

# About the Great Vigil of Easter

The Great Vigil of Easter is the culmination of the sacred celebration of Holy Week and the beginning of the celebration of the Lord's Resurrection. It is the climax of the Christian Year and unfolds in Scripture, Psalm, Sacrament, and Liturgy the story of redemption. It begins in darkness and proceeds to a joyous burst of light. It begins in silence and proceeds to the glorious proclamation of the Paschal Alleluia.

It is the Christian Passover, for it celebrates the passing from death to life, from sin to grace. The story of the Exodus is central to the Liturgy of the Word; Baptism is the means of the full realization of redemption; Holy Communion is the promise of the glory that shall be ours with our Risen Lord.

This liturgy moves with austere solemnity from one part to the next, as we watch and wait for the Lord's Resurrection. It is not to be rushed through, for time is suspended as we recount the story of creation, celebrate the glory of the New Creation in the waters of Baptism, and profess our faith in the perfection of all creation in the fullness of time, in the glory of God.

Of all the celebrations of the Church Year, the Great Vigil of Easter is preeminent, for it alone vividly and dramatically portrays all that was, that is, and that ever shall be in the drama of our redemption.

*Christ yesterday and today, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and Omega.  
His are the times and ages and to him be glory and dominion through all ages of eternity. Amen.*

# THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

April 4, 2026

Service begins in the Book of Common Prayer

BCP, p. 285

## The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

*We invite children to come to the front to watch the lighting of the fire.  
(Please note: the People read the portions of the text in bold italics.)*

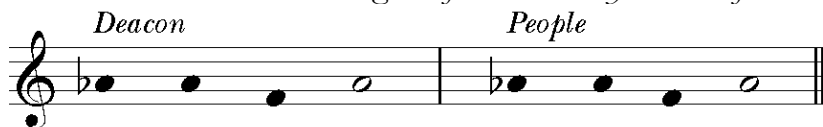
*In the darkness, fire is kindled; after which the Celebrant says:*

Dear friends in Christ; On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the church invites her members dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For 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, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

*The Paschal Candle is then lighted from the newly kindled fire.*



**The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.**

*At the second and third pause, the Versicle and Response is sung successively a step higher.*

*At this time the candles of the members of the congregation are lighted.*

*Children's Liturgy of the Word: Children ages 3-8 will follow the leader and return after the sermon.*

*Then the Cantor, standing near the Candle, sings the Exsultet, as follows*

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choir of angels,  
and let your trumpets shout Salvation  
for the victory of our mighty King.





## **Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea**

**Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21**

**Come, Sing the Joy of Miriam** *(Please stand, as able)*

**AZMON**

Come, sing the joy of Miriam, for she has seen dry land.

Come, dance with her as now we join this grateful, glorious band.

Our faithful God delivers us when enemies assail.

The world will bring false promises. Our God will still prevail.

Come, journey on with Miriam, empowered, strong, and free.

Come, live our praise through all our days, serving God's family.

Edith Sinclair Downing (2000) based on Exodus 15:1-18 Recommended tune: Azmon CM by Carl G. Glaser

Arranged: Lowell Mason, Modern Psalmist (1839)

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Valley of Dry Bones** *(Please sit)*

**Ezekiel 37:1-14**

**Spirit of the Living God** *(Please stand, as able)*

Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me

Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

Almighty God, by the Passover of your Son you have brought us out of sin into righteousness and out of death into life: Grant to those who are sealed by your Holy Spirit the will and the power to proclaim you to all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The gathering of God's people** *(Please sit)*

**Zephaniah 3:14-20**

**Surely It Is God Who Saves Me** *(Please stand, as able)*

**Hymn 678**

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **THE FIRST EUCHARIST OF EASTER**

*The candles at the altar are now lighted from the Paschal Candle*

*You are welcome to take a bell from the narthex to ring every time we say Alleluia during this service.*

*Rejoice together with us and ring in the resurrection of Jesus!*

*(Please stand, as able)*

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

***The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.***

## **Hail Thee Festival Day**

**Hymn 175**

The Lord be with you.

***And also with you.***

Let us pray.

O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection: Stir up in your Church that Spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (6:3-11) *(Please sit)***

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But 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. 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.

The Word of the Lord

*People*      ***Thanks be to God***

## Psalm 114

# S 418

George A. MacFarren  
(1813-1887)



1 Hallelujah!

When Israel came 'out of 'Egypt, \*  
the house of Jacob from a 'people of 'stränge 'speech,

2 Judah be'came God's 'sanctuary \*  
and 'Israel 'his do'minion.

3 The sea beheld 'it and 'fled; \*  
Jordan 'turned and 'wënt 'back.

4 The mountains 'skipped like 'rams, \*  
and the 'little 'hills like 'young sheep.

5 What ailed you, O sea, 'that you 'fled? \*  
O 'Jordan, that 'you turned 'back?

6 You mountains, that you 'skipped like 'rams? \*  
you 'little hills 'like young 'sheep?

7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence 'of the 'Lord, \*  
at the 'presence of the 'God of 'Jacob,

8 Who turned the hard rock into a 'pool of 'water \*  
and flint-stone 'into a 'flowing 'spring.

## Sequence Hymn

**We Know That Christ is Raised** (*Please stand, as able*)

**Hymn 296**

## The Gospel

**Matthew 28:1-10**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I

know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* ***Praise to you, Lord Christ.***

**The Sermon**

**The Rev. Frank Samuelson**

**Presentation and Examination of the Candidates**

*The Celebrant says*

The Candidates for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

**Infants and Younger Children**

*Then the candidates unable to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Parents and Godparents, as follows*

*Parents and Godparents*

I present N. to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

*When all have been presented the Celebrant asks the parents and godparents*

Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?

*Parents and Godparents*

I will, with God's help

*Celebrant*

Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

*Parents and Godparents*

I will, with God's help.

*Then the Celebrant asks the following questions of the candidates who can speak for themselves and of the parents and godparents who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children*

*Question* Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

*Question* Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

*Question* Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

*Question* Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

*Answer* I do.

*Question* Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

*Answer* I do.

*Question* Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

*Answer* I do.

*The Celebrant addresses the congregation, saying*

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?

*People* **We will.**

*The Celebrant then says these or similar words*

Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.

### **The Baptismal Covenant**

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God the Father?

*People* ***I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.***

*Celebrant* Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

*People* ***I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.***

*Celebrant* Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*People* ***I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.***

*Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

*People* ***I will, with God's help.***

*Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People* ***I will, with God's help.***

*Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

*People* ***I will, with God's help.***

*Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

*People* ***I will, with God's help.***

*Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

*People* ***I will, with God's help.***

### **Prayers for the Candidates**

*The Celebrant then says to the congregation*

Let us now pray for *these persons* who *are* to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

*Deacon* Deliver them, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*Deacon* Open their hearts to your grace and truth.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*Deacon* Fill them with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*Deacon* Keep them in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*Deacon* Teach them to love others in the power of the Spirit.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*Deacon* Send them into the world in witness to your love.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*Leader* Bring them to the fullness of your peace and glory.

*People* ***Lord, hear our prayer.***

*The Celebrant says*

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and for ever. ***Amen.***

## Thanksgiving over the Water

*The Celebrant blesses the water, first saying*

*Celebrant*     The Lord be with you,

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

*Celebrant*     Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People*         ***It is right to give him thanks and praise.***

*Celebrant*

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it 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 bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## The Baptism

*Each candidate is presented by name to the Celebrant who then pours water upon the candidate, saying*

N., I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*Amen.*

*Then the Priest places a hand on the person's head, marking on the forehead the sign of the cross and saying to each one*

N., you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever.

*Amen.*

*When this action has been completed for all candidates, the Celebrant or Priest, at a place in full sight of the congregation, prays over them, saying*

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. *Amen.*

*When all have been baptized, the Celebrant says*  
Let us welcome the newly baptized.

*Celebrant and People*

***We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.***

**The Peace** *(please stand, as able)*

*Celebrant* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

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

### **The Holy Communion**

*Gluten free wafers and wine are available at the far end of the Altar Rail on the Gospel side (left side as you face the Altar). These wafers and the wine are separate from the wafers made of wheat. Please let the priest know you wish gluten free.*

### **Offertory Sentence**

**Offertory** *With a Voice of Singing*

**Martin Shaw**

### **Doxology**

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow***

***Praise God all creatures here below***

***Alleluia, Alleluia***

***Praise God the source of all our gifts***

***Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts***

***Praise the Spirit Holy Spirit***

***Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia***

### **Prayers at Offertory**

*Celebrant* Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation; through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the Bread of Heaven.

*People* ***Blessed be God forever.***

*Celebrant* Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation; through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the Cup of Salvation.

*People* ***Blessed be God forever.***

*Celebrant* Receive, O Lord, these gifts presented by your people for the work of your Church.

*People* ***Amen.***

## The Great Thanksgiving

BCP, p. 372

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

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

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* ***We lift them to the Lord.***

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* ***It is right to give him thanks and praise.***

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever. Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance. Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing,

*Celebrant and People*

**Sanctus**

**Hymn S128**

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation. Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new. And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

*Celebrant and People*

***We praise you, we bless you,  
we give thanks to you,  
and we pray to you, Lord our God.***

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name. Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace. Remember all who minister in your Church. Remember all your people, and those who seek your truth, and all Baptized this night. Remember all who have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone; bring them into the place of eternal joy and light. And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. ***AMEN.***

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,  
***Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,  
 thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,  
 as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation,  
 but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory,  
 for ever and ever. Amen.***

**The Breaking of the Bread**

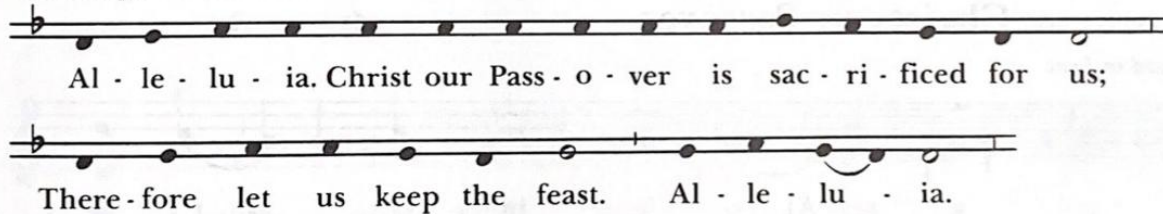
*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.  
 A period of silence is kept.*

**The Holy Eucharist**

**S 152**

**Fraction Anthem: Christ our Passover**

*This setting is not used in Lent.*



Al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;  
 There - fore let us keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia.

*This setting may be sung full by all, or by the choir, or as a versicle and response.*

Setting: Ambrosian chant; adapt. Mason Martens (b. 1933)

**Agnus Dei**

**S-165**

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

**Fraction Anthem**



The dis - ci - ples knew the Lord Je - sus  
 in the break - ing of the bread.

**Communion Anthem**

**No Other Name**

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**Communion Hymns:**

**Come Risen Lord**

**Hymn 306**

**Lift Your Voice Rejoicing, Mary**

**Hymn 190**

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

***Eternal God, heavenly Father,  
you have graciously accepted us as living members  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,  
and you have fed us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.  
Send us now into the world in peace,  
and grant us strength and courage  
to love and serve you  
with gladness and singleness of heart;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

**The Blessing**

**Recessional**

**Jesus Christ is Risen Today**

**Hymn 207**

Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

*People Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.*

**Postlude**



*Associate Rector - The Rev. Frank Samuelson*

*Associate Rector - The Rev. Joanna Unangst*

*Deacon - The Rev. Russ Oechsel*

*Director of Music - Micki Balog*

*Music Associate and Principal Organist - Jack Balog*

*Coordinating Verger - Bill Cox*