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Imagining Liturgical Art for Your Worship Space

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THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

By Greg Scheer

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Just as the civic calendar begins a new cycle on January 1, the liturgical calendar begins with the first Sunday in Advent. The liturgical calendar unfolds in two broad sweeps. The first half of the cycle (from Advent to Easter) follows the life of Christ and the second half (from Pentecost to Advent) follows the life of the Church.

Advent is a season of waiting for Christ's incarnation starts four Sundays before Christmas, and is often celebrated with Advent candles, Advent wreaths, and Jesse trees. It is also a season of anticipating Christ's return.

Christmas was originally intended to be a season rather than just a day. **Christmastide** is the "12 Days of Christmas" during which we rejoice over the birth of our Lord.

Beginning January 6, **Epiphany** follows Christ through His earthly ministry, including the visit of the Magi, His miracles and His transfiguration.

Lent is a season of penance and preparation beginning 40 days before Easter (not including Sundays). The season begins with **Ash Wednesday**, a reminder of our mortality, and then continues walking with Jesus through His 40 days of temptation and the close of His earthly ministry.

Holy Week, the last week of Christ's life, starts with **Passion (Palm) Sunday**. Highly liturgical churches celebrate each day of Holy Week, but most modern liturgical churches only observe **Maundy Thursday** (the upper room) and **Good Friday** (the crucifixion).

Easter Season begins with **Resurrection Sunday**. It is the crux, as it were, of the Church Year and of Christianity.

Pentecost Sunday celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit and the foundation of the Church, and initiates the second half of the church year.

Many liturgical churches call the Sundays between Pentecost Sunday and Advent **Ordinary Time**. Others give it the accurate, but uninspiring name Days after Pentecost. At Church of the Servant, we break this part of the year into two seasons. Pentecost Sunday is extended to Pentecost Season, a time to reflect on the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church; **Trinity Sunday**, which historically falls on the Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, becomes Trinity Season, a full season of focusing on the triune nature of God.

SEASONS' LITURGICAL COLORS

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White

Christmas
Epiphany
Baptism of Our Lord
Easter
Ascension
Holy Trinity
All Saints' Day
Christ the King
Saints' Days

Blue

Advent

Purple

Lent

Scarlet/Dark Red

Holy Week

Red

Pentecost Sunday
Church Anniversaries
Ordinations
Reformation Day
Martyrs' Days

Green

Ordinary Time (all Sundays after Pentecost until Advent)

INTERESTING READING –

Sensing Beauty: Aesthetics, The Human Spirit, and the Church. Eusden & Westerhoff
Art in Service of the Sacred. Catherine Kapikian
Sacred Passion: The Art of William Schickel. Gregory Wolf
Mind of the Maker. Dorothy Sayers
Walking on Water. Madeleine L'Engle
On Beauty. Elaine Scarry
Beholding the Glory: Incarnation through the Arts. Jeremy Begbie
It was Good: Making Art to the Glory of God. Bustard & Bowden editors
Good Taste, Bad Taste, Christian Taste. Frank Burch Brown
Visuals for Worship. Betsy Steele Halstead
Patchwork Pilgrimage. Jill Liddell
Bridge to Wonder. Cecilia González-Andrieu (have not read)
Christian Century (Magazine. Arts and Cultures section)
Spaces for the Spirit. Nancy Chinn
Liturgy and the Art. Albert Rouet. (have not read)

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<http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/>

<http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/projected-images-in-worship-illustrate-or-illuminate/>

<http://www.artway.eu/>

<http://ecva.org/>

civa.org

<http://www.reformedworship.org/article/september-2013/building-philosophy-projection>