Our Saviour Lutheran Church

Baltimore, Maryland

Bible Study Course Catalogue

Lent 2026 through Advent 2028

Twenty-seven series. One hundred forty class sessions.

The Passion of Our Lord

A Comparative Study of the Four Gospels

Lent 2026. Six weeks, beginning February 22, 2026

What the series is for. To examine the suffering and death of Christ from Gethsemane to the tomb through a systematic comparison of all four Gospel accounts. The series uses the layered Building Approach: Mark is read in full as the baseline, and each successive Evangelist is added one layer at a time so that his distinctive witness stands out rather than dissolving into a harmony. Every session closes with a synthesis that gathers the four voices into one confession.

Week One: Gethsemane, the Agony Begins

Establishes the Building Approach itself. Mark 14:32–52 supplies the baseline; Matthew adds the exact prayer wording, the deepened second resignation, the address "Friend" to Judas, and the twelve legions of angels; Luke contributes the strengthening angel, the bloody sweat, and the healing of the servant's ear; John reframes the arrest as an act of sovereign authority. The class leaves knowing how the method works for the remaining five weeks.

Week Two: The Jewish Trial and Peter's Denial

Sets the Sanhedrin proceeding against Peter's simultaneous collapse in the courtyard. Matthew's focus falls on messianic titles and oaths, Luke's on the morning trial and the look Jesus gives Peter, John's on the preliminary hearing before Annas and the silence of the Word. The synthesis holds together the condemnation of the Righteous for the unrighteous and the means by which Peter is restored.

Week Three: The Roman Trial, the Interrogation

Moves from religious condemnation to political interrogation. Mark supplies the morning transfer, the silence, and Pilate's astonishment; Matthew adds the tragic interlude of Judas; Luke supplies the political charges and the hearing before Herod Antipas; John supplies the Praetorium dialogue on kingship and truth. The class sees the King of Kings stand before a worldly judge to secure an eternal citizenship.

Week Four: The Barabbas Exchange, Scourging, and Sentencing

The most theologically dense sequence in the narrative, taught by a deliberate hybrid method. The Barabbas exchange receives the full four-layer treatment, since every Evangelist contributes genuinely new material; the scourging and mocking are compressed into a single Synoptic unit to avoid redundancy; John's Ecce Homo receives its own full treatment. The Great Exchange is made visible: the innocent is condemned and the guilty walks free.

Week Five: The Crucifixion and Death

The central event of all Scripture. The class traces the road to Golgotha, the words from the cross, the supernatural signs, and the moment of death, watching how each Evangelist's theological emphasis governs what he records and what he omits. The session is framed around divine justice and divine mercy meeting in one place.

Week Six: The Burial and the Sabbath Rest

The Passion closes not in triumph but in a tomb. Mark supplies the official verification of death through the centurion; Matthew alone records the guard and the sealed stone; Luke emphasizes Joseph's righteousness, the unused tomb, and the women's Sabbath obedience; John introduces Nicodemus and the royal quantity of spices. The class carries the weight of the sealed stone into Holy Week.

Resurrection and Commission

A Comparative Study of the Four Gospels

Easter 2026. Six weeks, April 12 through May 17, 2026

What the series is for. To observe the transition from a localized physical presence to a global mandate, tracing the risen Christ from the empty tomb through the post-resurrection appearances to the Ascension and enthronement. The Building Approach continues from the Lenten series, and the material moves deliberately out of the Gospels and into the earliest life of the Church.

Week Seven: The Empty Tomb (April 12)

Compares how each Gospel narrates the discovery: which women came, which messengers spoke, and how the responses ranged from terror to wonder. Mark's abrupt close at "for they were afraid" is set against Matthew's earthquake and collapsing guards, Luke's divine "must" and the apostles' dismissal of the women, and John's footrace and undisturbed grave clothes. The divergences are treated as the texture of genuine testimony rather than as a problem to be smoothed.

Week Eight: Recognition of the Risen Lord (April 19)

Asks how the risen Christ is known: by His voice speaking a name, by His feet grasped in worship, by a miraculous catch, by a meal on the shore. Mary Magdalene, the women on the road, and the disciples at Tiberias each recognize Him differently. Song of Solomon 3:1–4 supplies the typological lens of the bride's night search, and the bribery of the guards supplies the counter-narrative: while the faithful recognize, the unbelieving fabricate.

Week Nine: The Road to Emmaus (April 26)

The most fully developed post-resurrection narrative in any Gospel, and the paradigm for how the Church meets her Lord after the Ascension. Two disciples walk away in despair with a tragically incomplete confession; Jesus opens the whole Old Testament, then is known in the breaking of the bread. The class sees the Divine Service in miniature: the Word proclaimed, the Sacrament given, the eyes opened, and the apostolic confession preceding private experience.

Week Ten: The Risen Lord Appears, Commissions, and Sends (May 3)

Luke 24:36–43 mounts the defense of the bodily resurrection through touch and broiled fish; John 20:19–29 adds the greeting of peace, the breathing of the Spirit, the institution of the Office of the Keys, and Thomas's confession; 1 Corinthians 15:1–11 supplies the earliest written creedal formula. The class ends with the Resurrected Crucified who bears His scars, sends His Church, and sustains her through the external, preached Word.

Week Eleven: The Great Commission, the Shepherd's Charge, and the Promise of Power (May 10)

Three commissioning scenes held together. Matthew's risen Christ claims universal authority and commissions through Baptism and teaching; John's threefold "Do you love me?" by the charcoal fire reverses Peter's threefold denial and makes the denier a shepherd; Acts 1:1–8 reorients expectation from a restored kingdom to a promised Spirit. The personal and the cosmic are joined: the Lord who restores a broken fisherman sends His Church to the nations.

Week Twelve: The Exalted Christ, Ascension, Session, and Eternal Reign (May 17)

Gathers Mark 16:19–20 and Luke 24:50–53, the Acts 1 narrative of the cloud and the angelic promise, the prophetic foundation in Psalm 110 and Daniel 7, and the exaltation theology of Philippians 2 and Hebrews 1. The class concludes that the Ascension is not a departure into absence but a transition into a new mode of ruling and feeding the Church.

Best of Both Worlds

Fourteen Independent Bible Studies from Series A

Summer 2026. Fourteen weeks, May 31 through August 30, 2026

What the series is for. To fill the gaps in the Historic One-Year Lectionary by teaching the readings the congregation never hears on a Sunday morning, drawn from Year A of the Three-Year Lectionary. Every session is self-contained, which suits summer attendance: miss one, pick up the next, no prior session required. Each study works through the Collect of the Day, the Gospel, the Old Testament, and the Epistle, and closes with a confessional synthesis.

Week One: Opened Eyes (John 9:1–41; May 31)

Christ the Light opens blind eyes. The One-Year lectionary never assigns John 9, one of the great Johannine sign narratives and central to the early Church's instruction of baptismal candidates. Isaiah 42:14–21 is likewise absent, and Ephesians 5:8–14 ties the day together. Placed first as the most vivid and immediately gripping of the fourteen.

Week Two: Born from Above (John 3:1–17; June 7)

The promise to Abraham and the new birth. The One-Year stops John 3 at verse 15 and pairs it with the Athanasian Creed; Series A extends through verse 17 and pairs Nicodemus with the call of Abraham in Genesis 12 and with Romans 4 on justification apart from works. The day drives home sola fide through Abraham's example.

Week Three: Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13–20; June 14)

Salt, light, and the Law fulfilled. The One-Year never assigns these verses, which contain the statement foundational to the Lutheran distinction of Law and Gospel: "I have not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it." Isaiah 58 on true fasting speaks to Christian vocation. A shorter session by design, changing pace after two long Johannine narratives.

Week Four: Living Water (John 4:5–42; June 21)

Living water for a thirsty world. The Samaritan woman is entirely absent from the One-Year. With Weeks One and Thirteen this completes the ancient baptismal triad of the Lenten catechumenate: Water, Light, Life. Exodus 17 appears in the One-Year, yet paired there with the vineyard workers, so the baptismal typology is lost.

Week Five: Wheat and Weeds (Matthew 13:24–43; June 28)

The parable never appears in the One-Year, and it answers a question every congregation asks: why does God permit evil to persist alongside good? Jesus supplies His own interpretation, with sobering language about the harvest and the furnace. A mid-series change of texture after the Johannine narratives.

Week Six: The Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:1–14; July 5)

The opening of the Farewell Discourse, skipped entirely by the One-Year, holding together one of Scripture's most comforting promises and its most exclusive claim. Paired with Stephen's martyrdom in Acts and the royal priesthood of 1 Peter 2. First of three Farewell Discourse sessions, spaced from Weeks Ten and Fourteen.

Week Seven: Lord of the Storm (Matthew 14:22–33; July 12)

Peter walking on the water, absent from the One-Year, yields both the sharpest illustration of faith and doubt and a full Christological confession. Job 38 supplies the majestic creation poetry, and Romans 10 supplies the chain from hearing to preaching. The day connects creation, Christology, and the preached Word.

Week Eight: The Emmaus Road (Luke 24:13–35; July 19)

Never assigned in the One-Year, though it is the foundational text for Christ's presence in Word and Sacrament after the Ascension. The shape of the narrative is the shape of the Divine Service. Peter's Pentecost sermon and 1 Peter 1 deepen the sacramental emphasis. The only Lukan Gospel in the series.

Week Nine: Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44–52; July 26)

The twin parables of the treasure and the pearl teach the surpassing value of the Kingdom in a way no other text quite matches. Deuteronomy 7 supplies Old Testament election theology, and Romans 8:28–39 supplies enormous comfort. Short parables placed as a breather after Emmaus.

Week Ten: The Unknown God (Acts 17:16–31; August 2)

Paul on the Areopagus, one of the most important apologetic texts in the New Testament and completely absent from the One-Year. It is the biblical model for engaging a pagan culture. Paired with "I will not leave you as orphans" and with 1 Peter 3 on Christ preaching to the spirits in prison, confessed in the Creed yet rarely treated anywhere.

Week Eleven: The Keys of the Kingdom (Matthew 18:1–20; August 9)

The Church chapter, never read in full in the One-Year, which skips to the Unforgiving Servant and omits the first twenty verses on the Office of the Keys, the little ones, and binding and loosing. Ezekiel's watchman passage is likewise absent. The day teaches ecclesiology and the pastoral office in practical terms.

Week Twelve: The Vineyard (Matthew 21:33–46; August 16)

Series A pairs the parable with Isaiah 5, the Song of the Vineyard that Jesus is deliberately echoing and that the One-Year never reads. Setting the source text beside the parable lets the congregation watch Jesus claim the vineyard imagery for Himself and pronounce judgment. Prophetic weight building toward the close of the series.

Week Thirteen: The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:1–45; August 23)

The raising of Lazarus, never read in the One-Year, carrying arguably the most important "I Am" statement in John and triggering the plot to kill Jesus. Paired with the Valley of Dry Bones and Romans 8:1–11 for a threefold witness to bodily resurrection. The most emotionally powerful narrative in the series.

Week Fourteen: Christ Prays for His Church (John 17:1–11; August 30)

The High Priestly Prayer is entirely absent from the One-Year, though it is Christ's own prayer for the Church on the night of His betrayal and the only extended prayer of Jesus recorded in Scripture. Paired with the election of Matthias and 1 Peter on suffering. The series closes with the congregation hearing their Lord interceding for them.

The Blood of the Lamb

Understanding the Levitical Sacrificial System

September 2026. Three weeks, September 13, 20, and 27, 2026

What the series is for. To read Leviticus not as superseded ritual legislation but as the God-given vocabulary through which the work of Christ is understood. The New Testament writers could not explain the Gospel without it: John the Baptist, the author of Hebrews, and Paul all speak Levitical language. Each session pairs selected Levitical texts with their New Testament fulfillment, and the series deliberately equips the congregation for the Servant Songs and the Revelation material later in the program.

Week One: The Sacrificial System, Shadow and Substance (September 13)

Asks why God requires blood, and what the offerings teach about the nature of sin and the cost of its remedy. Three offerings are examined for their distinct theological functions: the burnt offering, the sin offering for a common person, and the guilt offering, together with the principle of Leviticus 17:11. Hebrews 10 supplies the interpretation: the sacrifices were a shadow of the good things to come.

Week Two: The Day of Atonement, Behind the Veil (September 20)

Leviticus 16 read alongside Hebrews 9 and 10. Once a year the high priest passed through the curtain into the presence of God, a terrifying responsibility framed by the deaths of Nadab and Abihu. The class works through the mercy seat, the scapegoat, and the question of access, arriving at the great High Priest who entered the holy places once for all by His own blood.

Week Three: Holy as I Am Holy (September 27)

The holiness categories and the Church's identity. No portion of the Torah is more alien to modern readers than the purity regulations, so the class works through Leviticus 11 and 19 and then follows the categories into Mark 7, Acts 10, and 1 Peter 1. The congregation arrives at its own identity: cleansed by the blood, made a royal priesthood and a holy nation.

Reclaiming the Solas

The Grammar of the Gospel, Confessed at Augsburg

October 2026. Five weeks, October 4 through November 1, 2026

What the series is for. To show that the solas are not a checklist invented by the Reformers but the grammar of the Gospel itself, each answering a specific question about how sinners are reconciled to a holy God. The sequence is deliberate: Scripture alone establishes the authority on which everything rests, grace alone and faith alone describe how justification works, Christ alone stands at the center as ground and object of faith, and the series culminates in the doxological principle that unites them. Participants read from the Augsburg Confession, its Apology, Luther's Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord throughout. Participants need a Bible and a copy of the Book of Concord.

Week One: Sola Scriptura (October 4)

Where do we go to hear God's voice, and what is the final authority for what we believe, teach, and confess? The class works through 2 Timothy 3, 2 Peter 1, Psalm 119, and John 10, then the opening of the Formula of Concord, Augsburg Confession XXVIII on the limits of church authority, and Luther's preface to the Large Catechism. The point pressed home is that sola Scriptura does not mean "me and my Bible alone" but that Scripture is the sole source and norm before which all teaching must stand.

Week Two: Sola Gratia (October 11)

What moves God to save sinners, and does salvation begin with something in us or entirely in Him? Ephesians 2, Romans 3 and 11, and Genesis 6 are read against Augsburg Confession II and IV, the Solid Declaration on free will, and the Apology. The class confronts the bondage of the will directly rather than softening it.

Week Three: Sola Fide (October 18)

How do sinners receive what God gives, and what is the instrument through which the benefits of Christ's work become ours? Romans 3 and 4, Galatians 2, and John 3 are set beside James 2, and the apparent conflict is worked through with Augsburg Confession IV and VI and the Apology. Justification and new obedience are distinguished without being separated.

Week Four: Solus Christus (October 25)

On what basis does God declare sinners righteous, and whose merit avails before Him? Acts 4, 1 Timothy 2, Colossians 1, Hebrews 7, and John 14 are read with Augsburg Confession III and the Solid Declaration on the person of Christ. The exclusivity of the one Mediator is the burden of the session.

Week Five: Soli Deo Gloria (November 1)

For whose glory does God save, to whom does the praise belong, and what does that mean for the life of the Church? Romans 11, Isaiah 48, Ephesians 1, Revelation 5, and Psalm 115 are read with the Large Catechism on the First Commandment. The series closes with the doxological principle that directs all the others.

The Greater Exodus

The Lamb, the Sea, and the Blood of the Covenant

November 2026. Three weeks, November 8, 15, and 22, 2026

What the series is for. To trace three central Exodus types into their New Testament fulfillment, following Paul's own claim in 1 Corinthians 10 that these things took place as types for us. The three form a single arc: deliverance from bondage, passage through death into new life, and the establishment of a covenant relationship with God. That arc is the story of every Christian, enacted in Baptism and renewed in the Lord's Supper. The series builds on the sacrificial vocabulary of September and prepares the congregation for the Advent prophets.

Week One: The Passover Lamb (November 8)

What does the blood of the lamb accomplish, and how does the Passover night in Egypt illuminate Good Friday? Exodus 12 is read with John 19, 1 Corinthians 5, and John 1:29. The typological details are precise: the lamb without blemish, the four days of examination, the unbroken bones that John flags explicitly at the cross, and the blood as a sign to God rather than a signal to Israel.

Week Two: Through the Waters (November 15)

What does it mean to pass through the waters, and how does the Red Sea crossing shape the New Testament understanding of Baptism? Exodus 14 is read with 1 Corinthians 10, Romans 6, and 1 Peter 3. The same event was simultaneously salvation and judgment: the waters that walled Israel in safety destroyed Egypt.

Week Three: The Covenant at Sinai and the Better Covenant (November 22)

What is a covenant, and why does the new covenant require better blood than the old? Exodus 19 and 24 are read with Hebrews 9 and 12. The Exodus reaches its theological climax not at the sea but at Sinai: deliverance was the means by which God brought Israel to Himself, and the terror of the mountain reveals the grace of the Gospel.

Advent in the Minor Prophets

The Prophetic Witness of the Twelve on the Threshold of the Incarnation

Advent 2026. Four classes, November 29 through December 20, 2026

What the series is for. To hear the Twelve as Advent preaching. The series moves historically from the eighth century through the seventh to the post-exilic period, tracing worship, judgment, and the promise of glory, and then returns deliberately to the eighth century for a final class that asks a different question altogether. Each class reads the prophets alongside their Advent fulfillment in the Gospels and Acts.

Class One: True Worship and Justice (Amos 5, Micah 6, Joel 2; November 29)

Asks what God wants from our worship. The eighth-century prophets expose worship severed from justice and announce that the Day of the Lord will be darkness rather than light. Fulfillment is traced through Matthew 23, Acts 2, and Luke 1. The class closes on the summons to repentance and on the One who comes to accomplish in us the repentance He commands.

Class Two: The Day of the Lord (Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk; December 6)

Moves forward roughly a century. Samaria has fallen, Assyria is crumbling, and Babylon is rising. Class One settled whether God judges; this class asks what His judgment looks like on a cosmic scale and whether there is any hope on the other side of it. Structured in movements from the original gift of God's presence through judgment to hope.

Class Three: The Silence Before the Dawn (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; December 13)

The remnant has returned under Cyrus's decree, yet nothing matches the promise: the second temple is smaller, the elders weep, and Malachi says the priests despise God's name. The question haunting the post-exilic community, and the class, is: where is the glory? The four hundred silent years are framed as the threshold of the Incarnation.

Class Four: Faithfulness, Betrayal, and Scandalous Mercy (Hosea, Jonah, Obadiah; December 20)

Placed closest to Christmas by design. Where Class One asked what God wants from His people's worship, this class asks why God wants His people at all. The answer is not duty, obligation, or covenant stricture, but love, dramatized by Hosea in the most shocking terms in the Old Testament.

Who is This Man?

A Christological Study in Four Parts

Christmas 2026–2027. Four weeks, December 27, 2026 through January 17, 2027

What the series is for. To work through four Christological titles in sequence, each traced from its Old Testament origin through the prophets and psalms to its New Testament fulfillment and its final appearance in the Revelation. The four are ordered so that the last interprets the rest: the Servant reveals how the King reigns, how the Son of Man wins His dominion, and how the Lamb takes away sin.

Week One: Son of David (December 27)

The most politically charged title in the New Testament, at once a royal claim and a messianic one. The royal-Davidic thread is traced from Nathan's oracle in 2 Samuel 7 through Isaiah 11, Psalm 110, and Psalm 89, into Matthew's genealogy and the question about David's Lord, Romans 1, and finally Revelation 22:16.

Week Two: Son of Man (January 3)

The title Jesus used of Himself more than any other, over eighty times in the Synoptics, and the most puzzling. Its surface sense is simply "mortal," yet Daniel 7:9–14 supplies the key: one like a son of man approaches the Ancient of Days and receives an everlasting dominion. Traced through Psalm 8, Ezekiel 2, Mark 14 and 10, the Johannine sayings, and Revelation 1 and 14.

Week Three: Lamb of God (January 10)

The title that most directly links the Levitical system to the person and work of Christ. The class gathers the threads John the Baptist draws together: the ram that replaced Isaac, the Passover lamb, the Day of Atonement, and the silent lamb of Isaiah 53, carried forward through 1 Corinthians 5 and 1 Peter 1 to the Lamb on the throne in Revelation 5.

Week Four: Servant of the Lord (January 17)

The title that explains what the others mean in practice. All four Servant Songs are read together with Matthew 12, the Philippians hymn, and the Ethiopian's question in Acts 8. The class moves from studying titles to beholding the suffering, and sets up the Lenten series that will take the Servant Songs one at a time.

Sworn to Our Fathers

Three Sessions on the Ancient Covenant and the God Who Keeps It

Pre-Lent 2027. Three weeks, January 24, January 31, and February 7, 2027

What the series is for. To follow one oath through three prophets on the three Sundays before Lent. Each session reads a prophetic text beside the promise to the fathers on which it rests, with a Psalm and with the appointed Propers of the day, so that the Gesima Sundays do their old work of emptying the heart of its own confidence before Ash Wednesday. Ezekiel says that God will remember the covenant of Jerusalem's youth, Jeremiah that He will remember her sin no more, and Micah that the oath sworn to the fathers is paid in mercy and truth, which is the forgiveness of sins. The series takes its title from Micah 7:20 and leads directly into the Servant Songs of Lent.

Septuagesima: What God Remembers (January 24)

Ezekiel 16 and Genesis 15, with Psalm 103, Ephesians 2, and Romans 4. God finds Jerusalem as an abandoned newborn, takes her up, marries her, and clothes her in a splendor that is His own; she turns every gift against Him. The chapter ends with God remembering the covenant of her youth, and the class goes back to Genesis 15 to see that covenant cut, where the fire passes between the pieces alone while Abram sleeps. The Gospel of the day, the workers in the vineyard, asks the same question within a single working day: on what basis does God give?

Sexagesima: Fire in the Bones (January 31)

Jeremiah 1, 20, 31, and 33, with Psalm 22, Hebrews 8, and 2 Corinthians 3. A priest's son who never served at an altar is given God's words and six verbs, four of them destructive. Twenty years later he accuses God of deceiving him and finds the Word a fire that he cannot contain. From the same mouth comes the only promise of a new covenant in the Old Testament, and an oath that binds the promise to David to the rising of the sun. The Gospel of the day is the Sower, and the session asks where the fruit of more than forty years of preaching finally landed.

Quinquagesima: Into the Depths of the Sea (February 7)

Micah 6 and 7 with Genesis 22, Psalm 130, the Magnificat, and Romans 8:31–39. God stands as the defendant and asks what He has done wrong; the people answer with offers that rise from calves to a firstborn son. Micah closes his book by casting Israel's sins into the sea that drowned Pharaoh's army, in keeping with the oath sworn to the fathers. The class hears that oath sworn on Moriah, hears Paul turn Abraham's verb around when he writes that God "did not spare his own Son," and follows a blind beggar into Lent asking only for mercy.

The Fifth Gospel

Six Weeks on the Servant Songs of Isaiah

Lent 2027. Six weeks, February 14 through March 21, 2027

What the series is for. To trace the four Servant Songs and their crowning proclamation as the prophetic script that the Gospels perform. The title comes from the patristic observation that Isaiah 53 is so precise about the Passion that the Fathers called Isaiah the fifth Evangelist. The series presupposes the sacrificial vocabulary taught in September 2026 and the Christological titles taught at Christmas, and it deliberately begins one chapter early, since the congregation needs to know who sends the Servant before meeting Him.

Session One: The God Who Comforts (Isaiah 40:1–11)

The doorway into the Songs, placed in Ash Wednesday week. Isaiah 40 is the promise; the Servant Songs are the mechanism. Five things are established before the Servant appears: God's character is comfort, the way of salvation passes through the wilderness, all flesh is grass while the Word endures, God comes with might yet gathers gently, and the Shepherd who carries the lambs will carry them through suffering rather than around it. The imposition of ashes is shown to be a liturgical enactment of the chapter.

Session Two: Here Is My Servant (Isaiah 42:1–9)

The First Servant Song. The chosen one upheld by God, endowed with the Spirit, who brings justice not through force but through gentleness and who will not break the bruised reed. Read with the voice at the Baptism, Matthew's explicit citation, and Augsburg Confession III.

Session Three: Listen to Me, You Islands (Isaiah 49:1–7)

The Second Servant Song, and the hardest turn in the series: the Servant's despair that He has labored in vain, answered by an expansion rather than a consolation. The mission widens from Israel to the nations, and the class follows the widening into Simeon's song, Paul at Antioch, and Galatians 1.

Session Four: I Gave My Back to Those Who Strike (Isaiah 50:4–11)

The Third Servant Song. The obedient sufferer who is taught morning by morning, who does not turn back, and who does not hide His face from disgrace and spitting. Set directly against the Synoptic accounts of the mocking, and interpreted by Hebrews 5 and Philippians 2 on obedience learned through suffering.

Session Five: He Was Pierced for Our Transgressions (Isaiah 52:13–53:6)

The theological heart of the series: substitution, bearing, and healing. The Song opens in exaltation and plunges immediately into disfigurement and rejection, arriving at the great declaration that the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Read with the scapegoat, Romans 4:25, 1 Peter 2, and the Solid Declaration on the righteousness of faith.

Session Six: He Shall See His Offspring (Isaiah 53:7–12 with 61:1–3)

The guilt offering, the resurrection, and the Servant's own proclamation. The Song turns from death to vindication, and Isaiah 61 puts the Servant's mission in His own mouth, the text Jesus reads in the synagogue at Nazareth. Closes with Hebrews 9, Acts 2, and the Lamb of Revelation 5, alongside the Second Article of the Small Catechism.

The Church is Born

Acts 1 through 8

Easter 2027. Four weeks, April 4 through April 25, 2027

What the series is for. To follow the Church from the Spirit falling at Pentecost to the Gospel breaking out of Jerusalem, structured on the geographic program of Acts 1:8.

Week One: Pentecost and Peter's Sermon (April 4)

Acts 2:1–41 with Joel 2, Psalm 16, and Psalm 110. The Spirit falls, the Scriptures open, and the Church begins. Peter preaches the resurrection and the enthronement out of the Psalms, and three thousand are baptized. Connected back to the risen Christ opening the Scriptures in Luke 24.

Week Two: The Early Church and the First Confrontation (April 11)

Acts 2:42–47 through 4:37. The community's life, the healing at the gate, the arrest and trial before the same authorities who tried Jesus, the Church's prayer out of Psalm 2, and the common life. The Church does what Christ did, and is met by what met Him.

Week Three: The First Martyr (April 18)

Acts 5 through 7. Judgment inside the community with Ananias and Sapphira, growth under opposition, the appointment of the Seven, and Stephen's speech recapitulating the whole of Israel's history before his death. Holiness, service, and martyrdom are held together.

Week Four: The Word Scattered, the World Gathered (April 25)

Acts 8. The persecution scatters the Church like seed, Philip preaches in Samaria, and the Ethiopian eunuch is reading Isaiah 53 when Philip finds him. The Servant Song opens the world, and Isaiah 56 answers the eunuch's exclusion. Acts 1:8 is shown fulfilled: Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, the end of the earth.

Letters to the Church

Revelation 2 and 3

Easter 2027. Four weeks, May 2 through May 23, 2027

What the series is for. To turn from the Church's birth to her ongoing examination, hearing the risen Christ address seven real congregations with commendation, rebuke, and promise, read as a pastoral portrait of the Church in every age.

Week One: Ephesus and Smyrna (May 2)

Revelation 1:9–20 establishes the vision of the risen Christ among the lampstands. Ephesus holds orthodoxy without love, and Smyrna holds poverty that is wealth. Read with the Shema, the tree of life, and Daniel 1 on faithfulness under persecution.

Week Two: Pergamum and Thyatira (May 9)

The seduction of accommodation, named through two Old Testament figures the letters invoke directly: Balaam, who taught Israel to stumble, and Jezebel. Numbers 22–25 and the Elijah cycle supply the background, and Psalm 2 supplies the rod of iron.

Week Three: Sardis and Philadelphia (May 16)

Appearance against reality: the church with a name for being alive that is dead, and the church with little power that Christ commends without a single rebuke. The key of David is traced back to Eliakim in Isaiah 22, and the book of life to Exodus 32 and Daniel 12.

Week Four: Laodicea and the Sevenfold Promise (May 23)

The lukewarm church and the knocking Christ, followed by a synthesis gathering all seven overcomer promises across the two chapters. The series closes with the Lamb who conquered and with the seven letters read as a portrait of the Church in every age.

Best of Both Worlds

Thirteen Independent Bible Studies from Series B

Summer 2027. Thirteen weeks, June 6 through August 29, 2027

What the series is for. The second summer of gap-filling, turning from Year A to Year B. Year B is dominated by Mark, the Evangelist the One-Year Lectionary draws from least, preferring the fuller parallel accounts in Matthew and Luke; the result is that the congregation rarely hears the Gospel that shaped the other Synoptics. Year B also opens Ephesians, Hebrews, and James, and its Old Testament pairings supply texts the One-Year never reads on a Sunday: the Protoevangelium, the Davidic Covenant, the Shema, and the New Covenant promise. Several sessions connect directly back to The Blood of the Lamb, Reclaiming the Solas, and The Greater Exodus.

Week One: The First Promise (Mark 3:20–35 with Genesis 3:8–15)

Opens where the Bible opens. The Protoevangelium is the seed of every later messianic promise and never appears as a Sunday reading. Mark supplies the counterpart: the offspring of the woman doing battle with the serpent's kingdom, redefining the family of God around whoever does the will of God.

Week Two: The House of David (Luke 1:26–38 with 2 Samuel 7:1–16)

The Davidic Covenant and the Annunciation. David proposes to build God a house, and God promises instead to build David one. The promise and its fulfillment are read on the same morning.

Week Three: The Kingdom Grows (Mark 4 with Ezekiel 17:22–24)

The growing seed and the mustard seed, paired with Ezekiel's tender sprig planted on the mountain height. The kingdom grows by a power the sower does not supply and cannot explain.

Week Four: Great Is Thy Faithfulness (Mark 5 with Lamentations 3:22–33)

Jairus, the hemorrhaging woman, and the God who does not fail. Two interwoven healings set against the great confession of steadfast love spoken from the middle of ruin.

Week Five: Chosen and Sent (Mark 6 with Amos 7:7–15 and Ephesians 1:3–14)

Election, adoption, and the sending of the Twelve. Amos protests that he is no prophet nor a prophet's son, yet the Lord took him; Ephesians 1 grounds the sending in election before the foundation of the world.

Week Six: The Bread of Life (John 6 with 1 Kings 19:1–8)

Elijah under the juniper tree, fed for a journey too great for him, set beside the I Am saying that interprets the feeding. Ephesians 4 supplies the walk that follows.

Week Seven: The New Covenant (Mark 10:35–45 with Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Hebrews 5:1–10)

The covenant Jeremiah promised and the priest who fulfills it. The law written on the heart, and the High Priest who learned obedience through what He suffered.

Week Eight: Pure in Heart (Mark 7 with Deuteronomy 4 and Ephesians 6:10–20)

The Word kept whole, the armor of God, and the heart made clean. Nothing outside a man defiles him; Deuteronomy commands that the Word be neither added to nor taken from, the tradition of the elders is measured against the commandment of God, and the heart cleansed by the Word is clothed in the armor of God.

Week Nine: Choose This Day (Joshua 24 with Ephesians 5:6–21 and John 6:51–69)

Joshua's charge at Shechem, the children of light, and the words of eternal life in John 6. Three texts about the point at which following becomes a decision to stay or leave.

Week Ten: I Believe, Help My Unbelief (Mark 9:14–29 with Isaiah 50:4–10 and James 3:1–12)

The Servant whom the Lord God helps, the untamed tongue, and the father who cried for help. A boy the disciples cannot heal, and a father whose faith and unbelief arrive in a single sentence. The Third Servant Song is the same text the congregation studied in Lent, and James sets beside it the tongue that no man can tame.

Week Eleven: What God Has Joined (Mark 10 with Genesis 2:18–25 and Hebrews 2)

Marriage, children, and the kingdom received as a child receives it. Creation, hardness of heart, and the Son who was made like His brothers in every respect.

Week Twelve: Hear, O Israel (Deuteronomy 6:1–9 with Mark 12)

The Shema, the greatest commandment, and the question about David's Lord, closed by Hebrews 9 on the blood that cleanses the conscience.

Week Thirteen: The Eye of the Needle (Mark 10 with Amos 5)

Wealth, self-salvation, and the God for whom all things are possible. The series closes on a session that bridges naturally into the Ecclesiastes study beginning in September.

Ecclesiastes and the New Testament

Vanity, Glory, and the Life That Does Not End

September 2027. Three weeks, September 12, 19, and 26, 2027

What the series is for. To read Qohelet honestly rather than defensively, letting the diagnosis of life under the sun stand at full strength, and then to set each conclusion beside the New Testament answer. The series asks the congregation to hold two things at once: the vapor of everything under the sun, and the promise that in the Lord their labor is not in vain.

Week One: Vanity of Vanities (September 12)

The diagnosis and the gift of limits. Ecclesiastes 1, 2, 3, and 12 are read for the verdict, the experiment, the seasons, and the conclusion. Romans 8, 1 Corinthians 15, and Revelation 21 supply the response: creation subjected to futility in hope, and the promise to make all things new.

Week Two: A Time to Die (September 19)

Mortality, wisdom, and the resurrection. The shared fate of man and beast, the injustice that death does not resolve, the house of mourning, and the dead who know nothing, answered by 1 Corinthians 15, the raising of Lazarus, and Hebrews 2 on deliverance from lifelong slavery to the fear of death.

Week Three: The Whole Duty of Man (September 26)

Vocation, worship, and the life that does not end. Guarding your steps when you go to the house of God, eating your bread with joy, sowing in the morning without knowing which will prosper, and the final word to fear God and keep His commandments. Colossians 3, Matthew 6, Romans 12, and the river of life close the series.

The Marks of the Church

What Scripture Shows and the Confessions Confess

October 2027. Five weeks, October 3 through October 31, 2027

What the series is for. To answer where the Church is found and how she is recognized, working from a scriptural portrait to the confessional definition. Every week pairs an anchor New Testament text with an Old Testament portrait of the same reality and with the article of the Confessions that states it, so the congregation sees that Augsburg Confession VII is a description of what Acts 2 already shows.

Week One: They Devoted Themselves (October 3)

Acts 2:42–47 as the anchor portrait, set beside the assembly at Sinai in Exodus 19–24, with Augsburg Confession VII and Luther's seven marks. The class establishes what the Church is before asking how she is recognized.

Week Two: The Word Dwells Richly (October 10)

The living Word that creates faith and sustains the Church. Isaiah 55 on the Word that does not return empty, Romans 10 on faith coming by hearing, and 2 Timothy 4 on the charge to preach, with Nehemiah 8 as the Old Testament portrait of a congregation under the read and explained Word.

Week Three: Given for You (October 17)

The Sacraments as God's provision for the journey. Baptism from Matthew 28 and Romans 6, the Supper from 1 Corinthians 10 and 11 and John 6, with Elijah fed under the juniper tree as the portrait of provision for a journey too great, and the relevant articles of the Augsburg Confession and Small Catechism.

Week Four: Where Two or Three Are Gathered (October 24)

The fellowship, the prayers, and the mutual consolation of the brethren. Matthew 18 on discipline and promise, James 5 on mutual care, Colossians 3 on life together, and the Church at prayer in Acts 4 and Hebrews 10, with Psalms 22 and 23 read as a pair.

Week Five: Here We Stand (Reformation Sunday, October 31)

The Word recovered, the Church renewed, the confession made. The lampstand and the knocking Christ from Revelation, the Church built on rock from Ephesians 2, 1 Peter 2, and Matthew 16, with Josiah finding the Book of the Law as the Old Testament portrait, and the Augsburg Confession read in full at Articles VII and VIII with its preface and conclusion.

Even So, Come, Lord Jesus

A Constructed Eschatology Series

November 2027. Three weeks, November 7, 14, and 21, 2027

What the series is for. To teach the last things as the creed confesses them rather than as speculation, anchoring each session in a creedal phrase and closing the program year where the whole curriculum has been pointing. The series is built to connect explicitly backward, to the Lamb who was slain, to the minor prophets, and to Easter 2026, and forward into Advent.

Week One: Some to Everlasting Life (November 7)

Daniel 12:1–4, 13: the sleepers in the dust awake, some to everlasting life. Read with Isaiah 26:19, John 5:19–29 (the voice of the Son), Luke 20:27–40 with Exodus 3:6, Philippians 3:17–21 (the body of His glory), and 1 John 3:1–3, and confessed in Augsburg Confession XVII and the Athanasian Creed. The creedal phrase governs the session: I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

Week Two: The Great Day of the Lord (November 14)

Amos 5:18–20 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11 read with both halves of Zephaniah: the terror of chapter 1 and the joy of chapter 3. Terror and joy from the same prophet, the same God, and the same day. 2 Peter 3 supplies the patience of God as the reason for the delay.

Week Three: New Heavens and a New Earth (November 21)

Isaiah 65:17–25 and 66:22–23 with Isaiah 60, held together with Revelation 21–22, Matthew 19:27–30, Hebrews 11 (the pilgrims who greeted the promise from afar), and 2 Peter 3:11–13, and closing on the Marana tha of 1 Corinthians 16:22. The world is destined not for destruction but for transformation. The session closes the program year, from Eden to the New Jerusalem, and opens the door to Advent.

The King, the Martyrs, the Bride, and the New Song

Four Psalms Read with Daniel and the Revelation

Advent 2027. Four Sundays, November 28 through December 19, 2027

What the series is for. To read Advent as the coming of the King rather than as a countdown to Christmas. Each week takes one Psalm, sets it beside a vision from Daniel and its apocalyptic fulfillment in the Revelation, and reads the appointed Gospel for that Sunday alongside them. The four move from the gates opening to the new song that has no end.

Advent One: Lift Up Your Heads, O Gates (Psalm 24; November 28)

The King of glory enters His temple, His city, and His creation. Daniel 7:9–10 supplies the throne set in place, Revelation 4–5 supplies the heavenly court, and Matthew 21:1–9 supplies the entry the congregation sings every week in the Sanctus.

Advent Two: God Is Our Refuge and Strength (Psalm 46; December 5)

The martyrs under the altar, the multitude in white, and the God who wipes every tear. Daniel 12 supplies the time of trouble, the fifth seal and the great multitude supply the answer to "how long," and Luke 21 supplies the shaking of the powers of heaven.

Advent Three: Your Throne, O God, Is Forever (Psalm 45; December 12)

The royal wedding psalm read with the marriage supper of the Lamb and with John's question from prison. Daniel 7:13–14 supplies the everlasting dominion, Revelation 19 the rider and the wedding, and Matthew 11 the question "are You the one who is to come?"

Advent Four: Sing to the Lord a New Song (Psalm 96; December 19)

The new song, the new creation, and the Word made flesh. Daniel 2 supplies the stone that fills the earth, Revelation 21–22 supplies the city that needs no sun, and John 1:19–28 supplies the voice in the wilderness, closing the two-year arc where it began.

The Songs of the Incarnation

The Four Canticles of Luke and Their Old Testament Sources

Christmas 2027–2028. Four weeks, December 26, 2027 through January 16, 2028

What the series is for. To study the four songs that Luke records around the birth of Christ, each of which the Church still sings: the Magnificat at Vespers, the Benedictus at Matins, the Gloria in Excelsis in the Divine Service, and the Nunc Dimittis after the Sacrament. Advent closed on Psalm 96 and its new song, and these are the first new songs of the New Testament. Every line of them is drawn from the Old Testament, so each class sets the canticle beside its sources and reads the two together. The class has already met parts of these songs: Sworn to Our Fathers closed on the oath to Abraham in the Magnificat and the Benedictus, Advent in the Minor Prophets read Zechariah at the altar and Simeon's prayer, and The Fifth Gospel taught Simeon's words from Isaiah 49. Those passages are named and summarized where they fall, and each hour is built on what the class has not yet studied.

Week One: The Magnificat (December 26)

Luke 1:39–56 with 1 Samuel 1:1–2:10. The visit to Elizabeth, the child who leaps in the womb, and Mary's song set beside the whole story of Hannah: a barren wife who prays in the house of the Lord, gives up her son, and sings of the God who brings down the mighty and exalts the lowly. The class reads the two songs line by line. The closing oath to Abraham (1:54–55) was the subject of Sworn to Our Fathers, Session Three, and Habakkuk 3:18 and Psalm 103 were taught in Advent 2026 and Pre-Lent 2027; each is named in a sentence. Luther's 1521 commentary on the Magnificat supplies the confessional voice.

Week Two: The Benedictus (January 2)

Luke 1:57–80. The naming of John, the tongue that is loosed, and a song that praises Mary's child before it mentions Zechariah's own. The hour follows the verb that opens and closes the song: God has "visited" His people (1:68, 78). The class traces that word to Joseph's dying promise in Genesis 50:24–25, to the bush, where the Lord says He has "observed" His people with the same Hebrew verb (Exodus 3:16), to the people who believed that the Lord had visited them (Exodus 4:31), and to Naomi's report in Ruth 1:6, and then reads the song's own definition of salvation: service without fear, in holiness and righteousness, and the forgiveness of sins (1:74–77). The horn of David (2 Samuel 7), the oath to Abraham, the forerunner of Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3, and Zechariah's hour at the altar have each been taught and are named in a sentence. The session closes on the Benedictus at Matins.

Week Three: The Gloria in Excelsis (January 9)

Luke 2:8–20. One verse of song, studied with its scene. The shepherds keep watch near David's town, where Micah 5:2–5 promised a ruler who "shall be their peace," and Ezekiel 34:11–24 promised that the Lord Himself would seek His sheep and set one shepherd over them. The angels' praise is read with Job 38:7 and Psalm 148, where the heavens are summoned to praise. The class also weighs the translation question in the second line and sees how the Church expanded one verse into the hymn of praise sung in the Divine Service. Isaiah 6 and Isaiah 9 are left for Advent 2028, where they are studied in full.

Week Four: The Nunc Dimittis (January 16)

Luke 2:22–40. Simeon's song was taught in Advent in the Minor Prophets (Class Two) and in The Fifth Gospel (Class Three, with Isaiah 49:6), so the session summarizes it and gives the hour to the scene around it. Leviticus 12 explains the offering of two birds, the offering of a family that could not afford a lamb, and Exodus 13 the presentation of the firstborn. Simeon then tells Mary that the child is set for the fall and rising of many and for a sign that is opposed, and that a sword will pierce her own soul. Anna, a widow of the tribe of Asher, speaks of Him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. The session closes on the reason the Church sings this song after receiving the Sacrament.

Before Abraham Was, I Am

The Son of God Appearing Before Bethlehem

Epiphany 2028. Three weeks, January 23, January 30, and February 6, 2028

What the series is for. To teach Epiphany as the season of manifestation by studying the appearances of the Lord to the patriarchs, to Moses, and to Joshua. In each account a figure called the Angel of the Lord, or simply a man, speaks as God, receives worship, and bears the divine name. The Lutheran fathers, following the early Church, identified this figure as the Son before His incarnation, and Jesus says as much in John 8:58, the Gospel the congregation will hear on the Fifth Sunday in Lent. The series ends on Transfiguration, when two men who met Him on the mountain see His face. Genesis 22, where the Angel of the Lord stays Abraham's hand, has been the anchor of three earlier sessions (Who Is This Man?, Class Three; Sworn to Our Fathers, Session Three; The Fifth Gospel, Class Two) and is named here in a sentence.

Week One: Abraham and Hagar (January 23)

Genesis 16:7–14 and 18:1–15 with John 8:48–59. The Angel of the Lord finds Hagar by a spring in the wilderness, speaks with the Lord's own authority, and receives a name from her: "You are a God of seeing." At Mamre the Lord appears to Abraham as one of three visitors, eats at his table, and promises a son. Jesus then claims the patriarch's joy: "Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day." The rest of Hagar's story belongs to October, where Paul reads it in Galatians 4.

Week Two: Jacob and Moses (January 30)

Genesis 32:22–32 and Exodus 3:1–15. Jacob wrestles a man until daybreak and names the place Peniel, "for I have seen God face to face." Moses turns aside to a bush that burns without being consumed, where the Angel of the Lord speaks as the God of Abraham and gives the name I AM. Both men ask the visitor's name, and the two answers are set side by side. The link between I AM and the "I am" sayings of John was drawn in Summer 2026 and in the Passion series, so the hour stays with the appearances themselves. Hosea 12:3–5 is held for the summer, where it is paired with the widow who would not let go.

Week Three: Joshua and the Mountain (Transfiguration, February 6)

Joshua 5:13–15 and Judges 13 with Matthew 17:1–9. The Commander of the Lord's army gives Joshua the command that Moses heard at the bush, and Manoah's visitor says that his name is "wonderful," the word Isaiah 9:6 gives to the Child. The session then turns to the Gospel of the day. Moses saw only the Lord's back in Exodus 33, and Elijah covered his face at Horeb; on the mountain both look at Him. Luke 9:31 adds that they spoke of His departure, in Greek His "exodus," a word that points the class toward the Upper Room. 2 Peter 1:16–18 was taught in Reclaiming the Solas (Sola Scriptura) and is read here as the eyewitness summary.

The Night He Was Betrayed

The Upper Room in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul

Pre-Lent 2028. Three weeks, February 13, 20, and 27, 2028

What the series is for. To study the Last Supper by the Building Approach, which the class last used in Lent and Easter 2026. The Passion series began at Gethsemane, so the hours before it have not been taught as a narrative: the preparation, the meal, and the words the congregation hears at every celebration of the Sacrament. Mark is read as the baseline, Matthew and Luke are added in turn, and Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 11 is added as a fourth voice. The Old Testament background of the Supper (Exodus 24:8, Jeremiah 31:31–34, Isaiah 53:12) and the confessional teaching on it have each been taught several times, most recently in The Marks of the Church, Week Three. This series names them and gives its hours to the comparison of the accounts, which no earlier series has done. It ends where John 13 begins, and Lent takes up the discourse that John alone records.

Week One: Preparing the Passover (Septuagesima, February 13)

Mark 14:12–21 with Matthew 26:17–25 and Luke 22:7–16. The man with the water jar, the large upper room, and the announcement that one of the Twelve will betray Him. Matthew records the question Judas asks and the answer he receives; Luke records the Lord's own longing: "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." Exodus 12, taught in The Greater Exodus, supplies the meal they are eating.

Week Two: Four Accounts of One Testament (Sexagesima, February 20)

Mark 14:22–25, Matthew 26:26–29, Luke 22:17–20, and 1 Corinthians 11:23–26, compared phrase by phrase. Matthew alone adds "for the forgiveness of sins"; Luke and Paul record "new covenant" and the command to do this in remembrance; Luke alone records a cup before the bread as well as after it. Mark and Matthew close on the promise not to drink again of the fruit of the vine until the day He drinks it new in the kingdom. The new material of the hour is the word "testament": Luther's 1520 Treatise on the New Testament, that is, the Holy Mass, reads the Words of Institution as the last will of a man about to die, and Galatians 3:15 will return to that argument in October. The Old Testament background, the warning of 1 Corinthians 11:27–32, and the Small Catechism and Formula of Concord VII on the Sacrament were studied in The Marks of the Church, Week Three, and are named in a sentence each.

Week Three: After Supper (Quinquagesima, February 27)

Luke 22:24–38 with Mark 14:26–31 and Matthew 26:30–35. Luke records what was said at the table after the cup: a dispute about greatness, the Lord's answer that He is among them as the one who serves, the promise of thrones to those who have continued with Him, and the strange exchange about purses and swords. Isaiah 53:12, which Jesus applies to Himself here, and Zechariah 13:7, which Mark and Matthew quote, were taught in The Fifth Gospel and are named in a sentence. Peter's protest and the warning that Satan has demanded to sift them carry the class to the Mount of Olives, where the Passion series began, and the class turns to what John heard in that room.

The Hour Has Come

The Farewell Discourse, John 13 through 17

Lent 2028. Six weeks, March 5 through April 9, 2028

What the series is for. To hear what Jesus said to His own on the night of His betrayal, from the washing of feet to the prayer that ends the meal. John gives five chapters to a single evening and places them under one heading: Jesus knew that His hour had come. The discourse belongs to the Old Testament tradition of the farewell, in which Jacob, Moses, Joshua, and David gather their heirs before death, and it is the testament of the Son. Summer 2026 taught John 14:1–14, 14:15–21, and 17:1–11 as single studies, and its study of the Vineyard read John 15:1 as the answer to Isaiah 5. The series reads those passages in their setting, names what was taught, and builds each hour on the verses around them. The One-Year Lectionary appoints portions of chapters 14, 15, and 16 for the Sundays after Easter and for Pentecost, so the class will hear them again from the lectern within weeks.

Week One: He Loved Them to the End (March 5)

John 13:1–30. The Lord lays aside His garments, washes the disciples' feet, and takes His garments up again, an action that pictures the whole of His work. He quotes Psalm 41:9 of the betrayer and gives the morsel to Judas, who leaves at once. John closes the scene in four words: "And it was night." The session begins from the Supper studied in Pre-Lent, which John assumes and does not repeat.

Week Two: Where I Am Going (March 12)

John 13:31–38 and 14:22–31. The new commandment, the prediction of Peter's denial, and the question of the other Judas: why the Lord will show Himself to the disciples and not to the world. The Father's house and the way to it (14:1–14) and the promise of another Helper (14:15–21) were each the subject of a Summer 2026 session and are summarized in their places. The hour ends on the peace He leaves with them, on the ruler of this world who has no claim on Him, and on the words "Rise, let us go from here."

Week Three: The True Vine (March 19)

John 15:1–17. Ezekiel 15 asks what use the wood of a vine is when it bears no fruit, and Jeremiah 2:21 mourns a choice vine turned wild. Israel as the vine of Psalm 80 was taught in The Church Is Born (Class Four), and Isaiah's vineyard with the true vine in Summer 2026 (The Vineyard), so both are named in a sentence. The hour goes to what the earlier studies did not reach: abiding, pruning, the fruit that remains, and the change of name from servants to friends.

Week Four: The World and the Helper (March 26)

John 15:18–16:15. The world's hatred, explained from Psalm 69:4: "They hated me without a cause." Jesus then says that His going away is to the disciples' advantage, since the Helper will come to convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to guide the disciples into all the truth. The class reads the passage with the Third Article and its explanation in the Small Catechism.

Week Five: A Little While (April 2)

John 16:16–33. Sorrow that will turn into joy, pictured as a woman in labor, an image the prophets used for Zion in Isaiah 26 and 66. The disciples at last say that they understand, and Jesus answers that they will scatter within the hour. The discourse ends on its plainest promise: "Take heart; I have overcome the world."

Week Six: The Prayer of the High Priest (Palm Sunday, April 9)

John 17:12–26. Summer 2026 studied the opening of the prayer (17:1–11), and the session summarizes it before turning to the rest. Jesus prays for Himself, for the disciples in the room, and for those who will believe through their word, the same order in which the high priest made atonement in Leviticus 16:17. The class hears what He asks for His Church: that she be kept from the evil one, sanctified in the truth, made one, and brought to see His glory. John 18:1 then takes Him across the Kidron to the garden, and Holy Week begins.

Living Stones

The First Epistle of Peter

Easter 2028. Six sessions, April 23 through June 4, 2028; no class on May 28

What the series is for. To read one epistle whole, from greeting to close, for the first time in this program. First Peter is the Easter epistle of the One-Year Lectionary, appointed for three Sundays in this season, two of them class days. It also finishes a story: the class watched Peter deny his Lord in Lent 2026, saw him restored that Easter, and heard him preach at Pentecost in Easter 2027. Here the old apostle writes to baptized exiles, and nearly every paragraph preaches an Old Testament text. The class has already studied a good deal of this letter. Summer 2026 taught four of its Sunday portions as epistles (1:17–25; 2:2–10; 3:13–22; 4:12–19 with 5:6–11), and other series taught 1:15–16 (The Blood of the Lamb), 2:9 (The Marks of the Church), 2:21–25 (Who Is This Man? and The Fifth Gospel), and 3:18–22 (The Greater Exodus and The Marks of the Church). Those passages are read in Peter's order and summarized, and each of the six hours is built on a part of the letter the class has not studied.

Week One: Elect Exiles and a Living Hope (Quasimodogeniti, April 23)

1 Peter 1:1–12. The Sunday takes its name from 1 Peter 2:2, "like newborn infants," so the letter opens on its own day. Peter addresses the baptized as exiles of the Dispersion and blesses God who has caused them to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection, to an inheritance kept in heaven. Faith is tested by fire like gold, and those who have not seen Christ love Him. The session closes on the prophets who searched and inquired, and on the angels who long to look. The sprinkling of blood at Sinai (Exodus 24) was taught in The Greater Exodus and The Marks of the Church and is named in a sentence. Every piece of the next section, 1:13–2:10, has been studied: holiness from Leviticus 19 (The Blood of the Lamb), the ransom and the imperishable word (Summer 2026, The Emmaus Road), the lamb without blemish (Who Is This Man?, Class Three), the living stones and the royal priesthood (Summer 2026, The Way, the Truth, and the Life; The Marks of the Church, Week Five), and the rejected stone (The Church Is Born, Class Two). It is read aloud at the end of the hour with a one-page summary, so the letter is heard whole without spending a class on it.

Week Two: Sojourners and Exiles (Misericordias Domini, April 30)

1 Peter 2:11–20. Peter urges the baptized as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh and to keep their conduct honorable among the Gentiles, so that those who speak against them may see their good deeds and glorify God. They are to be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, to live as free people without using their freedom as a cover for evil, to honor everyone, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honor the emperor. Servants are to endure unjust suffering, mindful of God. Jeremiah 29:4–7 supplies the Old Testament voice: the letter to the first exiles in Babylon, telling them to build houses, plant gardens, and seek the welfare of the city where the Lord has sent them. Romans 13, taught in Summer 2026 (The Keys of the Kingdom), is named in a sentence, and the session closes with the Table of Duties on government and on servants. None of this passage has been studied in any series, and it is the epistle the One-Year appoints for the following Sunday.

Week Three: The Household of Faith (Jubilate, May 7)

1 Peter 2:21–3:12. Christ's own suffering told in the words of Isaiah 53 (2:21–25) was taught in Who Is This Man? and The Fifth Gospel; it is read as the ground of what follows and named, not retaught. The hour goes to 3:1–12. Peter turns to wives and husbands, sets Sarah before the women of the congregation as one who obeyed Abraham and did not fear, and calls husbands to live with their wives as heirs with them of the grace of life. He closes with Psalm 34:12–16, the psalm the class studied in Best of Both Worlds, Week Nine, now quoted as the rule for a life that blesses and does not repay evil for evil. The household instructions of 2:13–3:7 are sent home on a handout with the Table of Duties, which quotes them.

Week Four: Armed with the Same Mind (Cantate, May 14)

1 Peter 3:13–4:6. The descent, the Flood, and Baptism (3:18–22) have been taught three times, in Summer 2026 (The Unknown God), The Greater Exodus, and The Marks of the Church; the session names them and summarizes the article confessed in the Creed and in Formula of Concord IX. The hour goes to 4:1–6: since Christ suffered in the flesh, Christians arm themselves with the same way of thinking and live the rest of their time for the will of God. Their old companions are surprised that they no longer join them, and Peter answers that they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead, for this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead. Six verses make a shorter passage by design, and the class has time to weigh what 4:6 does and does not say.

Week Five: The End of All Things Is at Hand (Rogate, May 21)

1 Peter 4:7–19. The hour goes to 4:7–11, where the One-Year's epistle for the Sunday after the Ascension begins: be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins (Proverbs 10:12), show hospitality without grumbling, and serve as stewards of God's varied grace, speaking as one who speaks the oracles of God. The fiery trial and the Spirit of glory (4:12–19) were studied in Summer 2026 (Christ Prays for His Church) and are read with a short summary. The warning that judgment begins at the household of God, which Ezekiel 9 first gave, is carried to September.

Week Six: The Chief Shepherd (Pentecost, June 4)

1 Peter 5:1–14. The roaring lion and the God of all grace (5:6–11) were studied in Summer 2026 and are read with a short summary. The hour goes to 5:1–5 and 5:12–14. Peter writes as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, charges the elders to shepherd the flock willingly, and promises the unfading crown when the Chief Shepherd appears. The charge he received by the charcoal fire (John 21) was taught in Easter 2026, and Ezekiel 34 in the Christmas series; both are named in a sentence. The letter is signed through Silvanus, with greetings from Mark, from "Babylon," and the class leaves with the word that carries into the autumn: the Church lives in exile and is kept there by her Lord.

Best of Both Worlds

Twelve Independent Bible Studies from Series C

Summer 2028. Twelve weeks, June 11 through August 27, 2028

What the series is for. The third summer of gap-filling completes the Three-Year Lectionary. Series C is Luke's year. The One-Year Lectionary already reads a great deal of Luke, and what it omits is concentrated in the journey to Jerusalem, where Luke records sayings and parables that no other Evangelist has. Nine of the twelve sessions take their Gospel from that journey. Series C also reads Galatians, Colossians, Hebrews 11, Philemon, and 2 Timothy. Every session is self-contained. It takes the Gospel, the Old Testament, and the Epistle of one Series C Sunday, together with the Collect appointed for those readings, and closes with a confessional synthesis. Where a reading of the day was taught in an earlier series, or belongs to another series this year, the session names it in a sentence and builds the hour on the other readings. The Series C readings from Galatians 2 through 4 are held for October.

Week One: What Is Your Name? (June 11)

Luke 8:26–39 with Isaiah 65:1–9 (Proper 7, Series C). A man who lives among the tombs meets Jesus on the shore of the Gentiles, the demons give their name as Legion, and the swine run into the lake. The man sits at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind, and is sent home to declare how much God has done for him. Isaiah 65 describes a rebellious people who sit in tombs and eat pig's flesh, and opens with the Lord who was found by those who did not seek Him, the verse Paul quotes in Romans 10:20. The strong man bound in Mark 3 (Best of Both Worlds, Week One) is named in a sentence. The Epistle, Galatians 3:23–4:7, is held for October, and the session closes with the Second Article: redeemed from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

Week Two: You Are the Man (June 18)

Luke 7:36–8:3 with 2 Samuel 11:26–12:14. A woman of the city weeps at the feet of Jesus in a Pharisee's house, and He answers His host with the parable of two debtors. The Old Testament reading is Nathan before David: a parable, a verdict, a confession, and an absolution spoken on the spot. The One-Year appoints neither text for a Sunday. Private confession in the Small Catechism and the Office of the Keys were taught in The Marks of the Church (Week Four) and Summer 2026 (The Keys of the Kingdom), so the confessional synthesis reads Luther's Brief Exhortation to Confession from the Large Catechism instead. The Epistle, from Galatians 2 and 3, is held for October.

Week Three: He Set His Face (June 25)

Luke 9:51–62 with 1 Kings 19:9–21 and Galatians 5. The journey to Jerusalem begins. A Samaritan village refuses Him, James and John want fire from heaven, and three would-be followers hear what following costs. Elijah at Horeb hears the low whisper and is sent back to anoint Elisha, called from the plow, the background of the saying about the hand on the plow. Elijah's bread under the broom tree (1 Kings 19:1–8) was taught in Best of Both Worlds and The Marks of the Church and is named in a sentence. Galatians 5 supplies freedom, the flesh, and the fruit of the Spirit, from the part of that letter that October will not reach.

Week Four: Names Written in Heaven (July 2)

Luke 10:1–20 with Isaiah 66:10–14 and Galatians 6. The Lord sends seventy-two ahead of Him as lambs among wolves and receives them back with joy: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." He then turns their joy from the power they were given to the book in which their names are written, a book the class will see opened in Revelation 20 in November. Paul closes Galatians by boasting in nothing except the cross.

Week Five: One Thing Is Necessary (July 9)

Luke 10:38–42 with Genesis 18:1–14 and Colossians 1:21–29. Martha serves, and Mary sits at the Lord's feet to hear His word. Series C pairs the scene with Abraham's hospitality at Mamre, which the class studied in Epiphany as an appearance of the Lord; the session names that study in a sentence and reads Mamre here only for what it says about receiving a guest who proves to be the Giver. Psalm 27:4, "One thing have I asked of the Lord," supplies the Old Testament voice for the "one thing." Five verses of Gospel make a shorter session by design. Colossians 1 names the one thing: "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Week Six: Lord, Teach Us to Pray (July 16)

Luke 11:1–13 with Genesis 18:20–33 and Colossians 2:6–15. Luke's shorter form of the Lord's Prayer, the friend at midnight, and the promise that the Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask. Abraham's intercession for Sodom, from fifty righteous down to ten, is the Old Testament's boldest example of the same persistence. The session reads the prayer with the Small Catechism, the first treatment of the Third Chief Part in this program.

Week Seven: The Road to Damascus (July 23)

Acts 9:1–22 with Acts 22:3–16 and 26:9–18. The Church Is Born ended with Philip in Acts 8, and this session opens the next chapter. The risen Lord stops the persecutor, sends Ananias to baptize him, and names him a chosen instrument to carry His name before the Gentiles. Luke tells the story three times, and the session reads the three accounts by the Building Approach, noting what Paul adds when he tells it himself to a crowd in Jerusalem and to a king in Caesarea. The other readings of the day were taught before and are named in a sentence each: Peter's restoration on the shore (John 21) in Easter 2026, and the Lamb on the throne (Revelation 5) in Who Is This Man?, The Fifth Gospel, and Advent 2027. A change of texture at the midpoint.

Week Eight: By Faith (July 30)

Hebrews 11:1–7 with Luke 12:32–40. The Epistle leads this session. The One-Year never reads the roll of the faithful, and the hour goes to its opening: faith defined, the world framed by the word of God, and Abel, Enoch, and Noah. The pilgrims who greeted the promise from afar (11:8–16) were taught in Even So, Come Lord Jesus, and Genesis 15, the Old Testament reading of the day, was the anchor of Sworn to Our Fathers, Session One, and is studied in Paul's use of it in October; both are named in a sentence. In the Gospel, "Fear not, little flock" is followed by servants waiting with lamps lit for a master who, when he comes, will dress himself to serve them at table. The sayings against anxiety (12:22–31) parallel Matthew 6, studied in Ecclesiastes, Week Three, and are named in a sentence.

Week Nine: Charge That to My Account (August 6)

Philemon with Luke 14:25–35 and Deuteronomy 30:15–20. A whole epistle read at one sitting: twenty-five verses in which Paul sends a runaway slave back to his master as a beloved brother and offers to pay whatever he owes. Luther saw the Gospel in the letter and wrote that we are all the Lord's Onesimi. The Gospel sets beside it the tower builder and the king going to war, two men who count the cost before they begin.

Week Ten: Increase Our Faith (August 13)

Luke 17:1–10 with 2 Timothy 1:1–14 and Habakkuk 1:1–4; 2:1–4. The apostles ask for more faith and are told about a mustard seed and about servants who have only done their duty. Paul reminds Timothy of the sincere faith that lived first in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, tells him to fan into flame the gift of God, and charges him to guard the good deposit. Habakkuk was studied in Advent in the Minor Prophets (Class Two) and is read here only as far as the prophet's question and his watchtower; the sentence he receives in 2:4 is left for October 8, where Paul quotes it.

Week Eleven: I Will Not Let You Go (August 20)

Luke 18:1–8 with Genesis 32:22–30 and Hosea 12:3–6. The widow who wears down an unjust judge, a parable told so that the disciples would always pray and not lose heart. Series C pairs her with Jacob at Peniel, which the class studied in Epiphany as an appearance of the Lord; here the hour reads Peniel through Hosea, who says that Jacob wept and sought His favor. The Epistle of the day, 2 Timothy 3:14–4:5, was taught in The Marks of the Church (Week Two) and Reclaiming the Solas (Sola Scriptura) and is named in a sentence. The parable ends with a question that the session leaves open: "when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Week Twelve: Let It Alone This Year (August 27)

Luke 13:1–9 with Hosea 9:10. Asked about Galileans killed by Pilate, Jesus refuses to rank the victims and calls every hearer to repent; the parable of the barren fig tree then grants one more year. Hosea remembers Israel as the first fruit on the fig tree, the background against which the vinedresser's plea is heard. The other readings of the day are named in a sentence each: Ezekiel the watchman (33:7–9) was taught in Summer 2026 (The Keys of the Kingdom), the oath of 33:11 is studied in its first setting, Ezekiel 18, in September, and the wilderness warning of 1 Corinthians 10:1–13 was taught in The Greater Exodus and The Marks of the Church. The series closes on the prophet whom the class will study in September.

Then They Will Know

Three Difficult Readings in Ezekiel

September 2028. Three weeks, September 10, 17, and 24, 2028

What the series is for. To read three passages of Ezekiel that congregations seldom hear, each difficult in its own way: one is hard to picture, one is hard to hear, and one is hard to reconcile with the rest of Scripture. Ezekiel prophesied among the exiles in Babylon before and after the fall of Jerusalem in 586/587 BC, and more than sixty times he gives the purpose of everything he sees and says: "Then they will know that I am the Lord." The series reads each hard text to its end, where the Gospel is found, and follows it into the New Testament. Ezekiel 16 and 37 have been taught in earlier series and are not repeated. The departure of the glory (chapters 8 through 11) was taught in Advent in the Minor Prophets, Class Three, and is summarized. Chapters 38 through 48 are left for a later year.

Week One: Hard to Picture (September 10)

Ezekiel 1:1–3:15. The storm, the four living creatures, the wheels full of eyes, and above them a throne with "a likeness with a human appearance." The prophet falls on his face and is commanded to eat a scroll written on front and back with lamentation and mourning and woe, and in his mouth it is as sweet as honey. He then sits overwhelmed among the exiles for seven days. John eats a scroll that is sweet in the mouth and bitter in the stomach in Revelation 10:8–11, and the session reads the two calls together. The Lord's address "son of man" (2:1) was taught in Who Is This Man?, Class Two, and the living creatures around the throne of Revelation 4 in Advent 2027; both are named in a sentence.

Week Two: Hard to Hear (September 17)

Ezekiel 24. On the day the siege of Jerusalem begins, the Lord tells the prophet that He is about to take away the delight of his eyes at a stroke and that he is not to mourn or weep. Ezekiel preaches in the morning, and his wife dies that evening. His silence is the sign: the sanctuary, the delight of the people's eyes, will fall, and the exiles will be too stunned to grieve. The class met Jerusalem as the faithless bride of chapter 16 in Sworn to Our Fathers, and here her story reaches its end. The prophet was forbidden to weep over the city; the session follows the sign to Luke 19:41–44, where the Lord comes near to Jerusalem and weeps over it. It ends on the day the prophet's mouth is opened and the book turns from judgment to promise.

Week Three: Hard to Reconcile (September 24)

Ezekiel 18 and 20:10–26, with 36:22–28. "The soul who sins shall die" appears to set aside inherited guilt, and "I gave them statutes that were not good" appears to accuse God's own Law. The session works through both with the distinction of Law and Gospel. Chapter 18 commands, "make yourselves a new heart," and closes on the Lord's oath that He has no pleasure in the death of anyone. Chapter 36 then promises, "I will give you a new heart": the same book demands and then bestows. Ezekiel 36 was taught in The Greater Exodus and in Summer 2026 (Born from Above) and is read here only as the answer to chapter 18. Ezekiel 20 quotes Leviticus 18:5 three times, the verse Paul quotes in Galatians 3:12, and so the series hands its question to October.

Who Bewitched You?

Galatians, Abraham, and the Promise the Law Could Not Cancel

October 2028. Five weeks, October 1 through October 29, 2028

What the series is for. To give five Sundays to the central argument of Galatians, 3:1 through 5:1, in place of a survey of the whole letter. The Galatians had heard Christ crucified preached and were being persuaded that they needed something more. Paul answers from Abraham: the promise came first, it was received by faith, and nothing that came later can amend it. This is the third Reformation month in the program, after Reclaiming the Solas and The Marks of the Church, and it reads the epistle that Luther called his Katie von Bora with his 1535 lectures, Augsburg Confession IV, and Formula of Concord V on Law and Gospel. Participants need a Bible and a copy of the Book of Concord. Chapters 5 and 6 were taught in the summer.

Week One: Abraham Believed (October 1)

Galatians 3:1–9. The first session supplies the crisis of chapters 1 and 2 and then takes up Paul's opening question: did you receive the Spirit by works of the Law or by hearing with faith? Genesis 15:6 was studied in Reclaiming the Solas (Sola Fide) and Sworn to Our Fathers, Session One, with Romans 4, so the session names it and gives the hour to what Galatians adds: the evidence of the Spirit given by hearing, and Genesis 12:3, in which the Scripture preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham. Those who are of faith are his sons. Read with Augsburg Confession IV.

Week Two: The Curse and the Tree (October 8)

Galatians 3:10–14. Five verses and four Old Testament citations. Deuteronomy 27:26 curses everyone who does not keep all the Law, Habakkuk 2:4 gives life to the righteous by faith, and Leviticus 18:5 gives it to the one who does the commandments. The texts oppose one another until Deuteronomy 21:23 resolves them: Christ became a curse for us by hanging on a tree. The class has met two of these verses already: Habakkuk's in Advent in the Minor Prophets, and Leviticus 18:5 through Ezekiel in September.

Week Three: 430 Years Too Late (October 15)

Galatians 3:15–29. Paul argues as a lawyer. A ratified will cannot be annulled or amended by a later document, the argument the class met in Pre-Lent in the Words of Institution, and the Law arrived four hundred thirty years after the promise to Abraham and to his Offspring, who is Christ. Why then the Law? It was added because of transgressions and kept Israel under guard until faith came. The session ends at the font: as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ and are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Week Four: Sons, Not Slaves (October 22)

Galatians 4:1–20. The heir who is a child differs in nothing from a slave until the date his father set. "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law," the verse Advent in the Minor Prophets read as the fulfillment of the Day of the Lord, and here the hinge of Paul's argument. The Spirit of the Son cries "Abba! Father!" in the hearts of the adopted. Paul then drops the argument and pleads as a pastor, in the anguish of childbirth for people who are turning back.

Week Five: For Freedom (Reformation Sunday, October 29)

Galatians 4:21–5:1. Hagar and Sarah, two sons, two covenants, Mount Sinai and the Jerusalem above, read with Genesis 16:1–6 and 21:1–21 and with Isaiah 54:1. The Angel at Hagar's spring was studied in Epiphany and is named in a sentence. In John 8:31–36, a Gospel appointed for Reformation, the hearers answer Jesus, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone." Paul and John meet the same claim: the son remains in the house forever, and the children of the free woman are those whom the Son sets free. The series ends on its last verse, "For freedom Christ has set us free."

The Books Were Opened

Daniel 8 through 12, Read with the Revelation

November 2028. Four weeks, November 5 through November 26, 2028

What the series is for. To close the church year on the visions of Daniel. The year began in Advent 2027 with four fragments of this book set beside the Psalms: the thrones, the Son of Man, the time of trouble, and the stone. Daniel 7 was the primary text of Who Is This Man?, Class Two, and supplied two of those Advent fragments, and Daniel 12:1–4 and 13 were the primary text of Even So, Come Lord Jesus, Week One, and a third fragment. The series therefore begins with Daniel 8, names chapter 7 where it is needed, and reads the visions the class has not studied. Daniel remains the text for the hour. Each session then makes one fixed stop in the Revelation, where John shows what Daniel saw, and the visions are read as the Creed and Augsburg Confession XVII confess the last things, without a timetable. None of the Revelation passages chosen was a primary text in Advent 2027 or in Letters to the Church, and the greater part of that book remains for a series of its own.

Week One: How Long? (All Saints' Day observed, November 5)

Daniel 8. A ram with two horns and a goat with one, named in the text as Media and Persia and as Greece, and a little horn that grows great, casts truth to the ground, and stops the regular burnt offering. A holy one asks, "For how long?" and is answered with a number of evenings and mornings and a promise that the sanctuary will be restored. Daniel is overcome and lies sick for days. Revelation 13:1–10 is the stop in John, whose beast makes war on the saints, and the session ends on its call for the endurance and faith of the saints. Placed on All Saints' for the sake of that call. Daniel 7, whose beasts lie behind both chapters, is summarized from Who Is This Man?.

Week Two: Seventy Weeks (November 12)

Daniel 9. Daniel reads in Jeremiah that the desolation will last seventy years and turns to the Lord in a prayer of confession for his people: "we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy." Gabriel answers with seventy weeks: an Anointed One cut off, and an end made of sin. The session reads the numbers for what the angel says they accomplish and declines to build a calendar from them. Jesus cites this prophecy in Matthew 24:15, and Revelation 11:1–3 and 12:6, 14 turn its half-week into forty-two months and 1,260 days.

Week Three: The Man Clothed in Linen (November 19)

Daniel 10 and 11:36–45. Daniel sees a man whose face is like lightning and whose voice is like the sound of a multitude, loses all strength, and is touched and told not to fear. The angel then reveals a war behind the wars of kings, in which the prince of Persia resists him and Michael comes to help. Revelation 12:7–12 is the stop in John: Michael and his angels fight against the dragon, who is thrown down, and the accuser is conquered by the blood of the Lamb. John's own vision of the man in linen (Revelation 1:12–18) was taught in Letters to the Church and Who Is This Man? and is named in a sentence. The long history of 11:2–35 is assigned as reading beforehand, and the hour ends on the ruler who exalts himself above every god, read with 2 Thessalonians 2 and with the Apology's use of this chapter against the Antichrist.

Week Four: Seal the Book (Last Sunday of the Church Year, November 26)

Daniel 12:4–13. The deliverance of everyone written in the book and the waking of those who sleep in the dust (12:1–3) were studied in Advent 2027 and in Even So, Come Lord Jesus, and are named in a sentence. The hour goes to what follows. One clothed in linen raises both hands to heaven and swears by Him who lives forever that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; Daniel hears and does not understand, and is told to go his way, for the words are sealed until the time of the end. In Revelation 10:1–7 a mighty angel raises his hand and swears by Him who lives forever that there will be no more delay, and Revelation 20:11–15 opens the books a final time. Daniel is told to seal his book, and John is told the opposite in Revelation 22:10, "for the time is near." The church year closes on the difference between those two commands, and Advent begins the next Sunday.

Immanuel

The Book of Immanuel, Isaiah 6 through 12

Advent 2028. Four Sundays, December 3 through December 24, 2028

What the series is for. To read in order the chapters from which the Church takes her Christmas prophecies. The One-Year Lectionary scatters them across the year: Isaiah 6 on Trinity Sunday, Isaiah 7 on Christmas Eve, Isaiah 9 at midnight, Isaiah 11 on the Sunday after Christmas, and Isaiah 12 in Easter. Isaiah set them down as one book, written in the crisis of 735 BC, when the house of David faced invasion and its king would not believe. The Fifth Gospel taught the Servant of Isaiah 40 through 53 in Lent 2027, and this series turns to the Child of the earlier chapters. Isaiah 11:1–10 was the primary text of Who Is This Man?, Class One, and is summarized in its place. The series also completes the year, which began with the songs sung at the birth of Christ and ends with the song Isaiah wrote for the day of His coming.

Advent One: Holy, Holy, Holy (December 3)

Isaiah 6. In the year that King Uzziah died the prophet sees the King on His throne, hears the seraphim, and is cleansed by a coal from the altar. He is then sent to a people who will hear and not understand, the sentence Jesus quotes when He explains why He speaks in parables. John 12:41, which says that Isaiah saw the glory of Christ, was taught in The Fifth Gospel (Class Five), and the cry of the Palm Sunday crowd in Advent 2027, Week One; both are named in a sentence and joined to the seraphim's song in the Sanctus. The vision belongs with the appearances studied in Epiphany. The chapter ends with a felled tree and one sentence of hope: "The holy seed is its stump."

Advent Two: The Sign (December 10)

Isaiah 7:1–8:10. Two kings march on Jerusalem, and the heart of Ahaz shakes as the trees of the forest shake before the wind. Isaiah offers him any sign he will name and warns him, "If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all." Ahaz declines, and the Lord gives the sign Himself: the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and call His name Immanuel. The class reads the sign with Matthew 1:18–25, the Gospel for Christmas Eve, and follows the name through chapter 8.

Advent Three: A Great Light (December 17)

Isaiah 8:11–9:7. The Lord of hosts is a sanctuary to those who fear Him and a stone of stumbling to both houses of Israel, the verse Peter quotes in his first letter. The class has heard Simeon speak of a child set for the fall and rising of many, and the session asks whether this verse lies behind his words. The people then walk into the darkness they chose, and the light rises first in Galilee of the nations; Matthew 4 finds Jesus beginning to preach there, a connection The Fifth Gospel made with Isaiah 49 and that is named in a sentence. The Child born to us carries four names. One of them, Wonderful, is the name Manoah's visitor would not explain.

Advent Four: The Root and the Song (December 24)

Isaiah 10:33–12:6. The Lord fells the lofty forest, and from the stump of Jesse a shoot comes forth. The shoot, the Spirit resting on Him, and the wolf dwelling with the lamb (11:1–9) were taught in Who Is This Man?, the shoot and the Spirit (11:1–3) were read in Letters to the Church, and the passage is echoed in Isaiah 65 in Even So, Come Lord Jesus; the session names them and gives its hour to what follows. The root of Jesse is raised as a signal for the peoples, and the Lord gathers His exiles a second time, a promise for a class that has spent the autumn in Babylon with Ezekiel and Daniel. Chapter 12 is the song for that day: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." The class reads it on the morning of Christmas Eve, and the congregation hears Isaiah 7 and Isaiah 9 that night.

Soli Deo Gloria