

## **FWM Report to General Synod Appendix 6b Gathering Rites for Lent and Easter**

These texts take their current shape as a result of input by a Liturgy Working Group that held one meeting in the 2016-2019 triennium. Their origins are in the catechumenal resource *Becoming the Story We Tell (BST)*, a project commissioned by the Primate addressing baptismal formation of worshipping communities. BST responds to some of the recommendations by a Task Force initiated by the House of Bishops tackling questions concerning Christian Initiation, Eucharistic participation, and hospitality.

FWM continues to act on the conviction that a robust approach to Christian Initiation is foundational to effective discipleship formation and missional action. As a result, we keep before ourselves the question of how to foster a culture shift reflecting a more substantive baptismal ecclesiology in the life of congregations.

As part of this larger concern, FWM initiated a test of gathering rites for Lent and Easter during the paschal seasons of 2018. The gathering rites for Lent are simply revisions of the opening penitential rite provided in the BAS. There are two options. In one, a different question arising from the baptismal covenant is recalled each week, followed by the choice of two prayers of confession. In the other option, the recollection of all the questions belonging to the baptismal covenant, each followed by a congregational response, serves as the act of confession. The Easter gathering is based on a rite included in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Two of the three were part of the original posting of the 'Becoming the Story We Tell' resource. Congregations associated with the 2017 Liturgy Working Group members, those involved with *Liturgy Canada*, and other settings receiving appropriate permission of the Ordinary used these rites and provided feedback.

The texts were approved by CoGS in November 2018 for Trial Use and Evaluation and posted – with the attendant evaluation tools – on [www.anglican.ca](http://www.anglican.ca), and sent to bishops with a note encouraging their promotion of use and evaluation. The texts remain as originally posted. In a sense, as part of the package of *Becoming the Story We Tell*, they have been published, with the potential for use, since 2014, and so have been in circulation in our church for over four years. They have been picked up and used – as part of the whole catechumenal package of *Becoming the Story We Tell*, by several Episcopal Dioceses or congregations in the United States, and have been tested in numerous workshops led by Liturgy Canada and by the Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission.

\*\*\*

### **'Gathering of the Community': Seasonal Option for Lent (Option 1)**

*The Book of Alternative Services (and Evangelical Lutheran Worship) provide different forms for the beginning of the Holy Eucharist (BAS, pages 185, 216; see also ELW, peoples' book, pages 94 to 102). The forms provided in "Becoming the Story We Tell" are suggested specifically for the seasons of Lent and Easter.*

*By using this penitential form of Gathering during Lent, followed in the Easter Season with a form of Gathering based on thanksgiving for baptism, the customary order of Confession and Absolution may be*

*seasonally replicated: a season of penitence, followed by a season of rejoicing in the peace and absolution of the risen Christ.*

*In this option, a different question arising from the baptismal covenant is recalled each week, followed by the choice of two prayers of confession. In Option 2, the recollection of all the questions belonging to the baptismal covenant, each followed by a congregational response, serve as the act of confession.*

*The customary Confession and Absolution is not used after the Prayers of the People if this form of the Gathering is used.*

### ***Gathering of the Community***

*All stand. The presider greets the community.*

*Presider:* The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

*People:* **And also with you.**

*Presider:* Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

*People:* **His mercy endures for ever.**

*Presider:* Almighty God,

**All: to you all hearts are open, all desires known,  
and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### ***Confession and Absolution***

*Presider:* Dear Friends in Christ,  
as we prepare for the Paschal Feast,  
continuing in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers,  
let us make ready our hearts  
to renew the covenant of our baptism.

Let us kneel before our Creator and Redeemer.

*All kneel.*

*The presider continues,*

Let us ask God to bring to light  
the things now hidden in darkness,  
and to disclose to us the secret purposes of our hearts.

And most especially,

let us remember the covenant of our baptism

and test our hearts and conscience  
to know how faithfully...

*Lent 1:*

...we have persevered in resisting evil, and whenever we fell into sin,  
have repented and returned to the Lord.

*Lent 2:*

...we have proclaimed by word and example  
the good news of God in Christ.

*Lent 3:*

...we have sought and served Christ in all persons,  
loving our neighbours as ourselves.

*Lent 4:*

...we have striven for justice and peace among all people,  
respecting the dignity of every human being.

*Lent 5:*

...we have striven to safeguard the integrity of God's creation,  
respecting, sustaining and renewing the life of the earth.

*Silence is kept.*

*Presider:* Most merciful God,

**All: we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us,  
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*Or*

*Presider:* Holy and immortal God,

**All: you formed us from the dust in your image,  
and redeemed us from sin and death  
by the cross of our Saviour.  
Through the washing of baptism  
you raised us up with him  
to share in the new covenant with all your holy people.**

**But we have squandered the inheritance of your saints,  
and have wandered far in a land that is waste.  
Therefore we turn to you in penitence and humility.**

**In your great mercy, forgive us and restore us,  
that we may rejoice in your presence,  
and walk in your ways  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

*Presider:* Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*People:* **Amen.**

*Then may follow an act of praise: Kyrie Eleison or the Trisagion, or a hymn or other canticle.*

### ***The Collect of the Day***

*Presider:* Let us pray.

*The community may pray silently.*

*The presider then sings or says the collect, after which the people respond, **Amen.***

## **'Gathering of the Community': Seasonal Option for Lent (Option 2)**

*The Book of Alternative Services (and Evangelical Lutheran Worship) provide different forms for the beginning of the Holy Eucharist (BAS, pages 185, 216; see also ELW, peoples' book, pages 94 to 102). The forms provided in "Becoming the Story We Tell" are suggested specifically for the seasons of Lent and Easter.*

*By using this penitential form of Gathering during Lent, followed in the Easter Season with a form of Gathering based on thanksgiving for baptism, the customary order of Confession and Absolution may be seasonally replicated: a season of penitence, followed by a season of rejoicing in the peace and absolution of the risen Christ.*

*In this option, the recollection of all the questions belonging to the baptismal covenant, each followed by a congregational response, serve as the act of confession. In Option 1, a different question arising from the baptismal covenant is recalled each week, followed by the choice of two prayers of confession. The customary Confession and Absolution is not used after the Prayers of the People if this form of the Gathering is used.*

### ***Gathering of the Community***

*All stand. The presider greets the community.*

*Presider: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.*

*People: **And also with you.***

*Presider: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.*

*People: **His mercy endures for ever.***

*Presider: Almighty God,*

***All: to you all hearts are open,  
all desires known,***

***and from you no secrets are hidden.***

***Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts***

***by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,***

***that we may perfectly love you,***

***and worthily magnify your holy name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

### ***Confession and Absolution***

*Presider: Dear Friends in Christ,  
as we prepare for the Paschal Feast,  
let us make ready our hearts  
to renew the covenant of our baptism.  
Let us kneel before our Creator and Redeemer.*

*All Kneel.*

*The presider continues,*

Let us ask God to bring to light  
the things now hidden in darkness,  
and to disclose to us the secret purposes of our hearts.

How faithfully have we continued  
in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

**All: Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.**

*Presider:* How faithfully have we persevered in resisting evil,  
and whenever we fell into sin,  
repented and returned to the Lord?

**All: Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.**

*Presider:* How faithfully have we proclaimed  
by word and example  
the good news of God in Christ?

**All: Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.**

*Presider:* How faithfully have we sought and served Christ in all persons,  
loving our neighbours as ourselves?

**All: Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.**

*Presider:* How faithfully have we striven  
for justice and peace among all people,  
respecting the dignity of every human being?

**All: Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.**

*Presider:* How faithfully have we striven to safeguard  
the integrity of God's creation,  
respecting, sustaining and renewing the life of the earth?

**All: Lord, have mercy, and complete your work in us.**

*Presider:* Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*People:* **Amen.**

*Then may follow an act of praise: Kyrie Eleison or the Trisagion, or a hymn or other canticle.*

### ***The Collect of the Day***

*Presider:* Let us pray.

*The community may pray silently.*

*The presider then sings or says the collect, after which the people respond, **Amen.***

### **Gathering Rite for the Easter Season**

*This gathering rite is based on Evangelical Lutheran Worship, people's book, page 97. It is provided for use on Sundays, except when the Renewal of Baptismal Vows (BAS, page 330 - 332) is used.*

*This form of Gathering — a Thanksgiving for Baptism followed by the sharing of the Peace — is suggested for the Easter season, just as a Penitential Order was suggested for the Lenten season. In this way, the customary order of Confession-and-Absolution may be seasonally replicated: a season of penitence, followed by a season of rejoicing in the peace and absolution of the risen Christ. The Confession-and-Absolution are not used after the Prayers of the People if this form of the Gathering is used, and the Greeting of Peace may be used (as shown here) before the Collect of the Day, or after the Prayers of the People, but not in both places during the same liturgy.*

### **Gathering of the Community**

#### **Greeting**

*All stand. The presider greets the community.*

*Presider: Alleluia! Christ is risen.*

*People: **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!***

*Presider: May his grace and peace be with you.*

*People: **May he fill our hearts with joy!***

#### **Thanksgiving for Baptism**

*Standing at the font, the presider continues,*

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*or*

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are raised to new life in the Spirit.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*or*

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are set free from the dominion of evil and death.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*or*

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are born from above as members of a new creation.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font while the presider gives thanks, saying,*

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water.  
Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.  
Through water you led the children of Israel  
out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise.

In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John  
and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ,  
to lead us, through his death and resurrection,  
from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism.  
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.  
By it we share in his resurrection.  
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son,  
we celebrate our fellowship in him in faith.  
We pray that all who have passed through the water of baptism  
may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be all honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Presider:* The peace of the Lord be always with you. *People:* **And also with you.**

*Then follows an act of praise: Glory to God, or a hymn or other canticle. As a reminder of the gift of baptism, the assembly may be sprinkled with water during the singing.*

### ***The Collect of the Day***

*Presider:* Let us pray.

*The community may pray silently.*  
*The presider then sings or says the collect, after which the people respond,*  
**Amen.**