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LECTIONARY-BASED WORSHIP PLANNING

September 2 – November 25, 2018 (Year B)

Presbytery Resource Day, April 14

Bedford, New Hampshire

The Design of the Revised Common Lectionary

- Based on the 1969 Roman Catholic Lectionary for Mass
- Ecumenical Consultation on Common Texts
- 1983 Common Lectionary, 1992 Revised Common Lectionary
- Three-Year Cycle: Year A, Year B, Year C
- Advent (Nov. 27–Dec. 3) to Christ the King (Nov. 20–26)
- Year A starts in years evenly divisible by three
 - 2016–2017: Year A (2016/3=672)
 - 2017–2018: Year B
 - 2018–2019: Year C

The Design of the Revised Common Lectionary

- For each Sunday or festival, three readings and a psalm
 - First Reading: Old Testament or Acts (in Easter)
 - Psalm or Canticle: Musical/Prayerful Response to First Reading
 - Second Reading: New Testament Epistle or Revelation
 - Gospel Reading: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John

The Design of the Revised Common Lectionary

- After Pentecost (between Trinity Sunday and Christ the King), there are two tracks of readings from the Hebrew Scriptures:
 - The **semicontinuous** readings cover major narratives and themes from the Old Testament, and are unrelated to the New Testament readings; this track is provided to encourage familiarity with and proclamation of the Hebrew Scriptures on their own terms (think “independent”).
 - The **complementary** readings are chosen for their relationship to the Gospel reading for the day; this track reflects the Christian conviction that all of Scripture is to be understood in light of the revelation of Jesus Christ. The second reading and Gospel reading are consistent between both tracks (think “gospel-related”).
- These two tracks only apply to the first reading and psalm/canticle. The second reading and Gospel reading are consistent.

The Design of the Revised Common Lectionary

- **Year A.** Gospel of Matthew; after Pentecost—Genesis, Exodus, Joshua (semicontinuous track) and Romans, Philipians, 1 Thessalonians.
- **Year B.** Gospel of Mark; after Pentecost—1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, Proverbs, Job, Ruth (semicontinuous track) and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, James, Hebrews
- **Year C.** Gospel of Luke; after Pentecost—1 and 2 Kings, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah (semicontinuous track) and Galatians, Colossians, Hebrews, 1 and 2 Timothy, 2 Thessalonians
- **What about John?** Featured on most festival days; also during Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and for a series of weeks in Year B after Pentecost

The Design of the Revised Common Lectionary

- Other notable patterns:
 - Isaiah in Advent and Holy Week
 - 1 and 2 Corinthians after Epiphany
 - Acts in the Season of Easter, plus 1 Peter (A), 1 John (B), Revelation (C)

The Design of the Revised Common Lectionary

- There are a number of ways to think about connections among the readings and with the people of God in worship:
 - **Synchronic:** occurring at the same time (two readings on the same Sunday)
 - **Diachronic:** occurring through time (a series of readings over a span of weeks)
 - **Evangelical:** proclaiming the story of God's saving love through Jesus Christ
 - **Liturgical:** related to the action of worship (gathering, word, sacrament, sending)
- The readings also connect worship and culture (Nairobi Statement):
 - **Contextual:** emerging from particular communities, times, places
 - **Cross-cultural:** diversity of traditions within and beyond the church
 - **Transcultural:** universal message, common elements of human life
 - **Counter-cultural:** asserting the scandal of the gospel, God's realm

Sermon Development

- Proclaim the Word: Jesus, Scripture, Sermon
- Offer the gift and challenge of the gospel
- Start with Scripture: Listen to God in the text
- Focus: heart of the gospel in the text
- Function: invitation to the people of God
- Bridge: connecting text and context
- Know and love the congregation
- Know and love the world (local/global)

Sermon Development

September 2, 2018

Proper 17

SEMICONTINUOUS

Song of Solomon 2:8–13

Psalm 45:1–2, 6–9

COMPLEMENTARY

Deuteronomy 4:1–2, 6–9

Psalm 15

James 1:17–27

Mark 7:1–8, 14–15, 21–23

One lover calls to another: Arise, my love, and come away.

A royal love song: God has blessed the king with beauty and grace.

Observe God's law diligently; do not add to it or subtract from it.

Who may abide in God's presence? Those who do what is right.

Every good gift comes from God; pure religion is to care for others.

A debate about authority and tradition; evil things come from within.

Sermon Development

September 9, 2018

Proper 18

SEMICONTINUOUS

Proverbs 22:1–2, 8–9, 22–23

Psalm 125

COMPLEMENTARY

Isaiah 35:4–7a

Psalm 146

James 2:1–10 (11–13) 14–17

Mark 7:24–37

speaks.

A good name is more valuable than wealth; seek justice for the poor.
Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, abiding forever.

Miracles of healing and streams in the desert signal God's coming.
Trust God, who does justice, sets prisoners free, and helps the poor.
Care for those who are in need; without good works, faith is dead.
Jesus heals a Gentile woman's daughter and a man who cannot

Sermon Development

September 16, 2018

Proper 19

SEMICONTINUOUS

Proverbs 1:20–33

Psalm 19

COMPLEMENTARY

Isaiah 50:4–9a

Psalm 116:1–9

James 3:1–12

Mark 8:27–38

Wisdom cries out in the street: Ignore my word at your peril.
The heavens declare God's glory; the law of the Lord is good.

God has given me the tongue of a teacher, to sustain the weary.
Lord, you deliver me from death, from weeping, from stumbling.
Words have the power to bless and curse; use them wisely.
Jesus says: You must take up the cross if you want to follow me.

Sermon Development

September 23, 2018

Proper 20

SEMICONTINUOUS

Proverbs 31:10–31

Psalm 1

COMPLEMENTARY

Jeremiah 11:18–20

Psalm 54

James 3:13–4:3, 7–8a

Mark 9:30–37

A poem on the virtues and gifts of a strong and capable woman.
Those who delight in God's law will prosper like trees by the water.

Jeremiah laments: I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter.
Save me, O God, by your name; vindicate me against my enemies.
Wisdom from above is pure, peaceful, gentle; draw near to God.
Jesus foretells his dying and rising; then he welcomes a little child.

Sermon Development

September 30, 2018

Proper 21

SEMICONTINUOUS

Esther 7:1–6, 9–10; 9:20–22

Psalm 124

Queen Esther uses her influence to save her people from death.
We have escaped from a trap; our help is in the name of the Lord.

COMPLEMENTARY

Numbers 11:4–6, 10–16, 24–29

Psalm 19:7–14

James 5:13–20

Mark 9:38–50

Among the elders erupts a controversy over who can prophesy.
Clear me from hidden faults; let my words be acceptable to you.
Pray for one another; faithful prayer brings healing and forgiveness.
The disciples find someone else casting out demons in Jesus' name.

Sermon Development

October 7, 2018

Proper 22

SEMICONTINUOUS

Job 1:1; 2:1–10

Psalm 26

COMPLEMENTARY

Genesis 2:18–24

Psalm 8

Hebrews 1:1–4; 2:5–12

Mark 10:2–16

Satan begins a contest with the Lord, testing Job's faithfulness.
Vindicate me, O Lord; I have trusted you and walked in integrity.

God sees that the man is alone and creates a partner for him.
Majestic Lord, what are human beings that you are mindful of them?
Now God speaks to us by a Son, made lower than the angels.
Jesus responds to a question on divorce and blesses little children.

Sermon Development

October 14, 2018

Proper 23

SEMICONTINUOUS

Job 23:1–9, 16–17

Psalm 22:1–15

COMPLEMENTARY

Amos 5:6–7, 10–15

Psalm 90:12–17

Hebrews 4:12–16

Mark 10:17–31

Job complains bitterly about the absence of God in his suffering.
My God, why do you forsake me? You lay me in the dust of death.

Establish justice; seek good and not evil, so that you may live.
Satisfy us with your love, O Lord; prosper the work of our hands.
The living word of God is our judge; Jesus is our great high priest.
For God all things are possible; the last will be first in the kingdom.

Sermon Development

October 21, 2018

Proper 24

SEMICONTINUOUS

Job 38:1–7 (34–41)

Psalm 104:1–9, 24, 35b

COMPLEMENTARY

Isaiah 53:4–12

Psalm 91:9–16

Hebrews 5:1–10

Mark 10:35–45

From the whirlwind, the Lord answers Job: Who else is like God?
Bless the Lord: sovereign over all things, wrapped in glorious light.

The suffering servant of God was wounded for our iniquities.
The Lord says: I will deliver and protect those who love me.
The Son of God suffered willingly; now he is our great high priest.
Jesus came to be a servant and to give his life for others.

Sermon Development

October 28, 2018

Proper 25

SEMICONTINUOUS

Job 42:1–6, 10–17

Psalm 34:1–8 (19–22)

COMPLEMENTARY

Jeremiah 31:7–9

Psalm 126

Hebrews 7:23–28

Mark 10:46–52

Now Job answers the Lord, and repents; God restores his fortunes.
I will bless the Lord at all times; I cried, and God answered me.

The Lord says: I will gather my people from the ends of the earth.
Those who went out weeping will come home with shouts of joy.
Jesus is a high priest forever; his own sacrifice was once for all.
Jesus restores Bartimaeus's sight: Your faith has made you well.

Sermon Development

November 4, 2018

Proper 26

SEMICONTINUOUS

Ruth 1:1–18

Psalm 146

COMPLEMENTARY

Deuteronomy 6:1–9

Psalm 119:1–8

Hebrews 9:11–14

Mark 12:28–34

Ruth decides to go with Naomi to Judah: Where you go, I will go.
Happy are those who put their trust in the Lord, the God of Jacob.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord alone is our God; you shall love the Lord.
Happy are those who seek God and walk in the ways of the Lord.
By the blood of Christ, our high priest, we will be made clean.
Jesus summarizes the commandments: to love God and neighbor.

Sermon Development

November 11, 2018

Proper 27

SEMICONTINUOUS

Ruth 3:1–5; 4:13–17

Psalm 127

COMPLEMENTARY

1 Kings 17:8–16

Psalm 146

Hebrews 9:24–28

Mark 12:38–44

Ruth and Boaz have a son, who will become an ancestor to David.
Unless the Lord builds the house, the workers labor in vain.

With meager resources, a widow miraculously feeds Elijah.
Do not put your trust in princes; God gives food to the hungry.
Christ entered the sanctuary of heaven; he will come again to save.
Jesus criticizes the scribes and praises the gift of a poor widow.

Sermon Development

November 18, 2018

Proper 28

SEMICONTINUOUS

1 Samuel 1:4–20

1 Samuel 2:1–10

COMPLEMENTARY

Daniel 12:1–3

Psalm 16

Hebrews 10:11–14

(15–18) 19–25

Mark 13:1–8

Hannah prays for a son; she conceives and gives birth to Samuel.
Hannah's song of thanksgiving: My heart rejoices in the Lord.

Daniel's vision: Those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake.
O Lord, you are always with me; you show me the path of life.
Let us hold fast to our faith, preparing for the day of the Lord.

Jesus speaks of the temple's fall, and other signs of what is to come.

Sermon Development

November 25, 2018

Christ the King
or Reign of Christ

SEMICONTINUOUS

2 Samuel 23:1–7

Psalm 132:1–12 (13–18)

COMPLEMENTARY

Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14

Psalm 93

Revelation 1:4b–8

John 18:33–37

The last words of David: God has made an everlasting covenant.
Remember your covenant with David, O Lord, and bless us.

The Ancient One gives all dominion to a human, coming in clouds.
The ancient and everlasting Lord is enthroned in majesty.
Jesus is coming with the clouds; the Lord is Alpha and Omega.
Pilate asks: Are you a king? Jesus answers: I came to show the truth.

Sermon Development

- Five possibilities for a sermon series
 - *Stories of women*
 - *Job and suffering*
 - *Life of gratitude (James)*
 - *Who is Jesus? (Hebrews/Mark)*
 - *Expanded Advent*

Sermon Development

- Stories of women
 - *Sept. 2: Song of Solomon*
 - *Sept. 9: Mark*
 - *Sept. 16: Proverbs*
 - *Sept. 30: Esther*

Sermon Development

- Job and suffering
 - *Oct. 7: Satan tests Job's faithfulness*
 - *Oct. 14: Job laments bitterly*
 - *Oct. 21: God appears in the whirlwind*
 - *Oct. 28: God restores Job's fortunes*

Sermon Development

- Life of gratitude (James)
 - *Sept. 2: Every gift comes from God*
 - *Sept. 9: Faith without works is dead*
 - *Sept. 16: Use words with care*
 - *Sept. 23: Seek wisdom from God*
 - *Sept. 30: Pray for healing and grace*

Sermon Development

- Who is Jesus? (Hebrews/Mark)
 - *Oct. 7: Jesus as Son of God*
 - *Oct. 14: Jesus as great high priest*
 - *Oct. 21: Jesus as suffering servant*
 - *Oct. 28: Jesus as mercy of God*
 - *Nov. 4: Jesus as love of God*
 - *Nov. 11: Jesus as promise of God*
 - *Nov. 18: Jesus at the right hand of God*
 - *Nov. 25: Jesus as Sovereign/Lord*

Sermon Development

- Expanded Advent
 - *Nov. 11 to Dec. 23, 2018*
 - *Seven weeks of eschatological themes*
 - *Head start on Advent (vs. “Christmas culture”)*
 - *O Antiphons*
 - O Wisdom (Sapientia)
 - O Lord (Adonai)
 - O Root of Jesse (Radix Jesse)
 - O Key of David (Clavis David)
 - O Radiant Dawn (Oriens)
 - O Ruler of Nations (Rex Gentium)
 - O God with Us (Emmanuel)

Liturgical Design

- Worship as glorifying and enjoying God
- Worship as forming Christian disciples
- Start with Scripture: Listen to God in the text
- "Treasures old and new" (Matt. 13:52)
- Think carefully about repetition and novelty
- Organic whole, but don't try too hard to make everything fit
- Liturgy as prayerful action of the people of God (not just words)
- Sign of the realm of God among us here and now
- Worship and service: formation for Christian faith and life

Music Selection

- Glorify God, proclaim the Word, form disciples
- Empower the praise and prayer of the people
- Start with Scripture: Listen to God in the text
- Not about choosing “what I like” (see above)
- Two familiar, one new is a good rule of thumb
- Choir, children, instruments help teach new melodies
- Give hymns a chance! Don't lead badly, give up
- Be systematic about expanding your repertoire
- Every beloved hymn was once a strange new song

New Songs for RCL Year B

- Take, O Take Me as I Am — GTG 698
- Somos el cuerpo de Cristo — GTG 768
- Listen, God Is Calling — GTG 456
- As a Child Rests — GTG 474 / STF 2092
- Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us — GTG 44
- In the Presence of Your People — GTG 631
- Search Me, O God — GTG 426
- You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd — GTG 274 / STF 2102
- When the Lord Redeems the Very Least — GTG 852
- Spirit, Open My Heart — GTG 692
- God, We Honor You — GTG 709
- We Fall Down — GTG 368
- Soon and Very Soon — GTG 384

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Presbytery Resource Day, April 14

Bedford, New Hampshire