

THE CHURCH YEAR AT JERUSALEM

Season or Festival	Sundays	Basic Theme	Color
Advent	4 Sundays	We wait for Jesus' coming with patience and hope	Blue
Christmas	1 or 2 Sundays	We celebrate that God became man in Jesus Christ for our salvation	White
Epiphany	4 to 9 Sundays	We see Jesus revealed as the world's only Savior	White, Green
Ash Wednesday		We humbly confess our utter sinfulness to our merciful God	Black
Lent, including Palm Sunday	6 Sundays	We see Jesus Christ overcome our spiritual enemies: sin, death and the devil	Purple
Maundy Thursday		We commemorate Jesus' institution of Holy Communion	Green
Good Friday		We commemorate the death of our Savior	Black
Easter	7 Sundays	We exult in Jesus' victory over all death, physical and eternal	White
Ascension	(40 th Day of Easter)	We celebrate that Jesus, the God-man, takes his rightful place in heaven	White
Pentecost Sunday	(50 th day of Easter)	We celebrate God's gift of the Holy Spirit to his Church	Red
Holy Trinity		We contemplate the mysteries of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son & Holy Spirit	White
Sundays after Pentecost	Up to 19 Sundays	This is called the non-festival half of the Christian year	Green
Michaelmas Sunday	(September 23-29)	We are reminded of the God-given ministry of the holy angels	Red
Sundays after Michaelmas	5 or 6 Sundays	We recognize our need for God's help against the dark forces of this world	Red
End Time	3 Sundays	We contemplate the Last Judgment, Saints Triumphant, & Christ the King	Red, White

- ✘ Christmas (December 25) is the only fixed date festival of the Christian year
- ✘ The rest of the Christian year revolves around the date of Easter, which always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon in spring (see *Christian Worship*, p. 162)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LITURGICAL COLORS

BLUE is the color of the sky and reflects the spirit of anticipation and hope as we eagerly await the return of Savior from heaven. It is the color of Advent and other festivals relating to the coming of Jesus.

GREEN is the color of growth and life. It reflects the new life of the Spirit in believers and their necessary, ongoing growth in Christian faith. It is mainly used during the seasons of Epiphany and Pentecost.

PURPLE is the color of royalty but also repentance. It reminds us not only of our Savior's servant-king status but also his call to us to repent of our sin. It is used during the season of Lent.

WHITE is the color of eternity, purity, light and joy and reflects our Savior's perfect work of salvation. It is the color of Christmas, Epiphany and Easter, as well as other festivals of our Lord.

BLACK is the color of mourning, humiliation and death. It reminds of the great sacrifice our Savior has made for all sin. Its use is limited to the days of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

RED is the color of fire and blood. It reminds us of the Spirit's work in and through the Church, even as it reminds us of the bloody sacrifice so many Christians have made for their faith. It is used on Pentecost Sunday, for Michaelmas, and on other Church-related festivals.