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Eastertide 2026

**2026: Flourishing Together:**  
*Transformed on The Jesus Way*  
**Gospel Guide: John**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

-Romans 12:1-2

**EASTERTIDE 2026: *Shaped by The Spirit***

April 12, 2026 – May 30, 2026

The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

-Jesus (John 14:25)

**EASTERTIDE 2026**

**Introduction**

As Christianity spread across the ancient world, the followers of Jesus began to develop traditions and practices that both communicated the truths of the Christian faith to the broader world as well as edified the believers themselves. Early in the second century, we have evidence of misunderstandings recorded by pagans who were uncertain about this new "religion." For example, when the Romans heard that Christians were "eating the flesh" and "drinking the blood" of Christ, they accused the believers of cannibalism! Obviously, this was a profound misunderstanding of the Christian celebration of the Eucharist!

However, over time, Christian churches began to express their faith through broadly adopted practices. For example: baptism, Sunday worship, Eucharist (Lord's Supper or Communion), fasting, feasts, catechumens, celebration of Easter, etc. --- all became regular practices throughout Christianity across the ancient world. Eventually, the Church began to adopt an annual calendar that was intended to be both instructional and celebratory. Very early on, Christian leaders recognized Easter Sunday as the holiest day of the year as followers of Jesus honored our Resurrected Lord. Eventually, Advent, Holy Week, Ascension, and Pentecost became a part of the annual rhythm of the Church's life.

Eastertide is the liturgical season that begins on Easter and culminates on Pentecost Sunday. Originally, it seems that Eastertide was a 40-day commemoration that focused on the 40 days in Jesus' life between Easter Sunday and the Ascension. Over time, the period was extended to 50 days to include Pentecost Sunday. So, today, in both the East and the West, Eastertide is usually understood to begin on Easter Sunday and ends on Pentecost Sunday.

Most Protestants don't give much attention to this liturgical season. There are probably a number of reasons for that. Actually, most Protestants give little attention to any of the liturgical seasons! We have historically only focused on the Sundays themselves - Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and sometimes Pentecost Sunday. Obviously, Protestants celebrate Christmas - but most do not celebrate the Advent Season.

In recent years, I have chosen to lead our church to give more attention to liturgical considerations. Our church has celebrated the Advent Season for many years prior to my arrival as Senior Pastor. However, we have added a more focused time during the Lenten/Easter Season in recent years. We have added the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday now - as an example of this increased emphasis.

I think Eastertide is a season that is worth recognizing as well. It is a time where we can acknowledge and celebrate the miracle of Easter. We also can use this season as a time of instruction and discipleship regarding the promise of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is also a reason to celebrate! In some sense, all Christians are Pentecostal!

### **Intentional Discipleship Focus**

As has been the case since January of 2025, we will connect this season to our Flourishing Together journey. More directly, we will use these 50 days to learn more

about Intentional Discipleship. We have agreed that the emphasis on discipleship is worthy of our attention and focus during this era in the life of our church. Let me remind us all of our core convictions and commitments:

**Flourishing Together**  
**Following *The Jesus Way***  
**Knowing God    Experiencing God    Serving God**  
**Saved            Shepherded            Sent**  
**Shaped**

We just completed our Lenten/Easter Season where we gave much attention to Jesus as The Good Shepherd. We learned lessons regarding how He shepherds us as His sheep. Hopefully, we also gained insight into how our church needs to shepherd people.

The Eastertide Season will be given to an in-depth analysis of how we need to be *Shaped* as disciples of Jesus. The writers of the New Testament often utilize some variation of the word *form* to help us understand what God desires for followers of Jesus. We must be “formed” or “shaped” into people who can reflect God’s glory in His world. This means we are to be on a journey of “transformation” so that we can be “conformed” into the image of His Son, Jesus.

How does this happen? How can we be *spiritually formed* to become true *disciples*? The short answer is --- It is a process! At our church, we are calling that process: *Intentional Discipleship*. It requires something of us! God will do His part. In fact, God has given us His Spirit so that we can be **Shaped by the Spirit**.

So, our focus for this season will be a deep dive into how the Spirit of God is at work within us to shape us into true disciples of Christ. It is a process that is available to all of us. God is very intentional about engaging in this important process. We cannot do this on our own. However, we must participate intentionally both as individuals and as a gathered church community. It is really about *Flourishing*. In fact, it is all about *Flourishing Together*. As we travel together this season of Eastertide, let’s keep these two working definitions in our minds:

**A Disciple: A person being formed by Jesus as they follow Him in accomplishing His mission.**

The Church is a purposeful community of gathered believers following *The Jesus Way* together in the fulfillment of His mission.

## **EASTERTIDE 2026: *Shaped by The Spirit***

**April 12, 2026 – May 30, 2026**

**The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**

**-Jesus (John 14:25)**

**April 12, 2026:            *Pentecostal People***

**Acts 2:42-47**

We will begin Eastertide with a message that is based on the passage of Scripture that traditionally is read, studied, explored, and celebrated on Pentecost Sunday – which is at the end of the season. However, let’s begin with the end in mind! God sent His Spirit (just as He promised) and the New Covenantal People of God became a reality on earth. Together, the followers of Jesus launched this new era, filled with God’s Spirit. We are both the beneficiaries of the original Pentecost miracle as well as the stewards today of its meaning. We are Pentecostals!

### **Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

Luke was the author of an incredible account of the life of Jesus Christ that included His life story, His teachings, His example, His sacrificial death, and His resurrection. He followed up this Gospel with the incredible story of the early church. Thank you, Luke! This week we will read together about the “Original Eastertide” in the Book of Acts. Our Eastertide journey begins!

<u>April 13:</u>	Acts 1:1-11
<u>April 14:</u>	Acts 1:12-26
<u>April 15:</u>	Acts 2:1-13
<u>April 16:</u>	Acts 2:14-28
<u>April 17:</u>	Acts 2:29-41
<u>April 18:</u>	Acts 2:42-47

**April 19, 2026:            *The New Temple***

**1 Peter 2:4-10**

As followers of Jesus, we are being shaped and formed to “fit” into our new family! The Apostle Peter uses the imagery of a new “spiritual house” to help us understand this new era is God’s Redemptive Plan. We are now a chosen people, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation. All of this Old Testament imagery points towards our new identity in Christ as the New Temple.

**Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

This week we will read through 1 Peter as a church family. This letter provides us with powerfully descriptive images that help us learn how God is shaping us as disciples of Jesus. We have been born again, and God is at work within us to lead us to live holy lives in the midst of a secular society. Jesus is our example and our Shepherd as we learn more about living as His disciples.

<u>April 20:</u>	1 Peter 1:1-12
<u>April 21:</u>	1 Peter 1:13-2:3
<u>April 22:</u>	1 Peter 2:4-25
<u>April 23:</u>	1 Peter 3
<u>April 24:</u>	1 Peter 4
<u>April 25:</u>	1 Peter 5

**April 26, 2026:            *Formed for Flourishing!***

**Romans 12:1-2**

This is our core text for the entire year! As we focus on Intentional Discipleship, we are *informed* by the truth that God is at work within us to *conform* us by *transforming* us as we follow The Jesus Way. This is a challenging and lifelong journey. We have to learn to reject the *conforming* influences of our world while learning how to reflect the glory of God so that we might truly flourish!

**Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

The transforming work of God within the life of a believer is powerful and holistic. God begins this work at our salvation. We are justified by faith because Jesus Christ has died for our sins. We can now be at peace with God. But the

work is just beginning! We have to learn how to live “in the Spirit” as Christians. God is at work within us to shape us into true disciples.

<u>April 27:</u>	Romans 5:1-11
<u>April 28:</u>	Romans 8:1-8
<u>April 29:</u>	Romans 8:8-17
<u>April 30:</u>	Romans 8:18-30
<u>May 1:</u>	Romans 8:31-39
<u>May 2:</u>	Romans 12:1-2

**May 3, 2026:**                    *Filled with The Spirit!*

**College Grad Sunday**    **Ephesians 5:15-20**

Billy Graham once wrote that humans have two great spiritual needs: to be forgiven and to be good. God answered our need for forgiveness at Calvary and our need for goodness at Pentecost (*The Holy Spirit*, Word Books, 1978, p. 11). Our journey toward goodness is made possible by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are to be filled with The Spirit of God! He makes it possible for us to live the “good life” God has planned for us.

### **Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

At our salvation, we experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit as believers. The Holy Spirit seals us into the family of God for eternity. He then dwells within us so that we can walk in the right paths, live holy lives, and follow The Jesus Way. This is a lifelong transformative journey!

<u>May 4:</u>	Ephesians 1:1-14
<u>May 5:</u>	Ephesians 1:15-23
<u>May 6:</u>	Ephesians 2:1-10
<u>May 7:</u>	Ephesians 2:11-22
<u>May 8:</u>	Ephesians 3:1-13
<u>May 9:</u>	Ephesians 3:14-21

**May 10, 2026:**                    *We Can Do It!*

**Mother’s Day**                    **Ephesians 4:1-3**

The journey of discipleship is challenging. Satan will oppose us at every turn. However, it is possible for us to live as God desires for us to live! Because we are filled with God’s Spirit, we are empowered to live above our fleshly desires. We

can move past our selfish proclivities. We can overcome our “too-high” view of ourselves and live holy lives in community with God’s people. We can actually live lives that are “worthy” of our calling. May it be so!

### **Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

God truly has equipped us to live the life He desires for us. The Gospel has application in every area of our lives. Our inner transformation is connected to our behavior. Our relationships are intertwined with our spiritual formation. Whether it is the realm of family, friendships, church life, or in our communities, God is equipping and empowering us to live for His glory.

<u>May 11:</u>	Ephesians 4:1-6
<u>May 12:</u>	Ephesians 4:7-16
<u>May 13:</u>	Ephesians 4:17-5:2
<u>May 14:</u>	Ephesians 5:3-20
<u>May 15:</u>	Ephesians 5:21-6:9
<u>May 16:</u>	Ephesians 6:10-24

**May 17, 2026:**

***Grace for Everyone!***

**High School Grad Sunday**

**Ephesians 4:7-13**

The Church is the Body of Christ. It is the Family of God. It is the New Temple. It is the New Israel. Regardless of the image, God is at work within us so that we might fulfill our role in the New Covenantal People of God. This is only possible through His grace! He graces us! All of us! His grace is evident in the fact that He gifts all of us uniquely with spiritual giftings so that we can be effective, useful, and purposeful in His hands! We participate with Him in a lifetime journey of discovery and service.

### **Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

As Christians, we have to learn how to live above our fleshly proclivities. We are no longer simply “natural” people. We are learning how to discern spiritual truths that are only spiritually discerned. This is only possible through the power and work of the Holy Spirit within us and within the community of faith. As we live out our giftedness in community, we continue to be shaped and *formed* as disciples. And – we learn how to truly love others in response to God’s love for us.

<u>May 18:</u>	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
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<u>May 19:</u>	1 Corinthians 1:26-2:5
<u>May 20:</u>	1 Corinthians 2:6-16
<u>May 21:</u>	1 Corinthians 12:1-11
<u>May 22:</u>	1 Corinthians 12:13-31
<u>May 23:</u>	1 Corinthians 13

**Pentecost Sunday 2026:      *Pentecostal Power***  
**Acts 1:1-11**

We conclude our Eastertide journey with a message from this hopeful, insightful, and informative text. Jesus walked with His followers for 40 days after His glorious resurrection from the dead (again – the original Eastertide Season). Within the promise of Jesus in Acts 1:8, we also receive the purpose of Pentecostal Power! We are called to live as personal witnesses to Jesus! We are Easter People. We are . . . *Pentecostals!*

**Flourishing Together Daily Bible Readings**

As we make our way through this final week in this season, we will trace the steps of the early church. Let's pay attention to how God's Spirit led and formed these early disciples of Jesus. Let's observe how the Gospel spreads from Jerusalem to Syria to Asia Minor and to Europe! Let's also notice how God's people are shaped and *formed* along the way. We are on the same journey today as we are following the same Holy Spirit in the same task of being witnesses unto Jesus in our own Jerusalem(s), Samaria(s), Judea(s) – and to the ends of the earth!

<u>May 25:</u>	Acts 4:23-37
<u>May 26:</u>	Acts 8:26-40
<u>May 27:</u>	Acts 10
<u>May 28:</u>	Acts 11:19-30
<u>May 29:</u>	Acts 15:1-21
<u>May 30:</u>	Acts 16