

Easter Vigil

April 16, 2022

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

The Great Vigil of Easter comes to us from the earliest celebration in the Church of the death and resurrection of our Lord, known as Pascha.” When this celebration began to be spread over several days, the Vigil of Easter was conducted as a watch through the night for signs of the rising dawn. Ideally the service should start after sundown on Saturday and continue through the night, concluding with the Lord’s Supper at sunrise. Also, the rubrics call for the service to begin outside of the church, preferably around a fire, from which the congregation lights candles and processes into the nave. For obvious reasons, we will conduct the Vigil a bit differently, as noted in the Order of Service below.

The Great Vigil of Easter is comprised of six parts: the Services of Light, of Readings, of Holy Baptism, of Prayer, of the Word, and of the Sacrament. These are unified under the theme of the resurrection of our Lord and the restoration of creation in His new Kingdom. The vigil begins in silence and darkness.

THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

The congregation gathers in the parish hall.

All are given a candle, to be lighted from the paschal candle.

In semidarkness a fire is kindled.

INVOCATION

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

PRAYER

P: Beloved in the Lord, on this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, we are gathered here in vigil and prayer. This is the Passover of the Lord in which, by hearing His Word and celebrating His Sacraments, we share in His victory over death.

Let us pray. O God, You are like a refiner’s fire, and Your Spirit enkindles the hearts of Your faithful people with the fire of Your love. Bless, we implore You, this new flame and those who keep this joyful Easter festival that, burning with desire for life with You, we may be found rightly prepared to share in the Feast of Light which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Lighting the candle from the newly kindled fire, the pastor says:

P: May the light of Christ, who is risen in glory from the dead, scatter all the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Let us pray. Almighty and most merciful God, pour out on us Your abundant blessing that all who in true faith share this night in joyful celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead may be filled with your heavenly benediction. Once we were in darkness, but now we are in the Light, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

All light their candles from the paschal candle and then follow the candle bearer in procession into the darkened church.

At three different points along the procession, the procession stops and the following is said:

P: The light of Christ.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

EASTER PROCLAMATION

Exsultet

P: The Lord be with you.
C: **And also with you.**
P: Lift up your hearts.
C: **We lift them to the Lord.**
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.
C: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**
P: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places, with all our heart and mind and voice, praise You, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, and Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. For He is the very Paschal Lamb who offered Himself for the sin of the world, who has cleansed us by the shedding of His precious blood. This is the night when You brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt and led them through the Red Sea on dry ground. This is the night when all who believe in Christ are delivered from bondage to sin and are restored to life and immortality. This is the night when Christ, the Life, arose from the dead. The seal of the grave is broken and the morning of the new creation breaks forth out of night. Oh, how wonderful and beyond all telling is Your mercy toward us, O God, that to redeem a slave You gave Your Son. How holy is this night when all wickedness is put to flight and sin is washed away. How holy is this night when innocence is restored to the fallen and joy is given to those downcast. How blessed is this night when man is reconciled to God in Christ. Holy Father, accept now the evening sacrifices of our thanksgiving and praise. Let Christ, the true light and morning star, shine in our hearts, He who gave light to all creation, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C: **Amen.**

*The congregation extinguishes their candles and are seated.
A few lights may be turned on.*

THE SERVICE OF READINGS

P: In this most holy night our Savior, Christ, the Lord, broke the power of death and by His resurrection brought life and salvation to all creation. Let us praise the Lord, for He truly keeps His Word. The sun of righteousness has dawned upon us who have sat in darkness and in the shadow of death.

THE CREATION

Genesis 1:1-2:3

P: This is the Word of the Lord.
C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*
P: Let us pray. Almighty God, through Your Word and Spirit You most wonderfully created all things, and through the Word made flesh You brought new life to fallen humanity. Grant that in Your mercy we may be conformed to the image of Him who shares fully in our humanity, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C: **Amen.**

THE FLOOD

Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13

P: This is the Word of the Lord.
C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*

P: Let us pray. O Lord, You kill and You raise to life; You brought the Flood upon a wicked and perverse generation, and yet You saved faithful Noah and his family in the ark. Keep us in safety in the ark of Christ's body, the Church, that Your mercy may come to its fullness and Your salvation be preached to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE Exodus 14:10 – 15:1

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*

P: Let us pray. O God, You once delivered Your people Israel from bondage under Pharaoh and led them by a pillar of cloud and fire through the sea to safety. Grant that we may so follow Christ that through the waters of Baptism we may daily die and rise with Him and walk in safety through the wilderness of this life until we see Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES Ezekiel 37:1-14

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*

P: Let us pray. O God, Your Son came as the Son of Man to breathe His Word and Spirit upon the dry, dead bones of Adam's children. Grant that we may hear Your holy Word, receive Your Spirit, and rise each day from the death of sin to live in newness of life before You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

JOB CONFESSES THE REDEEMER Job 19:20-27

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, our great Redeemer, in the sacrifice of Your Son You put to death our wretched flesh and in His rising restored our life. Grant that we may always cling to Christ by faith in this life that at the last we may rejoice to stand in our own flesh and see You face to face; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

JONAH PREACHES TO NINEVEH Jonah 3:1-10

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*

P: Let us pray. O God, as the prophet Jonah spent three days in the belly of the great fish, so Your Son Jesus spent three days in the heart of the earth. Grant us repentance to embrace our death in Him through Holy Baptism and to proclaim His victory over sin and death to all the world; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE Zephaniah 3:12-20

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.** *silence*

P: Let us pray. Look in mercy, O Lord, upon Your faithful people, and by Word and Spirit bring to completion that good work which You have begun in us. Gather in Your people that all the world may see and

know that what has been cast down is raised up and what has grown old is made new, until the work You have begun in us is brought to its joyful fulfillment in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

PSALM 148

LSB 148

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the | heavens;*
praise him | in the heights!

Praise him, all his | angels;*
praise him, | all his hosts!

Praise him, | sun and moon,*
praise him, all you | shining stars!

Praise him, you highest | heavens,*
and you waters above the | heavens!

Let them praise the name | of the LORD!*

For he commanded and they were cre- | ated.

And he established them forever and | ever;*
he gave a decree, and it shall not | pass away.

Praise the LORD | from the earth,*
you great sea creatures and | all deeps,

fire and hail, | snow and mist,*
stormy wind fulfill- | ing his word!

Mountains and | all hills,*
fruit trees and all | cedars!

Beasts and all | livestock,*
creeping things and | flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all | peoples,*
princes and all rulers | of the earth!

Young men and maidens to- | gether,*
old men and | children!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is ex- | alted;*
his majesty is above earth and | heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for | all his saints,*
for the people of Israel who are near to him. | Praise the LORD!

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

THE SERVICE OF HOLY BAPTISM

P: On this holiest of nights the whole Church of our Lord Jesus Christ recalls His death and burial, rejoicing with great joy in the Gospel of His glorious and mighty resurrection from the dead. The apostle Paul says:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:3-11)

FLOOD PRAYER

P: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, according to Your strict judgment You condemned the unbelieving world through the flood, yet according to Your great mercy You preserved believing Noah and his family, eight souls in all.

You drowned hard-hearted Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea, yet led Your people Israel through the water on dry ground, foreshadowing this washing of Your Holy Baptism.

Through the Baptism in the Jordan of Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, You sanctified and instituted all waters to be a blessed flood and a lavish washing away of sin.

We pray that You would behold us according to Your boundless mercy and bless us with true faith by the Holy Spirit, that through this saving flood all sin in us, which we have inherited from Adam and which we ourselves have committed since, would be drowned and die.

Grant that we be kept safe and secure in the holy Ark of the Christian Church, being separated from the multitude of unbelievers and serving Your name at all times with a fervent spirit and a joyful hope, so that, with all believers in Your promise, we would be declared worthy of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: Do you renounce the devil?

C: Yes, I renounce him.

P: Do you renounce all his works?

C: Yes, I renounce them.

P: Do you renounce all his ways?

C: I do renounce them.

P: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

C: Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son?

C: Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into

hell. The third day, He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

P: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

C: **Yes, I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting.**

P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with His grace to life ☩ everlasting.

C: **Amen.**

P: Peace ☩ be with you.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN: *I Bind unto Myself Today*

LSB 604

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The congregation will not be ushered out this evening. You are welcome to stay as long as you desire. We will recess until 6:30 a.m. when the Vigil continues with the Services of Prayer, of the Word, and of the Sacrament.

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Easter Morning at Immanuel

Easter Vigil Service ~ Part Two
6:30 a.m.

Youth Group Easter Breakfast
7:30 a.m.

The Resurrection of our Lord
Divine Service at 9:00 a.m.