

# A BRIEF GUIDE TO HOME DEVOTIONS USING THE LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK

PREPARED MARCH 18 2020

## I. INTRODUCTION

In light of the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19, and in response to guidance from the federal and provincial governments, Lutheran Church–Canada has called on its congregations to suspend all worship services and group events for the time being.

The following guide has been developed as **a tool to assist you with home devotions** during this difficult period. While these resources are no replacement for the blessings of receiving Word and Sacrament in the context of your local congregation, they are intended to ensure you continue to be fed with God’s Word during an interruption to regular church services.

Lutheran Church–Canada congregations have been encouraged, where it is safe to do so, to allow congregants to take home with them the hymnals they regularly use during worship. Your hymnal is a great treasure, full of resources for personal devotions, ranging from brief services, Psalms, a Bible reading plan, prayers, Luther’s Small Catechism, and of course hymns. In the event your congregation’s regular worship times are interrupted, your hymnal will ensure you have regular access to a rich library of devotional resources.

In fact, even apart from the current crisis, learning to use the hymnal for personal and family devotions is a practice well worth pursuing.

*[In the event your congregation is unable to offer a hymnal for home use, you can print off the “Orders of Daily Prayer,” which Concordia Publishing House has recently made available for free online at [www.communication.cph.org/care](http://www.communication.cph.org/care).]*



## II. USING THE HYMNAL

In order to help you make the best use of your hymnal, LCC has developed this brief guide to assist you in finding the resources within the **Lutheran Service Book** quickly. Be sure to set aside a regular period of time for devotions each day, as following a routine is a helpful way to make new devotional practices last.

### 1. **Orders of Daily Prayer for Individuals and Families (Pages 294-298)**

These brief, **one-page-long services** provide a simple form of prayer that individuals and families can use to structure their daily home devotions.

### 2. **Daily Lectionary (Pages 299-304)**

This **lectionary** suggests brief readings from the Old Testament and the New Testament each day for personal study. A table of suggested readings for the Psalms is also provided.

### 3. **Prayers (Pages 305-318)**

The hymnal provides a list of **suggested prayers** which you can use during daily devotion. During this time of sorrow and confusion, you may wish to pray especially the prayers “For the nation” (page 313), “In times of affliction and distress” (page 317), and “Time of disaster” (page 317).

#### 4. Hymns of Trust, Hope, and Comfort (Pages 708-765)

While the **hymnal** is full of thoughtful hymns, those dealing with trust (pages 708-739) and hope and comfort (pages 740-765) may be particularly meaningful to people in times of crisis. Specific hymn suggestions appear later in this guide under the heading “IV. Suggested Hymns.”

If you’re looking for a particular hymn, you can also find an alphabetical index of first lines beginning on page 1017. If you’re looking for a topical index of hymns by subject or church season, see the index beginning on page 993.

#### 5. Luther’s Small Catechism (Pages 321-330)

Study anew the basics of the Christian faith with Martin Luther’s brief guide. **Luther’s Small Catechism** also includes brief sections on daily prayer, the table of duties, and Christian questions-and-answers.

If you are familiar with the services of **Matins** (page 219), **Vespers** (page 229), **Morning Prayer** (page 235), **Evening Prayer** (page 243), and **Compline** (page 253), you may wish to incorporate one or all of these into your personal prayer time as well. The service of Matins or Morning Prayer would be particularly appropriate for use on Sunday mornings while your congregation remains closed.



Another particularly valuable service is **The Litany**, an ancient order of prayer which can be found on page 288. Services of Responsive Prayer can also be found on pages 282 and 285.

As you plan for devotions on Sundays and holy days (like Good Friday), be sure to see also section “V. Scripture Readings” of this guide. It lists the assigned **Bible readings** for these days, along with **Collect Prayers** and **Suggested Hymns**.





### III. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following section highlights additional resources which may be helpful to you as you prepare home devotions.

#### 1. Lutheran Church–Canada

As the current pandemic continues to unfold, Lutheran Church–Canada will regularly offer new materials (both practical and devotional) online. Visit [www.lutheranchurch.ca](http://www.lutheranchurch.ca) and [www.canadianlutheran.ca](http://www.canadianlutheran.ca) regularly for new information, as well as for news and devotional reading. Watch also for LCC’s weekly email newsletter **InfoDigest**; sign-up by clicking “Subscribe” on the website of The Canadian Lutheran. The physical version of the magazine will also continue to be shipped to congregations.

Lutheran Church–Canada is also collating a list of congregations which offer livestream services and sermons, which will be posted on its website.

#### 2. Audio Liturgy Files

Not sure how to sing the music in some of the orders of service in the hymnal, but want to learn? The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has recorded examples of every service in the Lutheran Service Book and made them available to download free online. Visit [www.lcms.org/worship/church-music/liturgy-audio-files](http://www.lcms.org/worship/church-music/liturgy-audio-files) to listen in.

#### 3. Devotions for Times of Distress

Concordia Publishing House has released a free pdf of devotions, packaged in its popular Portals of Prayer format. The booklet is entitled **Where is God Now? Sixty Devotions for Times of Distress**, and you can download it at [www.communication.cph.org/care](http://www.communication.cph.org/care).

#### 4. The Lutheran Hour

Produced by the International Lutheran Laymen's League, **The Lutheran Hour** is a longstanding radio program which brings the good news of the Gospel to more than a million people in North America each week. You can find a list of radio stations in Canada which carry The Lutheran Hour at [www.ill.ca/lh\\_schedule](http://www.ill.ca/lh_schedule). You can also listen to The Lutheran Hour online at [www.lutheranhour.org](http://www.lutheranhour.org). The Lutheran Hour also publishes daily devotions which you can read online.

#### 5. Lutheran Public Radio

**Lutheran Public Radio** streams sacred music 24-7, with many of the songs being hymns from the Lutheran Service Book. Tune in to music especially chosen to match the church calendar at [www.lutheranpublicradio.org](http://www.lutheranpublicradio.org).

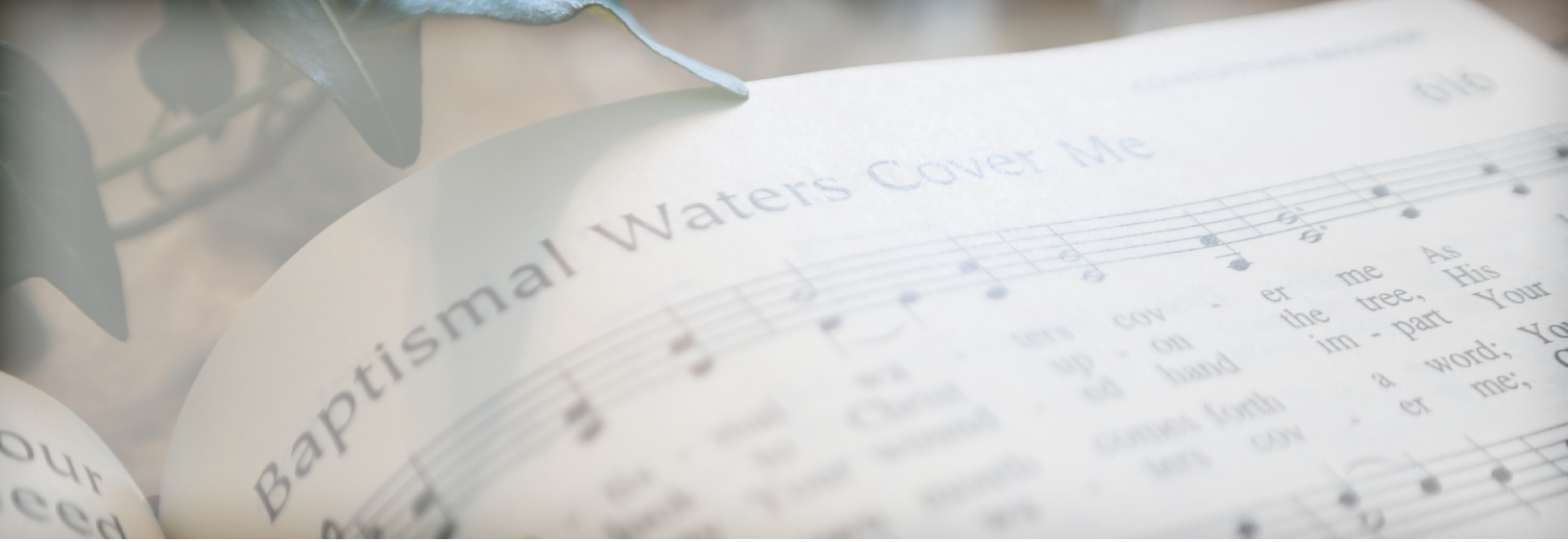
#### 6. Your Congregation

Your local church may have additional devotional resources, like the devotional Portals of Prayer, which they are distributing to members. Your church may also be open at regular periods for personal prayer, with congregants required to observe social distancing and with the church being carefully disinfected between visits. **Contact your congregation** for more information.

Your local congregation may also be planning to live-stream services or sermons; contact them for further information on how to tune-in. In the event your church does not have live-stream capabilities, LCC will soon be posting a list of churches that do at [www.lutheranchurch.ca](http://www.lutheranchurch.ca).

#### 7. Your Pastor

Even if services at your local congregation are temporarily suspended, your pastor is committed to providing spiritual support to you. Pick up the phone and call him, or send him an email. Your pastor may also be offering private confession, absolution, and communion, while observing strict social distancing and disinfection guidelines. **Contact your pastor for more information.**



## IV. SUGGESTED HYMNS

When some people pick up a hymnal, they don't know where to start. Hymns for the current and upcoming seasons of the church year appear in **Lutheran Service Book** here: Lent (Pages 418-440), Holy Week (Pages 441-456), and Easter (Pages 457-490). Those looking for hymns of consolation and comfort in this difficult time, may wish to especially look at the following. Hymns of Trust (Pages 708-739) and Hymns of Hope and Comfort (Pages 740-765) may be particularly helpful to you, but don't be afraid to leaf through the book looking for other beloved hymns.

*563 – Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness*  
*575/576 – My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*  
*588 – Jesus Loves Me This I Know*  
*604 – I Bind unto Myself Today*  
*615 – When in the Hour of Deepest Need*  
*666 – O Little Flock, Fear Not the Foe*  
*679 – Oh, How Blest Are They*  
*685 – Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus*  
*699 – I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*  
*702 – My Faith Looks Up to Thee*  
*709 – The King of Love My Shepherd Is*  
*710 – The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want*  
*715 – Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me*  
*722 – Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me*  
*725 – Children of the Heavenly Father*  
*733 – O God, Our Help in Ages Past*  
*735 – Have No Fear, Little Flock*  
*740 – I Am Jesus' Little Lamb*  
*741 – Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense*  
*742 – For Me to Live is Jesus*  
*743 – Jesus, Priceless Treasure*  
*744 – Amazing Grace*  
*745 – In God, My Faithful God*

*746 – Through Jesus' Blood and Merit*  
*750 – If Thou But Trust in God to Guide Thee*  
*752 – Be Still, My Soul*  
*754 – Entrust Your Days and Burdens*  
*756 – Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me*  
*765 – God Moves in a Mysterious Way*  
*770 – What a Friend We Have in Jesus*  
*878 – Abide with Me*  
*918 – Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer*

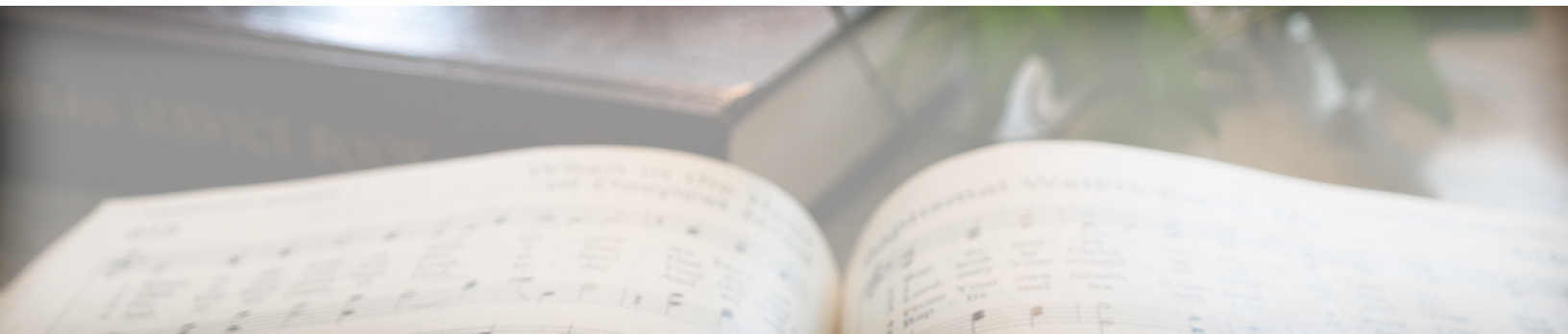


## V. SCRIPTURE READINGS

The following section lists all of the **Bible readings for Divine Service** from now through the end of April 2020, **along with the Collect Prayer and Suggested Hymns**. Even when your congregation is open, it's a fruitful practice to meditate on the Scripture readings in advance of the church service. In the event congregations should remain closed beyond the schedule listed here, or if you wish to see readings from the One-Year Lectionary, visit [www.lcms.org/worship/lectionary-series](http://www.lcms.org/worship/lectionary-series).

If you do not have a Bible, ask your local church if they can provide one. You can also read the Bible online at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).

*[Note: For the hymn suggestions below, FR=First Reading, E=Epistle, and G=Gospel.]*



### MARCH 22 (FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT)

**Psalm:** *Psalm 142*

**First Reading:** *Isaiah 42:14-21*

**Epistle:** *Ephesians 5:8-14*

**Gospel:** *John 9:1-41 or John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39*

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Your mercies are new every morning; and though we deserve only punishment, You receive us as Your children and provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant that we may heartily acknowledge Your merciful goodness, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Hymn of the Day:** 972

**Other Hymns:** 873 (FR, E), 545 (FR), 697 (E), 744 (G), 841 (G)



## MARCH 29 (FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT)

*Psalm: Psalm 130*

*First Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14*

*Epistle: Romans 8:1-11*

*Gospel: John 11:1-45 (46-53) or John 11:17-27, 38-53*

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God, by Your great goodness mercifully look upon Your people that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day: 430*

*Other Hymns: 686 (E), 420 (G), 543 (G), 552 st. 1, 9-10, 4 (G)*

## APRIL 5 (PALM SUNDAY/SUNDAY OF THE PASSION)

*Psalm: Psalm 118:19-29 or 31:9-16*

*First Reading: Isaiah 40:4-9a*

*Epistle: Philippians 2:5-11*

*Gospel: John 12:12-19 (Palm Sunday Procession) and Matthew 26:1-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-66 or John 12:20-43*

**Palm Sunday Collect:** Most merciful God, as the people of Jerusalem, with palms in their hands, gathered to greet Your dearly beloved Son when He came into His Holy City, grant that we may ever hail Him as our King and, when He comes again, may go forth to meet Him with trusting and steadfast hearts and follow Him in the way that leads to eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Palm Sunday Hymn of the Day: 442*

*Hymn of the Day: 438 or 440*

*Other Hymns: 451 (FR), 420 (G1), 560 (G2), 837 (G2), 425, 441, 443*





## APRIL 9 (HOLY THURSDAY/MAUNDY THURSDAY)

*Psalm: Psalm 116:12-19*

*First Reading: Exodus 24:3-11 or Exodus 12:1-14*

*Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-22 or 1 Corinthians 11:23-32*

*Gospel: Matthew 26:17-30 or John 13:1-17, 31b-35*

**Collect of the Day:** O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifested in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day: 454*

*Other Hymns: 435(E, FR), 431 (E, FR), 761 (E), 445 (G), 634 (G), 618, 637*

## APRIL 10 (GOOD FRIDAY)

*Psalm: Psalm 22 or Psalm 31*

*First Reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12*

*Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9*

*Gospel: John 18:1-19:42 or John 19:17-30*

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God, graciously behold this Your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and delivered into the hands of sinful men to suffer death upon the cross; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day: 454*

*Other Hymns: 434(FT), 429 (G), 440 (G), 449/450 (G), 451 (G), 453 (G), 436, 456*



## APRIL 12 (EASTER SUNRISE)

*Psalm: Psalm 11:18-15-29 or The Song of Moses and Israel*

*First Reading: Exodus 14:10-15:1*

*Epistle: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11*

*Gospel: John 20:1-18*

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life. We humbly pray that we may live before You in righteousness and purity forever; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day: 467*

*Other Hymns: 487 (FR), 925 (FR), 478 (FR, G), 461 (E), 475, 548*

## APRIL 12 (EASTER DAY)

*Psalm: Psalm 16*

*First Reading: Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6*

*Epistle: Colossians 3:1-4*

*Gospel: Matthew 28:1-10*

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God the Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have overcome death and opened the gate of everlasting life to us. Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of our Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by Your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Alternate Collect of the Day:** O God, for our redemption You gave Your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross and by His glorious resurrection delivered us from the

power of the enemy. Grant that all our sin may be drowned through daily repentance and that day by day we may arise to live before You in righteousness and purity forever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day: 458 or 466*

*Other Hymns: 548 (FR), 465 (E), 466 (G), 469 (G), 475 (G), 457, 467*

## APRIL 19 (SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER)

*Psalm: Psalm 148*

*First Reading: Acts 5:29-42*

*Epistle: 1 Peter 1:3-9*

*Gospel: John 20:19-31*

**Collect of the Day:** Almighty God, grant that we who have celebrated the Lord's resurrection may by Your grace confess in our life and conversation that Jesus is Lord and God; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day: 470/471*

*Other Hymns: 482 (FR), 829 (E), 467 (G), 472 (G), 720 (G)*

## APRIL 26 (THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER)

*Psalm: Psalm 116:1-14*

*First Reading: 2:14a, 36-41*

*Epistle: 1 Peter 1:17-25*

*Gospel: Luke 24:13-35*

**Collect of the Day:** O God, through the humiliation of Your Son You raised up the fallen world. Grant to Your faithful people, rescued from the peril of everlasting death, perpetual gladness and eternal joys; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Hymn of the Day - 483*

*Other Hymns -598 (E, FR), 474 (G), 476 (G), 585 (G), 463*



*"Almighty God, heavenly Father, give us grace to trust You during this time of great distress. In mercy put an end to the coronavirus epidemic that is afflicting many people around the world. Grant relief to those who are suffering, and comfort to those who mourn the death of loved ones. Sustain all medical personnel who are attending to the sick, and bless the efforts of those who are working tirelessly to discover a treatment for this disease. In these times of affliction and distress, strengthen us by Your Word and Spirit to continue steadfast in the one, true, saving faith; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our suffering Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen."*

