

Season of Easter

Crafting the Liturgy - Seasonal Planning Page

The season of Easter is one of joy and renewed hope as we celebrate the miracle of all miracles: Jesus is risen from the dead, alleluia! The whole church, in heaven and on earth, sings of God's glorious power and rejoices in the new reality brought to human life through Christ – death no longer has the last word. The Savior of the world has overcome sin, death, and the devil for the sake of all those who believe in the power of God. Jesus has triumphed, and believers are promised eternity.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SEASON

The following are some ideas for helping to make the season distinct and memorable. Congregations are free to adapt these suggestions, or follow the local customs of the congregation.

Preparing the Worship Space

Easter lilies are perfect for decorating the worship space during the season. Other bulbed flowers are also lovely to add to the adornment of the chancel space. Consider making new banners for the worship space for Easter. Symbols might include butterflies, a lamb, cross with lilies, an empty tomb, angels, or three crosses.

Liturgical Color

The liturgical color for Easter is white or gold.

The Gathering

Use the alternate liturgical prayers on the Seasonal Page of SOWeR for the gathering rite and other portions of the liturgy.

The Creed

Use the Nicene Creed during Easter.

The Offering

Consider using the hymn, "Give Me Jesus" as the offertory as we remember in this Easter season what Jesus' life, death, and resurrection has offered to us. You can find a downloadable PDF version on the Hymns and Music Page of SOWeR.

The Proclamation of the Word

Consider preaching a sermon series during the Easter season on the epistle lessons from 1 Peter. There is a lesson from 1 Peter beginning with the Second Sunday of Easter through the Seventh Sunday. Below are possible titles and themes to get you started.

Easter 2: 1 Peter 1:3–9 *A Living Hope:* Through Jesus' death and resurrection we are given a new life.

Easter 3: 1 Peter 1:17–25 *Reborn of Imperishable Seed:* Salvation is given to believers, not from a perishable source but from the imperishable Lord.

Easter 4: 1 Peter 2:19–25 *Jesus' Wounds Have Healed Us:* Only a suffering God can save his people from sin, death, and the devil.

Easter 5: 1 Peter 2:2–10 *Newborn Infants Longing for Spiritual Milk:* We are fed with the pure gospel of Christ who calls us to be the holy priesthood.

Easter 6: 1 Peter 3:13–22 *Blessed Even Through Suffering:* We are not to fear suffering because we have Jesus who went before us and is with us.

Easter 7: 1 Peter 4:12–19; 5:6–11 *Cast All Your Cares on Him:* The enemy will seek God's people, but we are to resist him and cling to Christ in suffering.

REMINDERS FOR THE SEASON

- ✦ Take orders for Easter lilies or other flowers before Easter Sunday.
- ✦ Use social media to advertise your church's Easter schedule.
- ✦ Bring back the hidden "Alleluia" on Easter Sunday and remind children why it was that you hid it during Lent.
- ✦ If you did not have any Baptisms at the Easter Vigil, Easter Day is also an appropriate day for Baptisms. The Baptismal liturgy beautifully reminds us of our new life in Christ even as we hear of his conquering of the grave and gates of death.
- ✦ If you need an Easter program for children in the parish there are five options on the SOWeR Easter Seasonal Page to choose from.
- ✦ As you celebrate Holy Communion during Easter, sing upbeat and celebratory hymns that call to mind the real presence of Jesus and how in the breaking of the bread, Jesus revealed himself to two disciples in Emmaus.
- ✦ If your congregation has an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Day, be sure to announce it well in advance.
- ✦ Consider encouraging worshippers to commit to more faithful worship attendance after Easter when there is often a drop off. "Take back Sunday" might be a theme to draw disciples to a regular habit of Sunday worship.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES THIS SEASON

- ✦ Encourage people to pray the "Fifty Day Challenge." (See the Easter Seasonal Page of SOWeR). The focus of this prayer during Easter is to listen to God's nudging in our lives in terms of inviting others to worship and/or simply engaging in a faith discussion.

COMMEMORATIONS

April 20: Johannes Bugenhagen, Pastor (24 June 1485 – 20 April 1558)

May 7: C.F.W. Walther, Theologian (October 25, 1811 – May 7, 1887)

May 21: Emperor Constantine, Christian Ruler (February 27, c. 272 – May 22, c. 337) and Helen, Mother of Constantine (c. 246 – c. 330).

LESSER FESTIVALS

April 25: St. Mark, Evangelist

May 1: St. Philip and St. James (son of Alphaeus), Apostles

None of the above festivals fall on Sundays this year.