

Appendix C Faith, Worship, and Ministry



Alternative Old Testament Readings for Eastertide

*Rites and Prayers Supplemental to
The Book of Alternative Services
Of The Anglican Church of Canada*

Texts for Trial Use and Evaluation, 2021

Revised Common Lectionary Daily Readings
Alternative Old Testament Readings for Eastertide

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1. General Introduction

Roughly 15 years ago, the Consultation on Common Texts and the English Language Liturgical Consultation proposed two new lectionary projects to complement the *Revised Common Lectionary* (RCL). Each of these is being brought to the Council of General Synod for commendation for trial use and evaluation where permitted by the Ordinary. They have been in use widely ecumenically.

The Consultation on Common Texts (www.commontexts.org) is the multilateral ecumenical liturgical roundtable of churches in Canada and the United States that created the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL). The Anglican Church of Canada was a founding member, and continues in that membership, officially supporting the Consultation and participating in its meetings and work through General Synod staff. The Consultation on Common Texts, further, is a member of the international English Language Liturgical Consultation (<https://www.englishtexts.org>), most well known for their promotion of the common English versions of the ecumenical creeds and prayers now in common usage in the English speaking Christian world (The Lord's Prayer, Kyrie, Gloria, Apostles and Nicene Creeds, Sursum Corda, etc...). Six regional ecumenical liturgical groups from different parts of the world make up the membership in this group.

The Anglican Church of Canada adopted the RCL in 1993. However, because the *Book of Alternative Services* had been developed and published by 1985, it did not include the three year RCL at that time, but rather its predecessor, the two year Common Lectionary. Dissonances were inadvertently created, the principal ones being:

1. the Proper of the Church Year's Collect of the Day, Prayer over the Gifts, Prayer after Communion, and Sentence were based on the older lectionary (The Common Lectionary) on a two-year cycle, so were out of sync with the RCL readings for the day;
2. the Daily Office and Daily Eucharistic lectionaries in the BAS are also based on a two year cycle to complement the older lectionary, and are similarly out of sync.

The Faith, Worship, and Ministry committee took up the challenge of the first dissonance with the creation of *Alternative Collects for the Revised Common Lectionary*,

which was authorized by the General Synod in 2019 (<https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Alternative-RCL-Collects-Final-2019.pdf>).

The following two items provide further lectionary resources, as additional alternatives to what is currently our adopted Book of Alternative Services Daily Office Lectionary and lectionary pattern in Eastertide. The Daily Office Lectionary was created by the Consultation on Common Texts, the North American body, and has been in use since 2004. It is the Lectionary for daily use published in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and recommended by the General Synod's new Daily Office, *Pray Without Ceasing: Morning and Evening Prayer for All Seasons and for Ordinary Time* (authorized by General Synod 2019). The table of Alternative Old Testament Readings for Easter season was produced and recommended by the English Language Liturgical Consultation, the international body in 2011.

2. Alternative Old Testament readings for Easter Season

One of the main criticisms of the Revised Common Lectionary has been the absence of Old Testament readings for the Easter Season. Several Provinces of the Anglican Communion collaborated to create a suggested alternative reading about ten years after adopting the RCL. Eventually, these proposals were brought to the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT), and evaluated. At the time, the CCT had just handed on its custodianship of the Revised Common Lectionary to the English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC) - the international ecumenical liturgical body made up of representatives of the regional English speaking ecumenical liturgical bodies in six global regions). ELLC reviewed the various options proposed and made a recommendation of one set of *Paschaltide Readings from the Old Testament*.

The following presentation of the proposal is taken from:

<https://www.englishtexts.org/paschaltide-readings-from-the-old-testament>

Paschaltide Readings from the Old Testament: An Alternative Selection for Use with the Revised Common Lectionary

As recommended by the English Language Liturgical Consultation

The earliest use of the scriptures in Christian worship was from the Old Testament. Much of the New Testament had not yet been written. The ordered readings of the synagogue, from the law, the prophets and the writings, were taken for granted when Christians gathered for prayer.

As the church began to grow, readings from the apostles and evangelists were added. Five or more lections became the norm, interspersed with psalmody. By the fourth century readings from the Acts of the Apostles were read at the daily offices. In the eucharist the number of readings was reduced, and in both east and west two readings from the New Testament became the norm.

At the Reformation attention to the scriptures was a priority. Not only were they to be read in the tongue of the people, but also the complete bible would be covered. The daily office of the medieval church was modified to form two services of morning and evening prayer. Each included readings from the Old and New Testaments, so selected what the whole bible might be read at least once during the year.

The reformed liturgies of Martin Luther and Thomas Cranmer follow this model, but with their eucharistic readings retaining the medieval choice of Epistle and Gospel. It was certainly the intention of Cranmer that the morning office would precede the eucharist, and even when the sacrament was not to be celebrated, the service of ante-communion would be read. This was the pattern of worship for the next few centuries, and even in traditions which did not have a set liturgy, the practice of readings from both Testaments was accepted as the norm.

The move to make the Sunday Eucharist the principle service of the day, well meant in every way, had the effect of depriving congregations of the Psalms, Canticles and the Hebrew Scriptures. This was recognized at the Lambeth Conference of 1958, which suggested that ‘a lesson from the Old Testament might form part of the delivery of God’s Word... and that the three lessons might be separated by psalms or portions of psalms.

The Revised Common Lectionary of 1992, following the Common Lectionary, provides readings from Acts for Paschaltide, but the Hebrew scripture portions are given only for Easter Day and Pentecost. The only justification for this omission of the Old Testament is that this was the tradition of certain ancient rites, both east and west. Our understanding of the resurrection and of the whole purpose of Paschaltide in the New Testament is based on the teaching of both creation and redemption as it comes to us from the Old. The particular contribution of the literature from the exilic and post-exilic periods is of great value.

Of the available sets of Paschaltide readings, that of the Church of Scotland is the recommended choice. Each lection is typologically related to its accompanying gospel readings, thus providing the most appropriate selection for the season, while avoiding any fragmentation of passages. Linked Psalms are also included. The obligatory use of the Acts reading is not recommended. The value of Acts has already been affirmed, but the Revised Common Lectionary selection is somewhat repetitive. In a future revision, the post-Pentecost season would be the more appropriate place for Acts.

For the present, this table of lessons covering the three-year cycle is an attempt to provide a balance of readings from both the Old and New Testaments which will be fitting and will enrich the season of Paschaltide.

Year A		
Easter Day	Jeremiah 31:1-6*	118:1-2, 14-24*
Easter 2	Exodus 15:1-11	111
Easter 3	Isaiah 51:1-6	34:1-10
Easter 4	Ezekiel 34:7-15	100
Easter 5	Proverbs 4:10-18	119:9-32
Easter 6	Ezekiel 34:1-7a	115
Ascension	Daniel 7:9-14	24:7-10
Easter 7	Isaiah 45:1-7	21:1-7
Pentecost	Numbers 11:24 -30*	104:26-34, 35b*
Easter Day	Isaiah 25:6-9*	118:1-2, 14-24*
Year B		
Easter 2	Isaiah 65:17-25	3
Easter 3	Isaiah 6:1-9a	40:1-5
Easter 4	Zechariah 10	80:1-7
Easter 5	Exodus 19:1-6	118:19-25
Easter 6	Genesis 35:9-15	101
Ascension Day	Daniel 7:9-14	68:15-20, 32-35
Easter 7	Jeremiah 10:1-10a	108

Day of Pentecost	Ezekiel 37:1-14*	104:24-34, 35b*
Year C		
Easter Day	Isaiah 65:17-25*	118:1-2, 14-24*
Easter 2	2 Kings 7:1-16	2
Easter 3	Isaiah 61:1-3	90:13-17
Easter 4	Isaiah 53:1-6	114
Easter 5	Leviticus 19:9-18	24:1-6
Easter 6	Deuteronomy 34:1-12	109:21-31
Ascension Day	Daniel 7:9-14	113
Easter 7	2 Kings 2:1-15	2
Day of Pentecost	Genesis 11:1-9*	104:24-34, 35b*