

— AT THE —
CROSSROADS

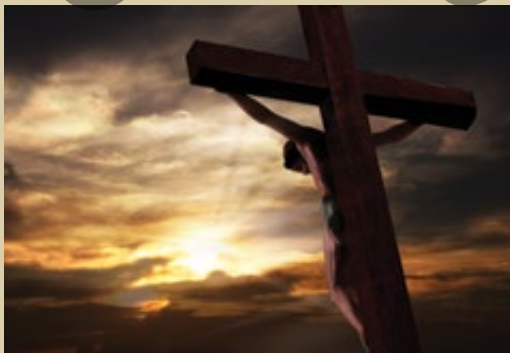
A SERIES OF SERVICES FOR HOLY WEEK



SUFFERING



FORGIVENESS



DEATH



LIFE

**Creative
Communications
Sample**

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CROSSROADS

A SERIES OF SERVICES
FOR HOLY WEEK

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LEADER'S GUIDE

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A SERIES OF SERVICES
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ABOUT “AT THE CROSSROADS”

Many of those involved in the story of the Passion of Christ came to a crossroads and had to decide which way to go. Some chose well, some did not, and the stories of each of these experiences at various crossroads help us to know what to do and what not to do when we encounter similar crossroads in our own lives. In the end, each service in the series reveals in some way how Christ and his cross lead us to decide the path of God's will for us.

For each service the kit contains: sample bulletins with complete orders of service • sermons dialogs for two readers • prayers • music for the accompanist and contemporary music song suggestions.

ORDERING INFORMATION

Additional resources are available from Creative Communications for the Parish. Contact us for current pricing and availability. Call us at 1-800-325-9414. Or visit our website:

www.creativecommunications.com.

Bulletins For The Palm Sunday Kit:

Code **CRDT** (printed) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDW** (blank) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDX** (blank) • 8.5" x 14" bulletins

Bulletins For The Maundy Thursday Kit:

Code **CRDC** (printed) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDG** (blank) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDM** (blank) • 8.5" x 14" bulletins

Bulletins For The Good Friday Kit:

Code **CRDD** (printed) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDH** (blank) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDN** (blank) • 8.5" x 14" bulletins

Bulletins For The Easter Sunday Kit:

Code **CRDE** (printed) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDJ** (blank) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDO** (blank) • 8.5" x 14" bulletins

A Complete Series For The Weeks Of Lent Is Available:

Those who desire may supplement this service with other services for all of Lent. They are available as a kit and include all the Leader's Guide features described above. The kit includes a CD-ROM (Mac/PC) in RTF format with text of services and of bulletins, plus PDF files of the kit, and PowerPoint documents for use on screens. Kit Code **CRDU**

Ash Wednesday

Confession • Psalm 32:1-5

As a model for us, the psalmist David reaches the crossroads of confession and confesses his sins to the Lord. We are called to confess our sins to the Son of David and find forgiveness in him.

Week 1

Betrayal • John 13:21-30

When Judas Iscariot comes to the point where he must either listen to Jesus or listen to the devil, he chooses to betray Jesus. When we are tempted by Satan to betray our Lord, we gain strength from our Savior to say, “No” to the devil.

Week 2

Judgment • Matthew 27:11-26

When Pontius Pilate is called upon by the crowds to make a judgment call about Jesus, his decision not to decide results in the death of Christ. We look to the cross of Christ to make definitive judgment calls in our lives.

Week 3

Compassion • Luke 22:47-51

When Jesus is taken into custody, he chooses to show compassion to a wounded participant in the arrest. We are called to show compassion, not anger, even to those in our midst whom we might consider our enemies.

Week 4

Declaration • Luke 22:54-62

When Peter is asked to declare whether or not he knows Jesus, he decides to deny his Savior. When questioned about our Lord, we are called to boldly declare our faith in Christ.

Week 5

Obedience • Matthew 26:36-46

When Jesus nears the time when he must die for our sins, he asks his Father if the cup might pass from him. But when the time comes, he obeys his Father’s will. When we are called upon to follow God’s will, we must obey.

Bulletins For The Six-Week Kit:

Code **CRDP** • Pre-printed bulletins • 8.5” x 11”

Code **CRD2** • Blank bulletins • 8.5” x 11”

Code **CRDR** • Blank bulletins • 8.5” x 14”

Ash Wednesday Alone

Confession • Psalm 32:1-5

As a model for us, the Psalmist David reaches the crossroads of confession and confesses his sins to the Lord. We are called to confess our sins to the Son of David and find forgiveness in him.

Code CRD3 • Kit

Code **CRDB** (printed) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDF** (blank) • 8.5" x 11" bulletins

Code **CRDK** (blank) • 8.5" x 14" bulletins

Other Resources:

Code **CRD1** • Bookmark • 7" x 2 1/2"

Code **CRD7** • Promotional Bulletin Insert

Code **CRD8** • Display Posters • 11" x 17"

Code **PHCRD** • Cloth Banner Suitable For Worship

Bible Study Resources:

Code **CRDS** • At the Crossroads Student Guide

Code **CRDL** • At the Crossroads Leader's Guide

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PALM SUNDAY
NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for a special service for Palm Sunday. In this service we remember that when Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time amid palm branches and praises, he knows the suffering that awaits him there, yet he does not turn back. In the observance of this remarkable day, we come to see as well that though we know suffering is part of being a follower of Christ, we must carry on for him. The service includes readings from Scripture, a children's sermon, a sermon dialog with Simon the Zealot and hymns that help us to approach the crossroads of suffering with courage and strength.

BULLETIN NOTICE

Welcome to this Palm Sunday service. In this service we remember that when Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time amid palm branches and praises, he knows the suffering that awaits him there, yet he does not turn back. In the observance of this remarkable day, we come to see as well that though we know suffering is part of being a follower of Christ, we must carry on for him. Let readings from Scripture, a children's sermon, a sermon dialog with Simon the Zealot and hymns help you to approach the crossroads of suffering with courage and strength.

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MAUNDY THURSDAY
NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for a special service for Maundy Thursday. In this service we remember that when Jesus institutes the first Lord's Supper, he grants forgiveness to his disciples through the bread and wine. When we receive the bread and wine of Communion in remembrance of him, we receive that forgiveness and in turn forgive others. The service includes readings from Scripture, a children's sermon, a sermon dialog with two struggling modern-day neighbors, Tom and Marie, and hymns that help us to approach the crossroads of forgiveness with reverence and relief.

BULLETIN NOTICE

Welcome to this service for Maundy Thursday. In this service we remember that when Jesus institutes the first Lord's Supper, he grants forgiveness to his disciples through the bread and wine. When we receive the bread and wine of Communion in remembrance of him, we receive that forgiveness and in turn forgive others. Let the readings from Scripture, a children's sermon, a sermon dialog with two struggling modern-day neighbors, Tom and Marie, and hymns help you to approach the crossroads of forgiveness with reverence and relief.

———— AT THE ————
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GOOD FRIDAY
NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for a special service for Good Friday. In this service we are reminded that when Jesus is on the cross, he accepts the power of death upon himself and does not turn away from it. We, too, must face death when it comes and not turn away from it, knowing that his salvation awaits us on the other side.

The service includes readings from Scripture, a children's sermon, a sermon dialog with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and hymns that help us to face the inevitable crossroads of death with the certain hope of everlasting life through Christ and his cross.

BULLETIN NOTICE

Welcome to this service for Good Friday. In this service we are reminded that when Jesus is on the cross, he accepts the power of death upon himself and does not turn away from it. We, too, must face death when it comes and not turn away from it, knowing that his salvation awaits us on the other side. Let the readings from Scripture, a children's sermon, a sermon dialog with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and hymns help you to face the inevitable crossroads of death with the certain hope of everlasting life through Christ and his cross.

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CROSSROADS

A SERIES OF SERVICES
FOR HOLY WEEK

EASTER SUNDAY
NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Join us for a special service for Easter Sunday. In this service we recall that after the risen Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, she responds by telling the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” We who know that our Redeemer lives must share that news with others too. The service includes readings from Scripture, a children’s sermon, a sermon dialog with Mary Magdalene and hymns that help us to fix our eyes on the crossroads of life at the threshold of heaven, where our risen Lord is eager to escort us into eternity.

BULLETIN NOTICE

Welcome to this service for Easter Sunday. In this service we recall that after the risen Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, she responds by telling the disciples, “I have seen the Lord!” We who know that our Redeemer lives must share that news with others too. Let the readings from Scripture, a children’s sermon, a sermon dialog with Mary Magdalene and hymns help you to fix your eyes on the crossroads of life at the threshold of heaven, where our risen Lord is eager to escort you into eternity.

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GOOD FRIDAY: DEATH

COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** of a cross (purchased by you from shutterstock.com) to symbolize the ultimate crossroads Jesus faces on Calvary is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

<http://www.shutterstock.com/pic-412229257/stock-photo-silhouette-of-jesus-with-cross-over-sunset-concept-for-religion-worship-christmas-easter.html?src=R97HlozXB5kSSKSOXjensQ-1-12>

- The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune O Welt, Ich Muss Dich Lassen 776 778, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Upon the cross extended see, world, your Lord suspended.
Your Savior yields his breath. The Prince of Life from heaven
Himself has freely given to shame and blows and bitter death.

Who is it, Lord, that bruised you? Who has so sore abused you
And caused you all your woe? We all must make confession
Of sin and dire transgression while you no ways of evil know.

Your soul in griefs unbounded, your head with thorns surrounded,
You died to ransom me. The cross for me enduring,
The crown for me securing, you healed my wounds and set me free.

Your cross I place before me; its saving pow'r restore me,
Sustain me in the test. It will, when life is ending,
Be guiding and attending my way to your eternal rest.

- This **Opening Response** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

C **Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

P For you have delivered my soul from death, my feet from falling,

C **That I may walk before God in the light of life.**

P For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

C **Therefore we give glory to God who raised him up and gave us the promise of salvation. Amen.**

- The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively by the congregation and the pastor:

P Jesus said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

C **Lord, we come to you confessing that we find ourselves too often at the crossroads of life and death and find ourselves choosing death. We wander into the darkness that beckons. We go the way of our own imitations of life and find ourselves in the face of death. We enter tombs of our own making that we cannot seem to escape. We stand in terror of death and cannot break its grasp. Resurrecting Lord, forgive us our deadly choices and give us your strength to choose life, to go into the light that you have bought for us. Make us who celebrate the gift of life seek to share it with all those who walk with us. Fill us with the Spirit so that we might overflow**

with the giving that proclaims your very presence with us.

Ⓟ I have the honor and privilege, by the grace of God, of announcing to you the entire forgiveness of your sins. In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven and free—free to share the steadfast love of God with all.

- A **Hymn of Response** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Herzlich Tut Mich Verlangen* 76 76 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

O sacred Head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown.
O sacred Head, what glory, what bliss, till now was thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.

My burden in thy Passion, Lord, thou hast borne for me,
For it was my transgression which brought this woe on thee.
I cast me down before thee, wrath were my rightful lot;
Have mercy, I implore thee; Redeemer, spurn me not!

My Shepherd, now receive me; my Guardian, own me thine.
Great blessings thou didst give me, O Source of gifts divine!
Thy lips have often fed me with words of truth and love,
Thy Spirit oft hath led me to heav'nly joys above.

My Savior, be thou near me when death is at my door;
Then let thy presence cheer me, forsake me nevermore!
When soul and body languish, oh, leave me not alone,
But take away mine anguish by virtue of thine own!

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Isaiah 53:10-12, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

- The **Epistle Reading**, Philippians 1:18-26, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

- The **Gospel Reading**, John 19:17-30, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ And he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things, but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

- The **Children's Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ *(Ahead of time, get two flowers. Keep one fresh and allow one to obviously die. Hold up the two flowers.)* These two flowers are the same, right? *(Allow responses.)* You are right. One is dead. Why do you think it died? *(Allow responses.)* That's right. It did not have enough water and light to keep it alive. Sadly, people die too. But they don't usually die from lack of water or light. Why do people die? *(Allow responses.)* That's right. People die from old age, from sickness and accident. It can be very sad when we lose a loved one or very scary to face our own death. But there is another kind of death that happens to people. It is called spiritual death. Like with the flower. It happens from a lack of water—the water of Baptism that makes us God's own child and a lack of light—the light of life that Jesus won for us on the cross. By his resurrection he makes us spiritually alive to serve him. And his light of life will not die like the flower. We are promised that our loved ones and we ourselves will live with Jesus in heaven, even after we die. That's good news and something to celebrate—like we will on Easter. *(Close with an echo prayer thanking God for life or let a child pray.)*

- A **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Jesu, Meins Lebens Leben* 87 87 88 77, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Christ, the life of all the living, Christ, the death of death, our foe,
 Christ, yourself for me once giving to the darkest depths of woe:
 Through your suffering, death, and merit life eternal I inherit.
 Thousand, thousand thanks are due, dearest Jesus, unto you.

You have suffered great affliction and have borne it patiently,
 Even death by crucifixion, fully to atone for me;
 For you chose to be tormented that my doom should be prevented.
 Thousand, thousand thanks are due, dearest Jesus, unto you.

Then, for all that bought my pardon, for the sorrows deep and sore,
 For the anguish in the garden, I will thank you evermore,
 Thank you for the groaning, sighing, for the bleeding and the dying,
 For that last triumphant cry, praise you evermore on high.

- If desired, this **Mini Movie** (purchased by you from Worship House Media: worshiphousemedia.com) is presented on a screen at this time to reflect on the events and the meaning of Good Friday:

<http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/36244/good-friday>

- The **Sermon Dialog with Mary, Mother of Jesus** is delivered by the pastor (P) and another reader (R) in the role of Mary:

P Crossroads. They are there for all of us. We may move along from day to day easily, walking in the sunshine, enjoying the view, feeling at peace. And then it comes. A crossroad. A choice point. There we stand, frozen to the spot. Which way now? Right? Left? Straight? What waits down each of those choices? Which way does our heart call us to go? Which makes sense? Which is God's way?

The answers aren't easy. A crossroad can bring daunting spiritual pain. And it can bring us to our knees. It can even bring us to destruction.

Tonight we look at the reality of the death of Jesus. The story may be familiar to us, but it is not pleasant. The story may, in some sense be horrifying and add to our own fear of death. But in the story there is also a remarkable and astonishing hope.

Tonight we have with us an expert on the life and death of Jesus, called Jesus of Nazareth. Tonight we will hear from Mary, mother of Jesus.

(Mary enters. She is dressed well or in biblical costume. She enters smiling, seemingly joyful.)

- P Welcome, Mary. We know you well. Scripture speaks often of your life and your experiences.
- R *Thank you. I am happy to be with you. I guess I never thought I would be well known, even up to this day. But God had other plans for me.*
- P We often read about your life when the angel announced the birth of Jesus to you and the stories of the birth in Bethlehem and the flight to Egypt. But tonight we want to focus on the end of Jesus life instead of the beginning. We know you were also involved in that event.
- R *Yes, I was there. At the cross. It is not a time I like to dwell on.*
- P Can you tell us about it?
- R *Like all deaths, Jesus' death was a time of fear and great sorrow. His death was a terrible pain for me. My very heart was broken. But I know now that it was also a time of irony.*
- P Irony?
- R *Think about it. Think about the amazing contrasts in that death. Here he was, bringing life by dying on a cross. Here was the gifter of light dying in darkness.*
- P Were you able to see those contrasts when you were there at the cross?
- R *No. It was simply a time of great sorrow. Even though Jesus had told us often that he would be put to*

death at the hands of the Romans and religious leaders, we never really believed it. Certainly, I didn't believe it. I had become so used to the miraculous life that Jesus lived, the marvelous things he was able to accomplish. I was so used to the pride I had in him as he went about his ministry of teaching and healing, I just could not imagine that it would end like that. I guess, there at the cross, mostly I was feeling helpless sorrow, almost despair. Here was my lovely child, the light of my life, my very heartbeat, dying in shame.

P I think we can feel that with you. In fact, we all experience something like that at the death of a loved one. Many of us have been brought to our knees by the death of someone close to us. We know the heart pain that must have been yours. We know the helpless despair that comes with that kind of loss.

R *The pain is so deep, it almost cannot be put into words.*

P And yet you can stand here among us and smile.

R *Of course, because we know that the curtain of death is not the end of the story. It is only the end of the first act in the miracle of life that Jesus bought for us on that cross.*

P The words we all cherish are those that Jesus spoke to Nicodemus: ... “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). With you, we understand that his death was for us a gift of life.

R *Later in life, when I would encounter people who knew Jesus and knew my story, they would ask, “How can you be so joyful when you were there at the death of your son?” And the answer was easy. I was also there when he rose, when he overcame death, when he claimed victory over death and gave us life.*

P That's not easy to remember when we confront the crossroad of death—the death of a loved one or even our own death.

R *No, death is never easy. I sometimes think of my own death. Oh, it is not well known like Jesus death. My death was quiet, in my old age. And yet it was also filled with contrast. In a way my death came with a great sense of loss. I felt I was losing my connection to the many I had shared my life with, including John who had become my son. But it was also a time of great joy, because I knew I was moving into the arms of my Son, my Savior in a better, brighter life.*

P I know that St. Paul said, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.” I guess that is true for all of us.

R *Not that we don't grieve. Death remains the great robber, the one seemingly taking from us all that we hold dear, including our life. But that's not the end of the story. We know that death is in reality a new beginning, Jesus has opened the tomb, the stone is rolled away. Death cannot hold us and we can smile.*

P Someone once said that the Christian faith is teaching people how to die. Do you agree?

R *No. Definitely not. Jesus did not come just to bring a way to choose life at the crossroad of death but a way to continually choose the abundant life at all life's crossroads. Faith in Christ teaches how to live. We live*

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EASTER SUNDAY: LIFE

MUSIC GUIDE

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Tune.....Llanfair 77 77 and alleluias

First system of musical notation, measures 1-4. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The right hand (treble clef) plays chords and moving lines, while the left hand (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment. Measure numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 are indicated at the start of each measure.

Second system of musical notation, measures 5-8. The notation continues from the first system. Measure numbers 5, 6, 7, and 8 are indicated at the start of each measure.

Third system of musical notation, measures 9-12. The notation continues from the second system. Measure numbers 9, 10, 11, and 12 are indicated at the start of each measure.

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 13-16. The notation continues from the third system. Measure numbers 13, 14, 15, and 16 are indicated at the start of each measure.

- The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Llanfair 77 77 and alleluias, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Alleluia! Earth and heav'n in chorus say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia! Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia! Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia! Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia! Where thy victory, O grave? Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia! Foll'wing our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia! Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Hail the Lord of earth and heav'n, Alleluia! Praise to thee by both be giv'n, Alleluia!
Thee we greet triumphant now, Alleluia! Hail the Resurrection, thou, Alleluia!

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