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# Worship Resources for the Sundays of Eastertide and Ascension Day

*Based on texts from the Revised Common Lectionary Year B*

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For those who may be looking for resources for the beginning of worship during Eastertide—the season after Easter—consider the following resources based on the texts from the Revised Common Lectionary but adaptable to any context. As I read through the lectionary readings for this season, many of them centered around love: God’s love for us and the call of Christ’s followers to love each other. Thus, that refrain echoes throughout these resources.. Another theme that began with Mark’s account of the women at the tomb is that of doubt and faith and how closely the two reside in each of us.

## **NOTES**

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- \* Congregation is invited to stand in body or spirit.

## **Easter: March 31, 2024**

### **God's Greeting\***

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

The God who has the power  
to make what was dead alive again,  
and loved us so much that he sent Christ

to die for our sins so we may live—  
that is the God who calls us here today,  
and greets us with these words:  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine."

**Opening Words: from Psalm 118\***

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his love endures forever.**

Let Israel say:  
**"His love endures forever."**

The Lord is my strength and my defense;  
he has become my salvation.

The Lord's right hand is lifted high;  
the Lord's right hand has done mighty things!"  
**I will not die but live,  
and will proclaim what the Lord has done.**

The stone the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
the Lord has done this,  
**and it is marvelous in our eyes.**  
The Lord has done it this very day;  
**let us rejoice today and be glad.**

**Song of Praise\***

["Forever"](#) Tomlin, LUYH 578

["I Stand Amazed"](#) Gabriel, LUYH 174, SSS 537

["Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven"](#) Wordsworth

["Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"](#) Wesley

**Call to Confession:**

Christ when asked,  
what was most important for his followers to do, said:  
"Love the Lord your God with all your heart  
and with all your soul and with all your mind.'  
This is the first and greatest commandment.  
And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

As much as we may have tried to do that this past week,  
we have failed.  
We have failed  
because we don't quite trust God's power and ability  
to work in and through us to make things new.

We remain captive to our doubt and fear  
and do not love as we are called.  
And so, we come to God, humbly confessing our sins,  
knowing that our God is compassionate and desires to offer us forgiveness.

Let us pray together saying:

***Prayer of Confession:***

**Almighty God, in raising Jesus from the grave,  
you shattered the power of sin and death.  
We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear,  
bound by the ways that lead to death.  
We overlook the poor and the hungry  
and pass by those who mourn;  
we are deaf to the cries of the oppressed  
and indifferent to calls for peace;  
we despise the weak and abuse the earth you made.  
Forgive us, God of mercy.  
Help us to trust your power  
to change our lives and make us new,  
that we may know the joy of life abundant  
given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord. Amen.**

—*Book of Common Worship* (Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.). © 1993, Westminster John Knox Press., p. 317  
[271], alt., PD

***Assurance of Pardon:***

God has promised to forgive us our sins, so with the Psalmist let us,  
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his love endures forever.**

The Lord is your strength and your defense.  
The Lord is your salvation.

**We will not die but live,  
and will proclaim what the Lord has done.**

## Second Sunday of Easter: April 7, 2024

***God's Greeting\****

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

The God who has the power  
to make what was dead alive again,  
and loved us so much that he sent Christ  
to die for our sins so we may live--  
that is the God who calls us here today,  
and greets us with these words:

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine."

**Opening Words: Psalm 133\***

How good and pleasant it is  
when God's people live together in unity!

It is like precious oil poured on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
running down on Aaron's beard,  
down on the collar of his robe.  
It is as if the dew of Hermon  
were falling on Mount Zion.

**For there the Lord bestows his blessing,  
even life forevermore.**

**Song of Praise:**

["Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing"](#) Wren

["Oh How Good It Is"](#) Getty et al.

["See How Good It Is \(Psalm 133\)"](#) Kimbrough and McCracken

["Miren qué bueno/Oh, Look and Wonder"](#)Sosa

**Call to Confession**

Scripture says:

"If we claim to be without sin,  
we deceive ourselves  
and the truth is not in us.  
If we confess our sins,  
God is faithful and just  
and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.  
If we claim we have not sinned,  
we make God out to be a liar  
and his word is not in us." (1 John 1: 8–10)

Let us then, confident of God's forgiveness,  
confess our sins to God,  
using the words provided, praying:

**Prayer of Confession**

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name.**

**Amen.**

—*The Book of Common Prayer, according to the use of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America.* © 1977, Charles Mortimer Guilbert as custodian; public domain. p. 79, alt.

### **Assurance of Pardon**

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you:  
God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.  
If we claim to have fellowship with him  
and yet walk in the darkness,  
we lie and do not live out the truth.  
But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,  
we have fellowship with one another,  
and the blood of Jesus, his Son,  
purifies us from all sin." (1 John 1: 5–7).

Be assured that you are forgiven,  
walk in the light, and live in unity together.

**Amen!**

**The Lord bestows his blessing,  
even life forevermore.** (Psalm 133:3)

## **Third Sunday of Easter: April 14, 2024**

### **God's Greeting\***

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

The God who has the power  
to make what was dead alive again,  
and loved us so much that he sent Christ  
to die for our sins so we may live—  
that is the God who calls us here today,  
and greets us with these words:  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine."

### **Opening Words (invite the congregation to be seated)**

For some of us it may be easy for us to declare that "Christ is risen",  
we feel it in our bones,  
we see the evidence around us.  
Others of us are full of doubt,  
or at least have a few questions we'd like to ask of God.

And we are in good company,  
the Psalmist also had a few questions for God.

Today, our opening words come to us from Psalm 4.  
It is a dialogue between God and both doubt and faith,  
which often are not that far from each other.

Reading today is [name] as doubt, [name] as the voice of God, and [name] as faith.

**Doubt:**

Answer me when I call to you,  
my righteous God.  
Give me relief from my distress;  
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

**God:**

How long will you people turn my glory into shame?  
How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?

**Faith:**

Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself;  
the Lord hears when I call to him.

**God:**

Tremble and do not sin;  
when you are on your beds,  
search your hearts and be silent.  
Offer the sacrifices of the righteous  
and trust in the Lord.

**Doubt:**

Many, Lord, are asking, "Who will bring us prosperity?"  
Let the light of your face shine on us.  
Fill my heart with joy  
when their grain and new wine abound.

**Faith and Doubt:**

In peace I will lie down and sleep,  
for you alone, Lord,  
make me dwell in safety.

**Sung Prayer**

["Come to Us, Beloved Stranger"](#) <sup>Downing</sup>

["Shine on Us"](#) <sup>Smith and Smith</sup>

"Psalm 4: [O God, Defender of the Poor](#)" <sup>Idle</sup>

["O For a Closer Walk with Thee"](#) <sup>Cowper</sup>

**Call to Confession**

God calls us to "tremble and do not sin"

and to "search our hearts".  
When we search our hearts  
we find that we have sinned.  
It isn't that our doubt or the act of questioning God is sinful,  
but rather when we stop coming to God,  
when we knowingly turn our back on God,  
running after delusions and false gods thinking they have the answers.

So we come to God in this time of confession  
not because of doubt or questions,  
but because we have turned to the wrong places for answers  
and need our hearts attuned to God's.

### ***Prayer of Confession***

Almighty God,  
so many psalms reveal a heart sighing, crying,  
and breaking with sorrow,  
yet still clinging to faith in you.  
Even in the midst of sorrow and doubt  
we acknowledge that we are afflicted by sin,  
that things are not as they should be in the world or in our heart.  
And in good times we think we have the answers  
and don't need you,  
And so we fail to recognize our sin at all.

In Jesus Christ, you have given us what we need most,  
yet somehow we continue to turn to other places,  
other people, other things and ideologies.  
Even though it is Christ's cross  
that makes our salvation and forgiveness possible,  
we consistently get distracted by the world's vain promises.

Send your Spirit to set the world aright,  
and in good times and in times of struggle  
tune our hearts to God's so that we may truly sing your praises.

Humbly we beg your pardon for our sin  
and ask that your truth will be revealed,  
and our hearts open to receive Christ Jesus as Lord of every part of our life,  
trusting in his unfailing love.

Amen.

—TWS 2.2.39, alt., Joyce Berger

### ***Assurance of Pardon***

Receive these words of grace:  
"The Lord is merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
He will not always accuse,  
nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to our iniquities.  
For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;  
as far as the east is from the west,  
so far he removes our transgressions from us.  
As a father has compassion for his children,  
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him".  
—Psalm 103:8–13, NRSV

## Fourth Sunday of Easter: April 21, 2024

### **God's Greeting\***

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

The God who has the power  
to make what was dead alive again,  
and loved us so much that he sent Christ  
to die for our sins so we may live—  
that is the God who calls us here today,  
and greets us with these words:  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine."

### **Opening Words\***

We belong.

We belong to God, the Good Shepherd.

Psalm 23 says:

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths  
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

**Surely your goodness and love will follow me**

all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
forever.

**Song of Praise:**

["Now the Green Blade Rises"](#) Crum

["The King of Love my Shepherd Is"](#) Baker, LUYH 824, GtG 802, SSS 359

["My Shepherd Will Supply My Need"](#) Watts, LUYH 369, GtG 803, SSS 44

**Call to Confession**

God loves us.

Christ, when asked

what was most important for his followers to do, said:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart  
and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

God loves us.

Yet we consistently fail to love God or our neighbor.

In sorrow for our failure

but with assurance of God's loving compassion,

let us offer our prayer of confession.

**Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God,

you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you.

We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy.

We have not loved you with a pure heart,

nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves.

We have not done justice, loved kindness,

or walked humbly with you, our God.

Have mercy on us, O God,

in your loving-kindness.

In your great compassion,

cleanse us from our sin.

**Create in us a clean heart, O God,**

**and renew a right spirit within us.**

**Do not cast us from your presence,**

**or take your Holy Spirit from us.**

**Restore to us the joy of your salvation**

**and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit**

**through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

—based on Psalm 51:10–12 (*The Book of Common Worship*. © 1946, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), p. 26., alt., PD)

**Assurance of Pardon**

People of God,  
be assured that you are forgiven  
and live lives of gratitude following God's commands.  
As John, the apostle, wrote:  
"The one who keeps God's commands lives in him,  
and he in them.  
And this is how we know that God lives in us:  
We know it by the Spirit God gave us." (1 John 3: 24)

## Fifth Sunday of Easter: April 28, 2024

### **God's Greeting\***

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

The God who has the power  
to make what was dead alive again,  
and loved us so much that he sent Christ  
to die for our sins so we may live—  
that is the God who calls us here today,  
and greets us with these words:  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine."

### **Opening Words\***

We love God because God first loved us  
and so we praise him using words from Psalm 22.

Because of what you have done,  
**I will praise you in the whole community  
of those who worship you.**

In front of those who respect you,

**I will keep my promises.**

Those who are poor will eat and be satisfied.

Those who seek the Lord will praise him.

**May their hearts be filled with new hope!**

People from one end of the earth to the other  
will remember and turn to the Lord.

The people of all the nations  
will bow down in front of him.

**The Lord is King.**

**He rules over the nations.**

— Psalm 22:25-28, (NIRV)

### **Song of Praise:**

["Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing"](#) Wren

"Psalm 22: [Amid the Thronging Worshipers](#)" *Psalter* 1912, LUYH 511

["I Come with Joy"](#) Wren

**Call to Confession**

God loves us.

Christ, when asked  
what was most important for his followers to do, said:  
"Love the Lord your God with all your heart  
and with all your soul and with all your mind.'  
This is the first and greatest commandment.  
And the second is like it:  
'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

God loves us.

Yet we consistently fail to love God or our neighbor.  
In sorrow for our failure  
but with assurance of God's loving compassion  
let us offer our prayer of confession.

**Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God,  
you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you.  
We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy.  
We have not loved you with a pure heart,  
nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves.  
We have not done justice, loved kindness,  
or walked humbly with you, our God.

Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness.  
In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin.

**Create in us a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within us.  
Do not cast us from your presence,  
or take your Holy Spirit from us.  
Restore to us the joy of your salvation  
and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

—based on Psalm 51:10-12 (*The Book of Common Worship*. © 1946, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), p. 26., alt., PD)

**Assurance of Pardon**

People of God,  
be assured that you are forgiven;  
now remain rooted in God's love.  
As John, the apostle, taught:  
"This is how we know  
that we live in him and he in us:

He has given us of his Spirit.  
And we have seen and testify  
that the Father has sent his Son  
to be the Savior of the world.  
If anyone acknowledges  
that Jesus is the Son of God,  
God lives in them and they in God.  
And so we know and rely on the love God has for us."  
—1 John 4:13–16

## Sixth Sunday of Easter: May 5, 2024

### **God's Greeting\***

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

The God who has the power  
to make what was dead alive again,  
and loved us so much that he sent Christ  
to die for our sins so we may live—  
that is the God who calls us here today,  
and greets us with these words:  
"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine."

### **Opening Words\***

We belong,  
God has redeemed us to be his own,  
and so we praise God,  
using words from Psalm 118.

Sing to the Lord a new song,  
**for he has done marvelous things;**  
his right hand and his holy arm  
have worked salvation for him.  
The Lord has made his salvation known  
and revealed his righteousness to the nations.  
He has remembered his love  
and his faithfulness to Israel;  
**all the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.**

### **Song of Praise\***

["Alleluia! Jesus is Risen"](#) Brokering

["Lord, Most High"](#) Harris and Sadler, LUYH 593, SSS 448

### **Call to Confession**

Christ, when asked  
what was most important for his followers to do, said:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart  
and with all your soul and with all your mind.’  
This is the first and greatest commandment.  
And the second is like it:  
‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Christ exemplified that love  
when he willingly lay down his life for us,  
yet so often we are not willing  
to even do the smallest act of love.  
And so, aware of our own sinfulness,  
we offer to God our prayer of confession.

### ***Prayer of Confession***

Merciful God,  
you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you.  
We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy.  
We have not loved you with a pure heart,  
nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves.  
We have not done justice, loved kindness,  
or walked humbly with you, our God.

Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness.  
In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin.

**Create in us a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within us.  
Do not cast us from your presence,  
or take your Holy Spirit from us.  
Restore to us the joy of your salvation  
and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

—based on Psalm 51:10–12 (*The Book of Common Worship*. © 1946, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), p. 26., alt., PD)

### ***Assurance of Pardon***

People of God,  
be assured that you are forgiven and live lives of love.  
As John, the Apostle teaches,  
“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God,  
and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.  
This is how we know that we love the children of God:  
by loving God and carrying out his commands.” (1 John 5:1–2)

**Ascension Day: Thursday, May 9 (or following Sunday)**

### ***God's Greeting\****

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

Christ has ascended!

**Christ has ascended, alleluia!**

Our ascended Lord greets us with these words:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ,  
through the working of the Holy Spirit.

**Opening Words\***

In celebration of Christ's ascension let us offer our praise using the words of Psalm 47:

Clap your hands, all you nations;  
**shout to God with cries of joy.**

For the Lord Most High is awesome,  
the great King over all the earth.  
He subdued nations under us,  
peoples under our feet.  
He chose our inheritance for us,  
the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

God has ascended amid shouts of joy,  
the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.

Sing praises to God,  
**sing praises;**  
sing praises to our King,  
**sing praises.**

For God is the King of all the earth;  
**sing to him a psalm of praise.**

God reigns over the nations;  
God is seated on his holy throne.  
The nobles of the nations assemble  
as the people of the God of Abraham,  
**for the kings of the earth belong to God;**  
**he is greatly exalted.**

**Song of Praise:**

"Psalm 47: [Nations, Clap Your Hands](#)" *Psalter Hymnal 1987*

"[Crown Him with Many Crowns](#)" Bridges and Thring, LUYH 223, GtG 268, SSS 208

"[Jesus is Lord](#)" Chua, LUYH 226

**Call to Confession**

While we claim to celebrate the ascension of our Lord,  
the way we live proclaims our lack of faith  
in his power to deal with the world.  
Let us confess the incongruity

between our faith and practice.

Let us pray.

—*Reformed Worship* 11:22 © The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship

### **Prayer of Confession**

We come, O Lord,

on this day of glory to confess our lack of trust.

While we sing of your lordship over all creation,

we have too often acted as though you are powerless

in the face of today's events.

Help us to live with confidence in your presence today

and in hope for life with you forever. Amen.

—*Reformed Worship* 11:22 © The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Hear the good news of the gospel:

God, who is rich in mercy,

out of the great love with which he loved us

even when we were dead through our trespasses,

made us alive together with Christ—

by grace you have been saved—

and raised us up with him

and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

so that in the ages to come

he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace

in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

In Christ, by God's grace, we are saved.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

—based on Ephesians 2:4–7, NRSV

## **Seventh Sunday of Easter: May 12, 2024 (or use Ascension Day)**

### **Opening Song:**

#### **God's Greeting\***

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

Christ has ascended!

**Christ has ascended, alleluia!**

The God who has the power

to make what was dead alive again,

and loved us so much that he sent Christ

to die for our sins so we may live—

that is the God who calls us here today,

and greets us with these words:

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine."

### **Opening Words\***

Lord, our God,  
we trust your promise to be among us as we gather.

**We come in the name of Christ,  
drawn by your Spirit,  
eager to hear your Word.**

Fill our hearts with your Spirit  
and prepare us for faithful service.

**Amen.**

—*The Worship Sourcebook* © Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1.4.43

### **Song of Praise:**

"Psalm 45: [For the Honor of Our King](#)" Leckebusch

"[Jesus is Lord](#)" Chua

"[Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God](#)" Getty and Townend, LUYH 746

### **Call to Confession**

Psalm 1 says,  
Blessed is the one  
    who does not walk in step with the wicked  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
    or sit in the company of mockers,  
but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
    and who meditates on his law day and night.  
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
    which yields its fruit in season.

Christ summarized God's law with these words:

"'Love the Lord your God with all your heart  
and with all your soul and with all your mind.'  
This is the first and greatest commandment.  
And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

As Christ's followers we know that we are not of the world  
and are called to a radical life of love,  
but we also know,  
that so often we fail to live out that calling.  
In sorrow for our failure  
but with assurance of God's loving compassion,  
let us offer our prayer of confession.

### **Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God,  
you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you.  
We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy.  
We have not loved you with a pure heart,  
nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves.  
We have not done justice, loved kindness,

or walked humbly with you, our God.

Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness.  
In your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin.

**Create in us a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within us.  
Do not cast us from your presence,  
or take your Holy Spirit from us.  
Restore to us the joy of your salvation  
and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

—based on Psalm 51:10-12 (*The Book of Common Worship*. © 1946, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), p. 26., alt., PD)

***Assurance of Pardon***

People of God,  
be assured that in Christ you are forgiven.  
Joined with Christ in his death and resurrection,  
pattern your life after his,  
showing radical love to all people.