

New Dimensions: Easter Music as a Resource for Preaching

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How often, making music, we have found
a new dimension in the world of sound
as music moved us to a more profound Alleluia!

—Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

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As a hymn-lyric writer, worship designer, and teacher of worship (Brian); and a music director, organist, and counselor for education in the American Guild of Organists (Sue), we begin with proposals about our theme, then offer suggestions for music and other arts, which we have considered in relation to the lectionary readings for Year A.

Some Not Very Startling Proposals

Music should not be separated from other worship arts. Our consideration of music in worship presupposes its partnership with drama and gesture, posture and dance, visual art, and the smell of baking bread.

Easter Sunday makes sense only in context. "Christ is Risen!" is a statement about the meaning of Good Friday, the identity of Jesus of Nazareth whose life story we follow in the weeks leading up to Good Friday, the promise that resurrection brings thereafter, and the ultimate significance of the Jesus who is risen and alive forevermore. Our theme therefore invites us to consider the whole Easter season, from Ash Wednesday to Ascension Day.

On Good Friday and Easter Sunday in particular, preaching is at a loss for words. We must reach for words, knowing (and saying) that words fall short, or fail us. At such times, music and other arts are more than a 'resource' for preaching; preaching needs (and needs to seek) nonverbal partners when words fail.

Before September 11, some parts of U. S. Christianity were shy about Good Friday, preferring to go straight from Palm Sunday's hint of trouble to Easter Sunday's shout of joy. Whether or not things are different now, Easter preaching needs to focus on Jesus' journey to the cross, and present the hard questions about the world's evil and suffering. Only then is Easter worthy of celebration. Along that journey, worship arts vividly express and evoke sorrow, joy, longing, lament, and hope.

Though worship arts can properly be called upon to support the spoken word, they have their own integrity and power. Preachers should trust the arts to speak, and expect the Spirit to move through prayer, song, and scripture, in counterpoint and polyphony with the preached word. Let the dancer sometimes say, “Let us pray” before he dances, the organist, “Listen for the word of God” before she plays.

Preparing for the Journey

Imagine what follows, not as a package ready to be unwrapped, assembled, and set in motion, but as a model for what might result from a process of brainstorming, listening, and planning *in your own congregation*. The process includes negotiating around particular needs, hazards, and hindrances; tabulating the gifts available in members of the congregation; and working together to design worship.

Imagine what follows, not as *the* way of doing worship, but as *one* way, from one corner of the worship garden. If your corner has different plants, the colors, textures, and arrangement of ours may stir your own creative thought. Whatever your process, a broad plan of education and communication about the theological and worship aspects of our worship journey is of inestimable value. Genuine enthusiasm for sharing the purpose and goals of this quarter-year pilgrimage will add to the dimension of participation, revelation, and faith-deepening experience for worshipers.

The journey from Ash Wednesday through Pentecost encompasses a full range of emotions. The more we can involve our congregations in the drama of this pilgrimage—through thought, action, and dedicated deed—the more effective will be the journey. By involving every worshiper in a whole and holy journey, each person will realize the agony and the ecstasy of this “faith passage” that is paramount to our life in Christ.

Practical Notes and Suggestions

Consider having some or all of a hymn spoken—by someone who reads well—as a poem, so that the words are heard afresh; or consider exegeting a hymn lyric as part of a sermon. If the hymn is well known, highlighting it will refresh its power for singers; if new, preaching can introduce it as worth singing. New hymns and songs should be introduced in ways that make them ‘singer-friendly’; for example, having opening stanzas sung by soloist or choir, teaching a refrain in advance, repeating a hymn over several Sundays, or having the text read aloud—by or to the congregation.

Use choral music as preaching. Let it speak for itself, or be ‘framed’ and followed by three or four brief, pithy, prepared responses from worship leaders and/or members of the congregation.

Be aware of the range of musical taste in your congregation. It is hazardous to assume that everyone *must* be as moved as you are by U2, Creed, “Awesome God” or the Bach B Minor Mass. Where musical taste has wide variations, hearing the story behind another person’s most-loved music can build bridges of tolerance and appreciation.

Music selections that amplify a wide gamut of emotions should frame the scripture of each service. Like other worship arts, music can continue to resonate with us after Sunday worship. Worship rituals help provide structure to support the words, music, movement, and aura of each service.

As you plan worship, take a step back from the details and meditate on the whole; try viewing the upcoming experience from the perspective of other worshipers. From time to time, the literal perspective can refresh the worship leader's imagination: listening to a choir, preacher, or reader while sitting on the last pew can yield insights that may be inaccessible from the pulpit, choir loft, or organ bench.

Beginning the Journey—Ash Wednesday

Readings:

Joel 2:1-2; 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalms 51:1-17

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6: 10

Emphases:

Blow the trumpet; call the people to return to God

The broken and contrite heart

Private acts of righteousness

Be reconciled to God

Sensory objectives for this day may include humility, introspection, remembering our sinfulness, repentance, asking God's forgiveness, and a focus not merely on individual sinfulness and falling short, but on collective, corporate, wrongdoing and separation from God. *To help achieve this awareness for worshipers*, consider the following: no flowers; unadorned robes; diminished light; absence of prelude/postlude; silent processional; touch of ashes; use of single (or few) hand bells as psalms and prayers are intoned; graceful and slower movement in walking and speaking.

Psalms: A perennial choice is Psalm 51—look for a psalm paraphrase, or psalm setting. Or have the psalm read, using a verse of a hymn, or a penitential chorus, as sung response. Example: a stanza from “Just as I Am.”

Hymns listed throughout this article are given by first line. Consult the first line index. Hymns not listed in standard hymnals are footnoted by source and publisher.

Hymns for Ash Wednesday through Lent include Just as I Am, Without One Plea; And Can It Be that I Should Gain; Thou Hidden Source of Calm Repose; Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life; Jesus, Lover of My Soul; Forty Days and Forty Nights. Also, “Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face” (Brian Wren, music by Hal H. Hopson)—its movement from individual to social sin provides material for preaching, and its refrain (best taught beforehand) is a prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.¹ See also David Haas' choral setting, below.

Choral—Vocal Music: “Create in Me, O Lord” (Johannes Brahms); “Hear, O Lord” from Christus (Felix Mendelssohn); Lenten Proclamation” [GIA Publications]; “O My God, Bestow Thy Tender Mercy” and/ or “Wash Me, O Lord God” (G.B. Pergolesi); “For Hard Things” (Jane Marshall); “Dust and Ashes” (David Haas/Brian Wren, GIA-3655).

Organ Music (during imposition of ashes): “Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir” (J.S. Bach), (Johann Pachelbel, W. Zachau & Samuel Scheidt). “Jesus, I Will Ponder Now” (Wilbur Held) (Paul Manz); “O Mensch, bewien' dein' Sunde gross” (J.S. Bach) from Orgelbuchlein #24.

On the Way: The Fifth Sunday in Lent

We need to preach how to ‘do Lent’. Only in part is Lent a penitential season. Equally important, Lent is an invitation to a counter-cultural pilgrimage with Jesus through the shadow and sunlight, the valleys and mountains of life.

Consider the alternative: zipping from a candle-lit carol service on Christmas Eve directly to Easter trumpets and lilies (or bunnies). What an insulated, insular, technicolor-fantasy experience that would be—yet not far removed from the fantasies, cheerful smiles, and cartoon characters promoted by our ‘feel-good’ escapist culture.

As Advent calls us to be counter-cultural by waiting, waiting, and preparing, instead of going instantly to Christmas, so Lent calls us to an equally counter-cultural engagement with the multifaceted realities of human life, in Jesus of Nazareth. Preaching needs persuasively to present the need to ‘do Lent’ with care and attention.

Thus, we need to take time, and persuasively present the value of taking time, to savor the life of Jesus, his ministry, the magnetism of his preaching and teaching that impelled disciples to abandon vocation and family to follow him, the controversies he stirred, his outreach to the outcast and ‘unclean’. In that story, Christ’s obedience to the One he called Abba / Father, his sense of drama and timing (Palm Sunday), sense of ritual (cleansing of the Temple; Last Supper), sense of vocation (prayer while disciples slept in the Garden of Gethsemane), and rejection of violence as God’s way (acceptance of betrayal and capture, prayer for his soldier-executioners)—all define his destiny, self-discipline, and suffering.

Through care-full scripture reading, study, and reflection, we can be startled into awareness of Jesus’ intimate knowledge of Torah, Psalms, and Prophets. We can glimpse and feel the charisma that generated such ardent loyalty, anger, and fear during his few short years of ministry. We can sense the play of politics between local and national leaders, Jerusalem crowds, Temple priests, client-monarchs (Herod), and Roman authorities. We can note that Jesus died a Jew, with a Jew’s vision of God’s purpose, betrayed by a close disciple, and rejected by the leaders of his people. We can explore what it means to say that the Risen Christ is still ‘Jesus the Jew’.

An Example: Fifth Sunday in Lent—Year A

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The valley of dry bones

Psalms 130

Hope of our redemption in God

John 11:1-45

Lazarus raised from the dead by Jesus

Romans 8:6-11

Death in sin; life in righteousness

Themes emphasize that life comes from God; life without God is death. *Sensory objectives* include life; hope; awareness of Christ’s sufferings; Martha’s confession that Jesus is the Messiah; Lazarus bound by death, then released into light. *To heighten worshipers’ awareness*, consider the following: dramatize Martha’s confession; let preaching give it due weight by comparing it with Peter’s confession; use cloth to suggest, or show, the wrappings of death, unwrapped by Christ; show Lazarus being raised as a foreshadowing of Christ’s resurrection, and our own rising to new life. A counter theme to the hope of resurrection in the story of Lazarus is that this Sunday was earlier observed as “Passion Sunday.” Music

may begin a shift today, looking toward the sufferings of Christ.

Hymns: Breathe on Me, Breath of God; My Jesus, I Love Thee; Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing; Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain; I Surrender All; The Day of Resurrection; And Can It Be that I Should Gain; Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth; O Sacred Head Surrounded; Out of the Depths; This is a Day of New Beginnings; The Royal Banners Forward Go; Spirit of the Living God, Fall Afresh on Me; Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult; We Give Immortal Praise; When I Survey the Wondrous Cross; Yee Jun Ae Joo Nim Eul Nae Ka Mol La (When I Had Not Yet Learned of Jesus).

Choral Music: "Agnus Dei" (Pergolesi/Burkhardt); "Awake, Good People" (arr. Marie Pooler); "Behold the Savior" (S. Drummond Wolff); "De profundis" (W.A. Mozart, Orlando di Lasso, Christoph Gluck, Josquin des Prez); "In Deep Despair I Call on Thee" (Felix Mendelssohn); "Judge Me, O God" (Felix Mendelssohn); "Lamb of God" (F.M. Christiansen); "Out of the Deep" (Adrian Batten, M.A. Charpentier, William Croft, Alan Hovhaness, Thomas Morley, Heinrich Schütz, Malcolm Williamson); "Psalm 130" (Paul Manz); "Salvator mundi" (Tallis/Kenney); "When Jesus Wept" (William Billings).

Organ Music: "Herzlich tut mich verlangen" (Johannes Brahms, Max Reger); "Herzliebster Jesu" (Flor Peeters, Ernst Pepping, Camil van Hulse, Helmut Walcha); "O Haupt voll blut und wunden" (Moritz Brosig, Adolph Hesse, F.W. Marpurg, Max Reger); "O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig" (J.S. Bach, Johann Pachelbel, Max Reger).

Approaching Jerusalem: Palm-Passion Sunday—Year A

Readings For The Liturgy Of The Palms (if the congregation will observe Good Friday, the passion narrative can be delayed until then):

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Matthew 21:1-11

The righteous enter through the Lord's gate
Christ's entry into Jerusalem

Hymns For Liturgy Of The Palms: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna; All Glory, Laud, and Honor; Ride On, Ride On in Majesty; Mantos y Palmas (Filled with Excitement).

Readings For The Liturgy Of The Passion:

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Steadfast servant of the Lord

Psalm 31:9-16

Trust in the Lord

Matthew 26:14-27:66 or 27:11-54

Passion Narrative

Philippians 2:5-11

From humility to exaltation

Sensory objectives include triumphant exaltation and somberness. *To achieve awareness of all worshipers*, consider gathering outside the church. Distribute palms to all; use the opening liturgy; use brass instruments and/or hand bells to begin the processional. Ask worshipers to shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David" as they wave palms (choir can give the lead); and/or ask choir or youth or others to form columns through which the congregation passes as it processes into the

church. As the service progresses into the Passion Liturgy, use readers placed in different areas of the church; ask the choir to be the angry crowd as scripture is read by different voices. Use hand bells to toll at the conclusion of the Passion Narrative; this becomes the “Good Friday” portion of the Passion Service. As the service concludes, ask people to stay and pray, then leave silently.

Hymns For The Liturgy Of The Passion: Ah, Holy Jesus; O Love, How Deep; ‘Tis Finished! The Messiah Dies; O Sacred Head Now Wounded; O Love Divine, What Hast Thou Done; Were You There? When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.

Choral Music: “Fanfare for Palm Sunday” (Richard Proulx) [GIA Publications]; Hosanna to the Son of David—An SATB setting by David Moe (Presser); Orlando Gibbons “Hosanna to the Son of David”; Thomas Weelkes “Hosanna to the Son of David; Kenneth Leighton “Solus ad victimam” (in English); Jane Marshall “My Eternal King”; Mary Kay Beall “On That Day When He Rode into Jerusalem”; Robert Ross “Palm Sunday Processional; Ride On, Ride On In Majesty—David N. Johnson (SAB, Augsburg).

Organ Music: “A Palm Sunday Processional on ‘All Glory, Laud and Honor’” (Jan Bender); “All Glory, Laud and Honor” (Robert J. Powell); (David Schack); (John Hebdens Schaffner); “Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund” (J.S. Bach (Samuel Scheidt); “Fantasia super: Valet will ich dir geben” (J.S. Bach); “Herzliebster Jesu” (Johannes Brahms) from 11 Chorale Preludes; “The Royal Banners Forward Go” (Wilbur Held); “Valet will ich dir geben” (J.S. Bach); (Max Reger).

Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14

Psalms 116:1-2, 12-19

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Passover

A debt of kindness

Last Supper and new mandate

Lord’s meal with Paul

Sensory objectives include humility, community, grief, dismay, and hollowness. *Elements that may help to achieve awareness of all worshipers* include foot washing; the sight, smell, and taste of communion elements of bread and wine; changes in lighting as we look toward Good Friday; extinguishing candles to remind us of denying disciples; the use of random hand bells during the chanting of Psalm 22

Hymns: Adoro te devote; An Upper Room did Our Lord Prepare; Great God [Lord God], Your Love Has Called Us Here (Wren, see stanza 4); Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love; Lift High the Cross; Praise We Christ’s Immortal Body; Sing, My Tongue, the Savior’s Battle / Glorious Battle; Ah, Holy Jesus; Go to Dark Gethsemane; Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face; All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night. (See also Good Friday.)

Choral Music: Ubi Caritas—Maurice Durufle’s—Richard Proulx / GIA Publications, or Randall Giles/Paraclete Press, or Taize monks (John Leavitt / CPP Belwin); “Ave verum corpus” (William Byrd, (W.A. Mozart, (Edward Elgar); “Faith, Hope and Love” (Alexander Pelouquin) [GIA Publications]; “Were You There?” (arr. Alice Parker)(arr. Sue Mitchell-Wallace, Hope Publishing). (See also Good Friday.)

Organ Music: “Schmucke dich, o liebe Seele” (J.S. Bach); (Johannes Brahms) (Wilbur Held); (M.F.A. Koehler), (F.W. Marburg), (Max Reger); “Soul, Adorn Thyself with Gladness” (Paul Manz) from Ten Chorale Improvisations, Set III [Concordia 97-4950].

Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalm 22

John 18:1-19:42

Hebrews 10:16-25 or

4:14-16; 5:7-9

Prophecy—humble servant sacrificed

Lamentations

Arrest, trial, crucifixion, death

Sin forgiven, no need for more sacrifices

Sensory objectives include grief, emptiness, anguish, and despair. *Ways to achieve the awareness of all worshipers* include the following: no paraments; bare communion table or pulpit, table, and other objects covered with gray cloth; no instrumental music; diminished lighting.

Hymns: O Love, How Deep, How Broad; O Love Divine; Ah, Holy Jesus; Go to Dark Gethsemane; Beneath the Cross of Jesus; When I Survey the Wondrous Cross; God is One, Unique and Holy (Presbyterian Hymnal #135); Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross; Jesus, Remember Me (Taize); Stay With Me (Taize); Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed; Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth; My Song Is Love Unknown; O Sacred Head Surrounded; Throned upon the Awe-full Tree; Were You There? He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word; What Wondrous Love Is This? Also: “A Parent’s Heart Will Feel the Hurt” and “Eternal Christ, You Rule” by Dan Damon; “Because You Came” and “God Weeps” by Shirley Murray; and “When Pain and Terror Strike By Chance” (Brian Wren).²

Choral Music: “Adoramus te, Christe” (L. da Viadana); “Ah, Holy Jesus” (arr. William Matthis); “Christus factus est” (Felice Anerio) (Anton Bruckner); “God Remembers (Pain, Joy, Us)—Russell Schulz-Widmar / Brian Wren, Augsburg 11-10882); “O vos omnes” (Giovanni Croce) (Pablo Casals); “Seven Last Words of Christ” (Haydn), (Dubois), (Schutz); “Were You There?” (arr. Alice Parker) (arr. Sue Mitchell-Wallace); Stabat Mater by Poulenc, Dvorak, Haydn, Schubert, Caldara.

Organ or Other Instrumental Music: No prelude or postlude; or slow drumbeat.

Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43

Sensory objectives for Easter Sunday include joy, renewed faith, hope, and release from fears and doubts. To achieve the awareness of all worshipers, employ banners, bells, brass, and other instruments. Include children as participants in the service. Engage special greeters and ushers. Create special settings for hymns and responses. Choose anthems of promise and joy. Use lights creatively; light the Paschal candle.

Hymns: Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing; Hail Thee, Festival Day; Jesus Christ Is Risen Today; He Lives!; Now the Green Blade Riseth; Christo Vive; They Crucified My Savior (He Rose); The Head That Once Was Crowned With Thorns; Let the Earth Rejoice and Sing; Sing We Triumphant Hymns of Praise; That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright; The Strife Is O'er; With High Delight; Fairest Lord Jesus; Savior of the Nations, Come; Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee; O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright; The Day of Resurrection; Easter People, Raise Your Voices; Christ Is Risen, Shout Hosanna! Thine Be the Glory (Thine Is the Glory); Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain; Christ Is Alive; Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands; Up from the Grave He Arose (Low in the Grave He Lay); Praise My Soul the King of Heaven.

Choral Music: Christ is Alive! Let Christian Sing (Wren, settings by Jane Holstein (Hope C 5182) and Richard Dirksen (Oxford); Christ is Risen—Gaul; Christ the Lord is Risen Again—Rutter; Christ the Lord hath risen—Lang; Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna! (Wren, settings by David Ashley White (Selah 425-871), William Rowan (Concordia 98-2786), David Haas (GIA 4870) and Carlton Young (Agape / Hope 7289; Hallelujah from Messiah—Handel; Hallelujah from Mount of Olives—Beethoven; Hilariter—R. Dirksen; His Yoke Is Easy—Handel; I Know That My Redeemer Lives; O sons and daughters—Parker / Shaw; JS Bach Cantata #4 (Christ lag in Todesbanden); Cantata #15, Denn du wirst meine Seele nicht in der Hoelle lassen; Cantata #31 Der Himmel lacht, die Erde jubiliert; Et resurexit from the B-mass; Billings Easter Anthem: The Lord Is Ris'n Indeed; Handel Amen fugue from Messiah; Worthy is the Lamb from Messiah; Parker, Alice "An Easter Rejoicing; Rutter Gloria; K. Lee Scott's "Now Glad of Heart"; Randall Thompson's "Alleluia"; "The Strife Is O'er" (C. Armstrong Gibbs; Psalm 150 (Walter Pelz); Entrata Festiva (Flor Peeters); Sing, Ye Faithful (Richard Dirksen).

Organ Music: "Vivace-Finale" from Symphony VI (Ch.M. Widor "Allegro-Finale" from Symphony I (Louis Vierne); "At the Lamb's High Feast" (Paul Manz); "Carillon-Sortie" (Henri Mulet); "Gloria in excelsis Deo" (Max Reger); "Grand Chouer Dialogue" (Eugene Gigout); "Heut' triumphiret Gottes Sohn" (J.S. Bach) from Orgelbuchlein #32; "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" (Paul Manz); "Litanies" (Jehan Alain); "Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious" (Paul Manz); "Prelude on 'O filii et filiae'" (Healey Willan); "Toccata" from Symphony V (Ch.M. Widor).

Sundays from Easter through Ascension

During the Easter season the Church extends the joy and gladness of Easter day throughout several weeks. This season of seven times seven days is highly symbolic, culminating in the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (pente meaning "fiftieth"). *To meet sensory objectives and to achieve the awareness of all worshipers*, plan exuberant "Alleluia" and festive music around the scripture readings for each Sunday. Employ bright colors, banners, joyous bell descants during hymns, and special solos and anthems to contribute to the celebratory nature of this season. Celebrating Easter shades into waiting for the Spirit.

Second Sunday Of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Psalm 16

John 20:19-31

1 Peter 1:3-9

The Apostle proclaims the Psalmist's
prophecy of life

A psalm of life in the Lord

Power of forgiveness

Salvation—the goal of faith

Emphases for this day include baptism, faith, community, praise, and rejoicing.

Hymns (see also selection for Easter Sunday): Canto de Esperanza (Song of Hope); The Day of Resurrection; Sing with All the Saints in Glory; Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee; Camina, Pueblo de Dios (Walk On, O People of God); Christo Vive (Christ is Risen); Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain; Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates; How Can We Sinners Know; Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus; O Spirit of the Living God; Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain; O Sons and Daughters; This Is the Day.

Choral Music (see also Easter Day): “Christ the Lord Is Risen Again” (John Rutter); “Exsultate justi in Domino” (Ludovico da Viadana); Horatio Parker’s “Light’s Glittering Morn”; Richard Dirksen “Christ Our Passover”; Easter Chorale, by Samuel Barber, published by G. Schirmer; “Upon this Rock” arr. John Ness Beck, G. Schirmer.

Organ Music (see also Easter Day): “Chorale Fantasia on ‘Lasst uns erfreuen’” (Flor Peeters); “Chorale Toccata on ‘Lasst uns erfreuen’” (R. Evan Copley) [H.W. Gray]; “Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain” (Wilbur Held) from Six Preludes on Easter Hymns [Concordia 97-5330]; “Partita on ‘O filii et filiae’” (Jean-Francois Dandrieu); “Prelude on ‘O filii et filiae’” (Healey Willan); “Prelude on ‘Lasst uns erfreuen’” (Paul Manz); “The Easter Sequence” (Wilbur Held) from Six Preludes on Easter Hymns]; “Variations on ‘O Sons and Daughters’” (Alexandre Guilmant).

Third Sunday Of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

Luke 24:13-35

1 Peter 1:17-23

Thousands are saved

The servant grateful for salvation

Walk to Emmaus

Rebirth from imperishable seed

Emphases appropriate for this Sunday include the Word / Eucharist, fulfillment, joy, hope, revelation, scripture, and the path of life. *To achieve awareness for all worshipers*, highlight the Gospel’s emphasis on Scripture (“He opened the Scriptures to us”) and sacrament (“He was made known in the breaking of the bread”). Invite families to bring forward the offerings and the communion elements. Invite people of all ages to read the scriptures. Have a Bible ceremonially opened at each service.

Hymns: O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing; Spirit of Faith, Come Down; Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above; O Zion, Haste; O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee; Maker in Whom We Live; Crown Him with Many Crowns; Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands; Gift of Finest Wheat; God with Hidden Majesty / Adoro te devote); Humbly We Adore The / Adoro te devote; I Know That My Redeemer Lives; Thy Word is a Lamp unto My Feet; Wonderful Words of Life; Pues Se

Vivimos (When We Are Living); That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright); The Day of Resurrection; This Joyful Eastertide.

Choral Music: “Adoro te devote”; “Alleluia” (Randall Thompson); “Ave verum corpus”; “Christ lag in Todesbanden” (J.S. Bach). Any of the music from the Easter Sunday list is appropriate.

Organ Music: “Christ lag in Todesbanden” (J.S. Bach) from Orgelbuchlein #27; “Christ lag in Todesbanden” (Georg Boehm, F.W. Zachau, Samuel Scheidt); “Prelude on ‘Christ lag in Todesbanden’.”

Fourth Sunday Of Easter

Acts 2:42-47

Psalm 23

John 10:1-10

Luke 15: 3-10

1 Peter 2:19-25

The daily fellowship of believers

The daily care of the Shepherd

The sheep know their shepherd; the Shepherd knows his sheep

Sheep and coin lost and found

Sheep who strayed have returned

Emphases include Jesus as the Good Shepherd; trust, safety, suffering, discernment, and mission (Christ searches for “other sheep, not of this fold”). Achieve awareness through pastoral music; special banners; children’s sermon about “the found sheep and the found coin”—God’s sweeping and searching. Dramatize these two parables; place small coins in chairs and pews for people to find.

Hymns: At the Lamb’s High Feast; How Clear is Our Vocation, Lord; My Shepherd Will Supply My Need; The Living God My Shepherd Is; The Lord’s My Shepherd; I Sought the Lord, and Afterward I Knew; This Is the Feast of Victory; Blest Be the Tie That Binds; The King of Love My Shepherd Is; Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling; Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us; Sweet Hour of Prayer; We Are Your People.

Choral Music: “Alleluia” from Presiet dem Herrn (J.S. Bach); “The Lord Is My Shepherd” from Glorious (Abraham Kaplan); Sheep May Safely Graze [J.S. Bach]; Shepherd Me, O God (Matry Haugen); Brother James’ Air; The Lord Is My Shepherd [various settings]; He Shall Feed His Flock (G.F. Handel); Settings of Psalm 23 and Psalm 100.

Organ Music: “A Meditation on ‘Brother James’ Air” (Harold Darke); “Erstanden ist der Heilige Christ” (J.S. Bach) from Orgelbuchlein #30; “Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense” (Max Reger); “Prelude on ‘At the Lamb’s High Feast’” (Paul Manz); “Prelude on ‘Brother James’ Air” (Searle Wright); “Prelude on ‘God of Grace’” (Paul Manz); “Prelude on ‘Saint Columba’” (Healey Willan).

Fifth Sunday Of Easter

Acts 7:55-60

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

John 14:1-14

1 Peter 2:2-10

God’s witness

The servant of God

The Son of God

The people of God

Emphases include ministry, service, chosen people, the diaconate, and faith in action. The Gospel readings for this Sunday and the following two Sundays come

from Christ's "Farewell Discourse" in John's Gospel. *To heighten worshipers' awareness*, choose transcendental and contemplative music. Create posters and displays that highlight ways people can serve in local and wider communities. Offer special opportunities to encourage volunteers for outreach and care in the church and beyond.

Hymns: A Mighty Fortress Is Our God; From All That Dwell Below the Skies; God of Grace and God of Glory; Sois la Semilla (You Are the Seed); Let My People Seek Their Freedom; Tu Has Venido a la Orilla (Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore); The Church of Christ, in Every Age; Today We Are All Called to Be Disciples; Here I Am, Lord; Ye Servants of God; We Believe in One True God; Fairest Lord Jesus; We've a Story to Tell to the Nations; Stand Up and Bless the Lord; Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Hail Thee, Festival Day; Cuando el Pobre (When a Poor One); With High Delight.

Choral Music: "Exsultate Deo" (Alessandro Scarlatti); "Misericordia Domini" (G.O. Pitoni); Blessed Is the Man (Katherine K. Davis); I Will Not Leave You Comfortless (various composers).

Organ Music: "Ershienen ist der herrliche Tag" (J.S. Bach), (J.G. Walther); "Jesus Christus, unser Heiland" (J.S. Bach) from Orgelbuchlein #28; "Prelude on 'Gelobt sei Gott'" (Paul Manz); "With High Delight" (Charles Ore).

Sixth Sunday After Easter

Acts 17:22-31

Sharing the message of One God

Psalm 66:8-20

Praising the One God

John 14:15-21

Loving the One God

1 Peter 3:13-22

Living for the One God

Emphases include initiation, the Holy Spirit, truth, community, love, and recognition that God is in all that we do. Recognize the talents of the congregation: for instance, display members' artwork or banners created by Sunday school classes; encourage participation of vocal and instrumental soloists.

Hymns: I Love to Tell the Story; Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle; Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven; All People That on Earth Do Dwell; To God Be the Glory; Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above; Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee; O How I Love Jesus; My God, I Love Thee; Forth in Thy Name, O Lord; Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine; Christ the Lord Is Risen Again; Now the Green Blade Rises; There's a Spirit in the Air.

Choral Music: "If Ye Love Me" (Thomas Tallis); "Love Never Fails" (K. Lee Scott); Christ Sends the Spirit (Richard Proulx); I Will Not Leave You Comfortless (Everett Titcomb Carl Fischer; A Beautiful Thing (Jane Marshall); "Come Down, O Love Divine" (William Harris); "I Will Not Leave You Comfortless" William Byrd OUP; "Cantique de Jean Racine" (Gabriel Faure).

Organ Music: "Awake, My Heart, with Gladness" (Wilbur Held), (Flor Peeters); "Christ ist erstanden" (J.S. Bach), (J.K.F. Fischer); "Prelude on 'Awake, My Heart, with Gladness'" (Paul Manz).

Ascensiontide

Acts 1:1-11

Psalms 47:2-3, 6-7, 8-9

Ephesians 1:17-23

Matt. 28:16-20

Christ lifted up while apostles look on
God mounts the throne to shouts and
trumpets

Christ at God's right hand in the heavenly
places

I am with you always; go!

Emphases include glory, majesty, fulfillment, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and baptism and mission, with a focus on Christ's sovereignty and universal power and presence ("Behold, I am with you, even unto the end of the world").

Hymns: A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing; Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing; Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise; Emmanuel, Emmanuel; Look, O Look, the Sight Is Glorious; Rejoice, Angelic Choirs; Sing We Triumphant Hymns of Praise; Thine Is the Glory; God Will Take Care of You; I Want Jesus to Walk With Me; Guide My Feet; Saranam, Saranam; How Firm a Foundation; O Food to Pilgrims Given; Spirit of Faith, Come Down; Love Divine, All Loves Excelling; God of Love and God of Power; Because Thou Hast Said; We Meet You, O Christ, in Many a Guise.

Choral Music: "How Lovely Are the Messengers" from Saint Paul (Felix Mendelssohn); Bruce Saylor: A Mighty Sound from Heaven, ECS 4228; William Grant Still: Holy Spirit, Don't You Leave Me (from Three Rhythmic Spirituals, Bourne Music; Good News Celebration (Philip Dieterich); I'm Gonna Rise (Spiritual); "Upon this Rock" arr. John Ness Beck, G. Schirmer.

Organ Music: "Fugue in G (Jig)" (J.S. Bach; "On Christ's Ascension I Now Build" (Max Reger); "Prelude on 'Bryn Calfaria'" (Paul Manz), (Ralph Vaughan Williams); "Prelude on 'Neander'" (Paul Manz); "Prelude on 'Werde munter'" (Paul Manz); "Toccata in b minor" (Eugene Gigout).

We recognize that there are many different denominations and different emphases within them. These ideas and suggestions are, we hope, one ray of light from a bright sun of creative ideas available to us all from our Creator and Giver of all gifts. *Soli Deo Gloria* (To God Alone Be the Glory!). So please use our offerings, or go one better!

Notes

¹ "Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face," in Brian Wren, *Bring Many Names: 35 New Hymns* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Hope Publishing Company, 1989).

² Dan Damon, in *Faith Will Sing* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Hope Publishing Company, 1993); Shirley Murray, in *Every Day in Your Spirit* (Hope Publishing Company, 1996); Brian Wren, in *New Beginnings* (Hope Publishing Company, 1993).