



Rejoice Now All the Earth!

LWF Communion Prayer
for the Easter Season 2020

7th week of Easter



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

A Communion
of Churches

Introduction

Easter is a season that lasts for 50 days. It begins with the celebration of Easter Sunday, and continues until the festival of Pentecost. The Easter Exultet reminds us that this is a time for all the earth to rejoice! We rejoice in the good news that God speaks the first and the last Word, and that Word is life. This particular Easter season (2020) we are experiencing a global pandemic that reminds us of our common human nature, and all of the vulnerabilities and limits of being a creature. In this context, the good news of Easter reminds us that, even though we live in the shadow of the cross where death and suffering are part of our condition, God continually renews life. These 50 days give us a time to contemplate that good news, which Jesus calls us to proclaim to all creation.

We offer this resource to our global Lutheran communion, as a way to be in the solidarity of prayer during this season of Easter. The daily prayers follow an order: Opening, Psalmody, Bible text, meditation and prayer. This order of prayer can be adapted in any way, such as singing songs, adding your own prayers, or any liturgical acts that are meaningful in your context. In addition to the texts, which follow the Revised Common Lectionary, you will notice that the Sunday meditations relate to a common theme of Baptism. Baptism is a sacrament where we receive the promise of this good news. And the Small Catechism encourages us to remember our baptism daily, as a way to be renewed by this promise each day.

We commend these prayers to your use, whether alone in your home, as a family, or as your community is able to virtually gather from a distance during the season of Easter. And as you pray in solidarity with the Lutheran communion across the globe, and the communion of saints in all times and places, be encouraged by the counsel that Luther offers in his letter, *A Simple Way to Pray*:

“Never think that you are kneeling or standing alone, rather think that the whole of the Church...are standing there beside you and you are standing among them in a common, united petition which God cannot disdain. There we find God the Creator, God the Redeemer, God the Holy Spirit, that is, God who daily sanctifies us.”

Rejoice, in the good news that all creation shares in this season! Christ is risen! And with it, all creation sings hope in the promise of new life.

Prayers are from *Koinonia, Services and Prayers*, LWF, 2004 and *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, Augsburg Fortress, 2006. Lectionary readings are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

Seventh Sunday of Easter

24 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

Come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.
For the LORD is a great God, and a great Sovereign above all gods

The LORD holds the caverns of the earth, and sustains the heights of the hills.
The sea belongs to God, who made it, whose hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the LORD our Maker.
For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.

Oh, that today you would hearken to God's voice!
– *Psalm 95*

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

John 17:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

In this seventh and last week of the Great 50 days of Easter, we hear Christ’s prayer in the Gospel of John. This prayer prepares us to continue the proclamation and witness and service that Christ embodied. As Pentecost approaches and the church year extends into the season of the Spirit, the disciples (and all believers) find strength in this intercessory prayer of Christ for them, for the community, and for the world.

There will be many objections to the way of faith. There will be many who want to claim “God” as their own and exclude others. There will be many who believe their way of approaching God is the only way. But the prayer of Jesus shifts all these perspectives. Eternal life consists in “that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” Eternal life is not something we can define. It is not about fulfilling certain obligations, even good obligations, it is simply to know God, which is to know

Jesus (as we heard in John 14). Jesus reveals to us God's mercy. Jesus is God's mercy. This is the way: mercy – or as Luther writes, “immeasurable goodness.” Immersed in God's mercy is eternal life.

On 27 March, during a special sermon and prayer for deliverance from the current pandemic, Pope Francis encouraged all believers to hear these words of Jesus “that they may be one, as we are one” (John17:11) as evoking our deep communal humanity: “our belonging as brothers and sisters.” Let us also engage continually in this prayer of Jesus and see in one another, in our neighbor, both familiar and unfamiliar, both friend and stranger, our communal bond, our responsibility for each other. And let us practice being one.

Let us pray...

God of the cosmos, we thank you for making yourself known to us in the solidarity of your Word and flesh. In the unity of the Holy Trinity, we know life-giving love. Nurture our unity, that the world may believe in your love, and live. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Monday, 25 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

Praise the LORD.
Praise God in the sanctuary;
praise God in the mighty heavens.
**Praise God for acts of power;
praise God for surpassing greatness.
Praise God with the sounding of the trumpet,**

praise God with the harp and lyre,
Praise God with timbrel and dancing,
praise God with the strings and pipe,
Praise God with the clash of cymbals,

praise God with resounding cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.
Praise the LORD.
– *Psalm 150*

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

Acts 1:6-8

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Let us pray...

Eternal God, author of creation, you call to us from beyond our experience of time. We give you thanks for your Holy Spirit that breaks into each moment and holds our lives in the eternal presence of your love. Grant us to trust the plenitude of your kingdom come in every moment, in the name of the one who was, who is, and who is to come. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Tuesday, 26 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth,
burst into jubilant song with music;

make music to the LORD with the harp,
with the harp and the sound of singing,

with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn—
shout for joy before the LORD, the King.

Let the sea resound, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it.

Let the rivers clap their hands,
let the mountains sing together for joy;

let them sing before the LORD,
for God comes to judge the earth.

– Psalm 98:4-9

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

Acts 1:9-14

When Jesus had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Let us pray...

Almighty God, who gives us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, turn our eyes from heaven to see the world that you love, and faithfully serve it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Wednesday, 27 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

Praise the LORD.
How good it is to sing praises to our God,

how pleasant and fitting to praise God!
The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
God gathers the exiles of Israel.
God heals the brokenhearted

and binds up their wounds.
God determines the number of the stars

and calls them each by name.
Great is our Lord and mighty in power;

God's understanding has no limit.
The LORD sustains the humble
but casts the wicked to the ground.
Sing to the LORD with grateful praise;
make music to our God on the harp.
– Psalm 147:1-7

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

Psalm 68:1-3

Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee before him.
As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God.
But let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Let us pray...

God, by the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, inspire joy in us, that we can exult before God, and rejoice with all creation. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Thursday, 28 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.

Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

– Psalm 96:1-3

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

1 Peter 5:6-7

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Let us pray...

Almighty and everlasting God, receive our anxieties as a sign of trust that you care for us, and will transform our grief by your liberating love. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Friday, 29 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes,
he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

– Psalm 96:11-13

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

Psalm 68:5-8

Father of orphans and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation.

God gives the desolate a home to live in; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious live in a parched land.

O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness,
Selah

the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Let us pray...

God of mercy, we thank you for the sustaining goodness of your creation, for all gifts of healing and forgiveness, for the gifts of relationship with others, and for the communion of faith in your church. Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.

Saturday 30 May 2020

Opening

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Alleluia!

Psalmody

It is good to praise the LORD
And make music to your name, O Most High,
proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,

to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.

For you make me glad by your deeds, LORD;
I sing for joy at what your hands have done.

How great are your works, LORD,
how profound your thoughts!

– Psalm 92:1-5

Glory to the Father, and to the + Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, is and will be for-e-ver. Amen.

Reflecting Together

John 17:6-11

“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia!

Let us pray...

Merciful God, protect your creation and nurture the unity of all, so that the world may know the hope of reconciliation that was begun in Christ Jesus, the living Lord.
Amen.

Our Father in heaven ...

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Lord bless us and direct our days and our deeds in peace.

Amen.