Here On Jesus Christ I Will Stand

## **June 30 - 6th Sunday after Pentecost**

~Readings found at ELW p. 41

Lamentations 3:22-33 - *The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

Psalms 30 - *I will exalt you, O LORD, because you have lifted me up and have not let my enemies triumph over me.*

1 Corinthians 8:7-15 - *The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.*

Gospel Acclamation — *Alleluia.* Our Saviour Jesus Christ has abolished death / and brought life and immortality to light | through the gospel. *Alleluia.*

Mark 5:21-43 - *Jesus heals the woman who had suffered from hemorrhages and also raises Jairus' daughter from the dead.*

### **Hymn Suggestions**

ELW 470 Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether

ELW 617 We Come to You for Healing, Lord

ELW 712 Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

ELW 733 Great is Thy Faithfulness

ACS 1021 O God, to You I Cry in Pain

ACS 1068 The Earth Adorned in Verdant Robe

Resources used in this preparation:

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) family of resources, including Pew Edition, Leader's Manual, Keeping Time: the Church's Years, and All Creation Sings (ACS).

**[sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com)**