



Bible
Readings
for the Christian Year

Revised Common Lectionary, Year A
2007-2008

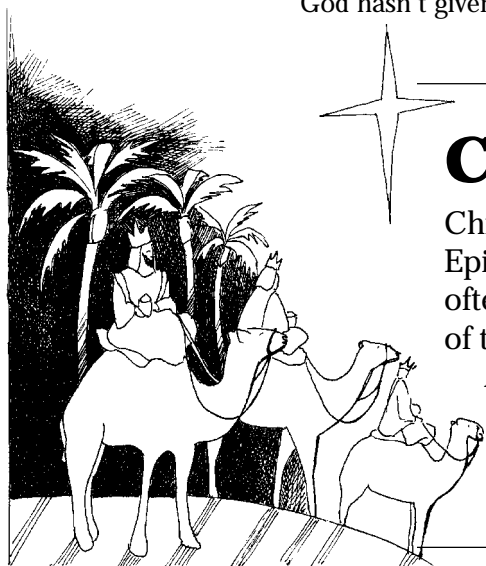
by The Rev. H.A. Tillinghast

ADVENT

Advent has a double meaning. On one hand it is a looking forward to the Advent (the coming of God in Jesus Christ) as celebrated in Christmas. As such, Advent is the beginning of the Church year. At the same time, it is the end of the last Church year. The final several Sundays of the previous Church year contain lections about “end times” and the first Sundays of Advent pick up this same theme, the return of Jesus, or the Second Coming. Advent is a time of expectation, of the first Advent and the Second. Shades of purple are colors usually associated with this season, but blue is also appropriate.



DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Dec. 2 2004	1st in Advent	Isaiah 2:1-5 God will teach us what to do. Swords to plows.	122 (845)	Romans 13:11-14 Wake up! The Day is almost here.	Matthew 24:36-44 No one knows the day or the hour.
Dec. 9	2nd in Advent	Isaiah 11:1-10 The peaceful kingdom. A new king will arise.	72:1-7, 18-19 (795)	Romans 15:4-13 Christ, root of Jesse, hope of the Gentiles.	Matthew 3:1-12 The preaching of John the Baptist.
Dec. 16	3rd in Advent	Isaiah 35:1-10 The road of holiness. The desert will rejoice.	Luke 1:47- 55 (199)	James 5:7-10 How live while you wait for the Day? Patience.	Matthew 11:2-11 John's Messengers "Are you the one?"
Dec. 23	4th in Advent	Isaiah 7:10-16 The sign of Emmanuel. God hasn't given up.	80:1-7 17-19 (801)	Romans 1:1-7 Promise to David for all thru Good News in Jesus.	Matthew 1:18-25 The birth of Jesus, Immanuel.



CHRISTMAS

Christmas or Christmastide is the period from Christmas through Epiphany, January 6 (though the Epiphany readings are now often moved to the first Sunday of January). It is the fulfillment of the Advent expectation, at least concerning the first Advent.

A combination of impatience and commercial interest have made us begin celebrating Christmas earlier in our culture than does the rhythm of the Christian Year. The color most associated with this season is white.

DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Dec. 25	Christmas Day	Isaiah 52:7-10 The beauty of the messenger of peace.	98 (818)	Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12) God who spoke now speaks through Son.	John 1:1-14 Word from beginning has become flesh.

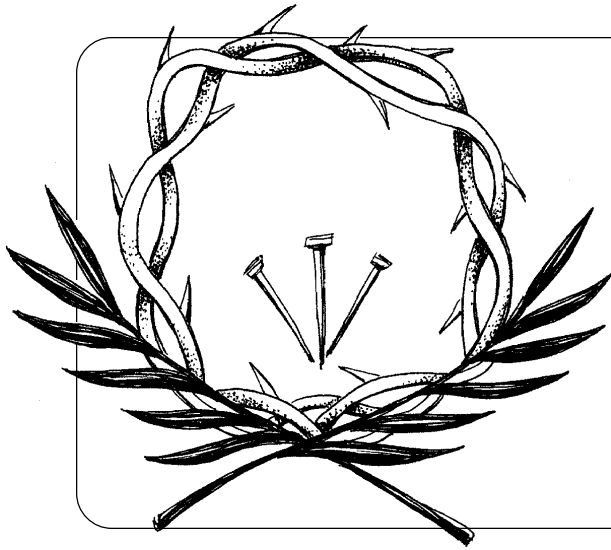
DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Dec. 30	1st after Christmas	Isaiah 63:7-9 The Lord's unfailing love to God's people.	148 (861)	Hebrews 2:10-18 Jesus became human to set us free.	Matthew 2:13-23 Escape to Egypt; death of innocents.
Jan. 1 2008	New Year's Eve/Day	Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 There is a time for everything.	8 (743)	Revelation 21:1-6a The New Heaven and the New Earth.	Matthew 25:31-46 Final judgement: the sheep and the goats.
Jan. 6	Epiphany of the Lord/ Epiphany Sun.	Isaiah 60:1-6 Glory of God's people. All will come to them.	72:1-7, 10-14 (795)	Ephesians 3:1-12 God's plan shown to Paul: for Gentiles.	Matthew 2:1-12 The visitors from the East.



AFTER EPIPHANY

The time between January 6 and Ash Wednesday (from 4 to 9 Sundays) is designated variously as Sundays after Epiphany or Sundays in "ordinary time." As is true also in the Post-Pentecost time, readings are chosen to be independent and semi-continuous rather than in "thematic harmony."

DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Jan. 13	Baptism of Lord	Isaiah 42:1-9 Lord's Servant. Bring justice to nations.	29 (761)	Acts 10:34-43 Peter's speech before Cornelius is baptized.	Matthew 3:13-17 The baptism of Jesus.
Jan. 20	2nd after Epiphany	Isaiah 49:1-7 Servant chosen to bring light to nations.	40:1-11 (774)	1 Corinthians 1:1-9 Blessings in Christ: will keep you firm.	John 1:29-42 John: "Behold the Lamb of God."
Jan. 27	3rd after Epiphany	Isaiah 9:1-4 Those in darkness have seen a great light.	27:1, 4-9 (758)	1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Divisions in the Church. Is Christ divided?	Matthew 4:12-23 Jesus' ministry begins, calls the four.
Feb. 3	Transfiguration Sunday	Exodus 24:12-18 God appears to Moses.	99 (819)	2 Peter 1:16-21 Not made up stories. We are eyewitnesses.	Matthew 17:1-9 The Transfiguration.



LENT

Lent, the 40 days before Easter (not counting Sundays), begins with Ash Wednesday and runs for six Sundays including Passion/Palm Sunday. Earliest emphasis was upon preparation for baptism and membership. Later emphasis turned toward penitence. Recent practice is to return to discipline and learning in preparation for the Easter celebration. The color purple is traditionally associated with this season.

DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Feb. 6	Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2,12-17 Warning about the Day. A call to repentance.	51:1-17 (785)	2 Cor. 5:20b—6:10 Let God turn you from enemy to friend. Now!	Matt. 6:1-6,16-21 Teachings: charity, prayer, fasting.
Feb. 10	1st in Lent	Gen. 2:15-17, 3:1-7 Creation of humans and disobedience.	32 (766)	Romans 5:12-19 Sin came with Adam. Grace came with Christ.	Matthew 4:1-11 The temptation of Jesus.
Feb. 17	2nd in Lent	Genesis 12:1-4a God calls Abram.	121 (844)	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 Example of Abraham. Promise had thru faith.	John 3:1-17 Nicodemus. God so loved the world.
Feb. 24	3rd in Lent	Exodus 17:1-7 Complaining of Israel. Water from the rock.	95 (814)	Romans 5:1-11 We have been put right with God thru Christ.	John 4:5-42 Jesus and the Samaritan woman.
Mar. 2	4th in Lent	1 Samuel 16:1-13 Covenant with David. He anointed king.	23 (754 or 137)	Ephesians 5:8-14 You were in dark; have been brought to light.	John 9:1-41 Jesus heals the man born blind.
Mar. 9	5th in Lent	Ezekiel 37:1-14 Valley of dry bones. Can these bones live?	130 (848)	Romans 8:6-11 Life by nature and life in the Spirit.	John 11:1-45 The raising of Lazarus.
Mar. 16	Passion/ Palm Sunday	<i>Liturgy of the Palms:</i> Matthew 21:1-11 (Jesus enters Jerusalem) <i>Liturgy of the Passion:</i> Isaiah 50:4-9a Servant of Lord: obedience in suffering.	Psalm 118:1-2,19-29 (Hymnal 839)	Philippians 2:5-11 Christ, through God, emptied self. Raised.	Matt. 26:14—27:66 (Passion reading) or Matt. 27:11-54
Mar. 20	Holy Thursday	Ex. 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14 Account of celebrating the Passover.	116:1-4, 12-19 (837)	1 Corinthians 11:23-26 Paul's account of the Last Supper.	John 13:1-17,31b-35 Jesus washes his Disciples' feet.
Mar. 21	Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13—53:12 The Suffering Servant. Endured our pain.	22 (752)	Hebrews 10:16-25 Jesus, our great High Priest. Confidence.	John 18:1—19:42 Passion account.

EASTER

Easter is the “queen of feasts” and lasts not a day or week but a week of weeks. So all of the Sundays are labeled Sundays **of** Easter, not Sundays **after** Easter. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday are inextricably linked with Easter Day in what is called the Triduum (“trid-jum,” three days). Together, the three days straddle the seasons of Lent and Easter. Easter is a season of great rejoicing which culminates in the Day of Pentecost. Hence, in this season we re-present those central events of our faith: the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The seasonal color is white.



DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Mar. 23	EASTER DAY	Acts 10:34-43 Peter: They killed him; God raised him.	118:1-2, 14-24 (839)	Colossians 3:1-4 You raised to life with Christ. Therefore...	John 20:1-18 or Mt. 28:1-10 Mary and empty tomb.
Mar. 30	2nd of Easter	Acts 2:14a, 22-32 Peter proclaims the Good News about Jesus.	16 (748)	1 Peter 1:3-9 God's raising Christ: given us living hope.	John 20:19-31 Appears to disciples and to Thomas.
Apr. 6	3rd of Easter	Acts 2:14a, 36-41 Response of people: believed and baptized.	116:1-4 12-19 (837)	1 Peter 1:17-23 Have confidence in God who raised Christ.	Luke 24:13-35 Appearance on the road to Emmaus.
Apr. 13	4th of Easter	Acts 2:42-47 Their life together.	23 (754 or 137)	1 Peter: 2:19-25 The example of Christ's suffering.	John 10:1-10 Parables: shepherds and thieves.
Apr. 20	5th of Easter	Acts 7:55-60 Stephen stoned.	31:1-5 15-16 (764)	1 Peter 2:2-10 Lord is living stone. You kingdom of priests	John 14:1-14 Don't worry; I am the way, truth, life.
Apr. 27	6th of Easter	Acts 17:22-31 Paul's sermon to the Athenians.	66:8-20 (790)	1 Peter 3:13-22 Christ died for our sins. Suffer for doing right.	John 14:15-21 Promise of the Holy Spirit.
May 1	Ascension of the Lord	Acts 1:1-11 Jesus taken up to heaven.	47 (781)	Ephesians 1:15-23 I give thanks for you in my prayers.	Luke 24:44-53 Final appearance; Jesus is taken up.
<i>(Note: These reading may also be used on the 7th Sunday of Easter.)</i>					
May 4	7th of Easter	Acts 1:6-14 Account of the Ascension. Disciples pray.	68:1-10, 32-35 (792)	1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 Suffer gladly as Christian. Be on the alert.	John 17:1-11 Jesus' prayer for his disciples.
May 11	Day of Pentecost	Acts 2:1-21 Account of Pentecost and descent of Spirit.	104:24-34, 35b (826)	1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 Different gifts from the Spirit. One body.	John 7:37-39 Thirsty: come, drink; Holy Spirit promised.



SUNDAYS AFTER PENTECOST

We enter now a period when all three readings in the Common Lectionary go their separate directions. Because this period covers half of the year, one might want to experiment to provide some variety in color beyond the recommended green. Perhaps the season might begin with green and move toward warmer colors of brown, yellow, orange as the year progresses. In the last several Sundays the readings begin to speak of “end times,” beginning to prepare us for the coming Advent season. And we prepare once more to start the cycle.

DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
May 18	Trinity Sunday	Genesis 1:1-2:4a First story of creation The seven days	8 (743)	2 Corinthians 13:11-13 Final warnings and a trinitarian farewell.	Matthew 28:16-20 Jesus sends disciples out. In Trinity.
May 25	2nd after Pentecost	Genesis 6:11-22, 7:24, 8:14-19 Noah and the flood.	46 (780)	Romans 1:16-17, 3:22b-28 (29-31) All fall short; Christ saves.	Matthew 7:21-29 Be like wise man who built house on rock.
June 1	3rd after Pentecost	Genesis 12:1-9 God to Abram: Go to land of Canaan.	33:1-12 (767)	Romans 4:13-25 God's promise realized through faith.	Mt. 9:9-13, 18-26 Matthew called; girl raised, woman healed.
June 8	4th after Pentecost	Genesis 18:1-15 Call of Abraham. Promised a son.	116:1-2, 12-19 (837)	Romans 5:1-8 Have been put right with God by faith.	Mt. 9:35-10:8 (9-23) Jesus preaches, heals. Sends out the twelve..
June 15	5th after Pentecost	Genesis 21:8-21 Hagar and Ishmael sent away.	86:1-10,16-17 or 17 (749)	Romans 6:1b-11 All baptized into Christ raised to new life.	Matthew 10:24-39 Don't fear people. Stand in awe of Christ
June 22	6th after Pentecost	Genesis 22:1-14 Abraham tested: sacrifice of Isaac	13 (746)	Romans 6:12-23 We were slaves to sin, now of righteousness.	Matthew 10:40-42 To welcome the other is to welcome Jesus.
June 29	7th after Pentecost	Gen. 24:34-38,42-49, 58-67 Finding a wife for Isaac: Rebekah.	45:10-17 or 72 (795)	Romans 7:15-25a The conflict within us Thank God for Christ!	Mt. 11:16-19, 25-30 Come to me and rest. Take my yoke.
July 6	8th after Pentecost	Genesis 25:19-34 Jacob and Esau. Mess of pottage.	119:105-112 or 25 (756)	Romans 8:1-11 Live by the Spirit not by our human nature.	Mt. 13:1-9, 18-23 Parable of the sower and the explanation.
July 13	9th after Pentecost	Genesis 28:10-19a Jacob's dream at Bethel. Covenant	139:1-12, 23-24 (854)	Romans 8:12-25 Since we're God's children, glory in the future.	Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43 Parable of the weeds and the explanation.
July 20	10th after Pentecost	Genesis 29:15-28 Jacob works fourteen years for wives.	105:1-11, 45b (828)	Romans 8:26-39 Sustained in weakness. Confidence is in God.	Mt. 13:31-33, 44-52 Parable:mustardseed, treasure, pearl, net.

DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
July 27	11th after Pentecost	Genesis 32:22-31 Jacob wrestles at Jabbok River.	17:1-7, 15 (749)	Romans 9:1-5 Paul's pain for his fellow Jews.	Matthew 14:13-21 Feeding of the five thousand.
Aug. 3	12th after Pentecost	Genesis 37:1-4,12-28 Joseph sold into slavery by brothers.	105:1-6, 16-22, 45b (828)	Romans 10:5-15 Salvation there for all in Christ.	Matthew 14:22-33 Jesus walks on the water.
Aug. 10	13th after Pentecost	Genesis 45:1-15 Joseph makes self known to his brothers.	133 (850)	Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 God's salvation, for Jew and Gentile.	Mt. 15: (10-20) 21-28 What comes out mouth. Foreign woman's faith.
Aug. 17	14th after Pentecost	Exodus 1:8-2:10 Israel slave in Egypt. Moses is born.	124 (846)	Romans 12:1-8 Offer ourselves and our gifts to God.	Matthew 16:13-20 "Who do you say I am?" "You are the Christ."
Aug. 24	15th after Pentecost	Exodus 3:1-15 God calls Moses from burning bush.	105:1-6 23-26, 45c (828)	Romans 12:9-21 Exhortation to life in God's service.	Matthew 16:21-28 Jesus: about suffering. Cost of discipleship.
Aug. 31	16th after Pentecost	Exodus 12:1-14 Account of the Passover.	149 or 148 (861)	Romans 13:8-14 Duties of Christians toward one another.	Matthew 18:15-20 Discipline of followers. Where 2 or 3 are, I am.
Sept. 7	17th after Pentecost	Exodus 14:19-31, Crossing Red Sea. Songs: Moses, Miriam.	Ex. 15:1b-11, 20-21 (135)	Romans 14:1-12 Welcome the other, do not judge.	Matthew 18:21-35 Parable of the unforgiving servant.
Sept. 14	18th after Pentecost	Exodus 16:2-15 God feeds Israel. Manna and quail.	105:1-6, 37-45 or 78 (799)	Philippians 1:21-30 "For me, to live is Christ."	Matthew 20:1-16 Parable of workers in the vineyard.
Sept. 21	19th after Pentecost	Exodus 17:1-7 God gives them water from the rock.	78:1-4, 12-16 (799)	Philippians 2:1-13 The greatness of Christ, emptied self.	Matthew 21:23-32 Question Jesus' authority. Parable: 2 sons.
Sept. 28	20th after Pentecost	Exodus 20:1-4,7-9, 12-20 The Decalogue.	19 (750)	Philippians 3:4b-14 Paul the essential Jew. "I run for the goal."	Matthew 21:33-46 Parable of the tenants in the vineyard.
Oct. 5	21st after Pentecost	Exodus 32:1-14 The Golden Calf.	106:1-6, 19-23 (829)	Philippians 4:1-9 Instructions for the faithful.	Matthew 22:1-14 Parable of the wedding feast.
Oct. 12	22nd after Pentecost	Exodus 33:12-23 God promises to be with Israel.	99 (819)	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 Thanks for your example. Others admire it.	Matthew 22:15-22 The question about paying taxes.
Oct. 19	23rd after Pentecost	Deut. 34:1-12 Moses gives final blessing and dies.	90:1-6 13-17 (789)	1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 Paul's faithfulness as their teacher.	Matthew 22:34-46 Great Commandment. Questions: Messiah
Oct. 26	24th after Pentecost	Joshua 3:7-17 Ark and people cross the Jordan on dry ground.	107:1-7, 33-37 (830)	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13 Thesalonians witness. Paul's work with them.	Matthew 23:1-12 Jesus and Pharisees. Do what they do, not say.

DATE	SUNDAY	OLD TESTAMENT	PSALM	EPISTLE	GOSPEL
Nov. 1 or Nov. 2	All Saints/ 25th after Pentecost	Revelation 7:9-17 The crowd worshipping around the Throne.	34:1-10, 22 (769)	1 John 3:1-3 We are God's children.	Matthew 5:1-12 Beatitudes.
<i>(Note: Oct. 30 may be observed as All Saints using these lessons.)</i>					
Nov. 9	26th after Pentecost	Joshua 24:1-3a,14-25 Covenant at Schechem "Choose this day."	78:1-7 (799)	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 What will happen on the Day of the Lord?	Matthew 25:1-13 Parable of ten girls and oil lamps.
Nov. 16	25th after Pentecost	Judges 4:1-7 Story of Deborah and Barak.	123 or 76 (797)	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Be ready for the Day. Comes unexpectedly.	Matthew 25:14-30 Parable of "the Talents."
Nov. 23	Christ the King	Ezekiel 34:11-16,20-24 "I am the shepherd and will care for my sheep."	100 (821)	Ephesians 1:15-23 Paul's prayer that they receive the Spirit.	Matthew 25:31-46 Final judgment: When did we see you?
Nov. 27	Thanks- giving Day	Deuteronomy 8:7-18 A warning not to for- get God in prosperity.	65 (789)	2 Corinthians 9:6-15 How we sow determines how we shall reap.	Luke 17:11-19 Jesus heals 10. One returns to thank.

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Why This Resource?

There are now many resources on the market for using the lectionary. Why add this one?

This booklet is designed to fill a gap. There are available listings of the lectionary which are brief, giving the readings by book, chapter, and verses only. Also, one can get materials which give the whole reading.

The advantage of the latter is making available the readings so that you can know exactly what they are. The readings for the coming Sunday are right in one's hands.

The disadvantages are:

1. One is not directed to the Bible itself. Thus the readings are not seen in context.
2. One cannot get easily an overall view of the readings for seasonal and long range worship planning.
3. The result is a body of material which is too expensive to put in the hands of each church member.

The advantage of the former is its simplicity and inexpensiveness. A copy of the year's readings can be easily made available to every member. Also, one is directed back to looking up the passage in its own Biblical setting.

The disadvantage is that no one can tell what the lection is about by just having the chapter / verse reference. Can you immediately plan the music for a service knowing only that the Gospel reading is Luke 10:25-37?

This guide fills the gap between. Its addition of a capsule summary of each reading means that the lections are more recognizable. Adding to Luke 10:25-37 the phrases "Parable of the Good Samaritan. Who is my neighbor?" means that a worship planner can recall enough of the lection to choose appropriate material. By seeing this reading is followed on subsequent Sundays by parables is even more help in long-range planning. But by not giving the whole reading, persons are directed to the Scripture itself for better understanding.

This guide, while most helpful to clergy, is primarily designed to help get the lectionary into the hands of the average church member. If you are not ready to go that far yet, begin with copies for musicians, liturgy planners and Bible class members.

Members of The Fellowship may purchase additional copies of this booklet for \$3.00 each; 5 or more copies to the same address: \$2.00. All orders must be PREPAID. Send check with order to The Fellowship, attn: Lectionary Guide, PO Box 24787, Nashville, TN 37202. Consider using this resource in conjunction with "Hymns for the Lectionary," which appears regularly in *Worship Arts*.

The art in this publication is by Suzanne Christensen.



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