

Historic Zion Lutheran Church

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

7:00 pm Saturday, April 16, 2022

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. Traditionally the service would start at such a time as to allow the Service of Holy Communion to occur after midnight. Also, the rubrics called 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 candlelighting a bit differently, as noted in the Order of Service below.

The Great Vigil of Easter is comprised of six services: the Service of Light, the Service of Readings, the Service of Baptism and Confirmation, the Service of Prayer, the Service of the Word, and the Service of Holy Communion. 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 Great Hall for the Service of Light.]

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

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.

[The fire is kindled, as the pastor says:]

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. Amen!

[The celebrant traces the cross and letters Alpha and Omega upon it, saying:]

Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever; the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and Omega.

[He traces the year upon the candle, saying:]

His are time and eternity; His are the glory and dominion, now and forever.

[He traces the five nails painted on the candle, saying:]

By his wounds we have healing both now and forever.

[The congregation rises; the paschal candle is lighted, as the pastor says:]

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. Amen!

[The service participants light their candles from the paschal candle. They distribute the light to congregation members who, in turn, pass the light to others around them until all candles are lighted.]

[The procession begins. As the procession enters the nave, the candle-bearer chants and congregation responds, using the same chant-notes:]



The light of Christ!



Thanks be to God!

[This occurs twice more in the procession on progressively higher notes.]

The Easter Proclamation ("Exsultet")

Rejoice now, all you heav'nly choirs of angels; rejoice now, all creation; sound forth, trumpet of salvation, and proclaim the triumph of our King. Rejoice too, all the earth, in the radiance of the light now poured upon you and made brilliant by the brightness of the everlasting King; know that the ancient darkness has been forever banished. Rejoice, O Church of Christ, clothed in the brightness of this light; let all this house

of God ring out with rejoicing, with the praises of all God's faithful people.
The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts.

And with thy spir - it.

We lift them up un - to the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is truly meet, 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 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 the 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 gives light to all creation, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

A- men.

[The paschal candle is placed in its stand; the hand-held candles are extinguished; the congregation is seated; and the nave lights are turned to dawn.]

+ The Service of Readings +

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.

[Each reading is followed by: "This is the Word of the Lord"; "Thanks be to God" and by prayer.]

The Creation.....	Genesis 1:1 – 2:2
The Flood	Genesis 7:1-5; 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13
The Testing of Abraham	Genesis 22:1-18
Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea	Exodus 14:10–15:1
The Valley of Dry Bones	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Jonah Preaches to Nineveh	Jonah 3:1-10
The Fiery Furnace.....	Daniel 3:1-30
Hymn	All Who Believe and Are Baptized..... Burgundy Hymn 601

[Pastor moves to the baptismal font as the hymn is sung. The congregation stands.]

+ The Service of Holy Baptism +

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 were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through

baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father; we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, He cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over Him. The death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Romans 6:3-11).

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 have been 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. **Amen.**

Do you renounce the devil? **I do renounce him!**
and all his works? **I do renounce them!**
and all his ways?..... **I do renounce them!**

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?
Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son?
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.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?
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.

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. **Amen!**
Peace ✠ be with you. **Amen!**

+ The Service of Prayer +
[The congregation kneels for prayer.]

Litany of the Resurrection
O Lord,
have mercy.
O Christ,
have mercy.
O Lord,
have mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

hear us.

Paschal Lamb, who was offered for us and has taken away the sin of the world,

have mercy on us.

Who was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification,

have mercy on us.

Who foretold Your Passion saying, “The Son of Man must be crucified and on the third day rise again,”

have mercy on us.

Who destroyed Death by dying, and by rising to life again have brought life and immortality to light,

have mercy on us.

Whose resurrection was first announced by an angel to the women,

have mercy on us.

Who appeared to Mary Magdalene and was worshiped by her:

have mercy on us.

Who revealed Yourself to the two disciples on the Emmaus road and made Yourself known to them in the Scriptures and in the breaking of the bread,

have mercy on us.

Who appeared to the disciples, bestowing on them Your peace and Your Spirit,

have mercy on us.

Who showed Your wounded hands and side to the apostle Thomas that he too might believe,

have mercy on us.

Who appeared to seven disciples on the Sea of Tiberias, bringing a miraculous catch of fish,

have mercy on us.

Who appeared to Peter and to the Twelve, to over 500 disciples, to James and to all the apostles, and to Paul on the Damascus road,

have mercy on us.

Who commissioned Your Church to make disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching them,

have mercy on us.

By Your glorious resurrection from the dead,

good Lord, deliver us.

By Your victory over sin and death,

good Lord, deliver us.

By the majesty of Your risen body,

good Lord, deliver us.

We poor sinners implore You,

to hear us, Lord Jesus.

That we may daily die and rise with You in our Baptism and walk in the freedom of Your forgiveness,

grant us, good Lord.

That we may set our minds on things above and not on earthly things, serving others as we have been served by You,

grant us, good Lord.

That we may dwell with You forever in the new creation as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, together with all the saints,

grant us, good Lord.

Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

have mercy on us.

Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

have mercy on us.

Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

grant us Your peace.

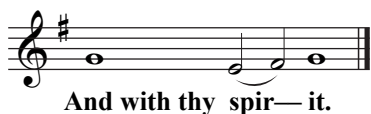
+ The Service of the Word +

Christ is risen. Al-le-lu-ia!

He is risen in-deed! Alleluia! Al-le-lu-ia!

Hymn Christ the Lord Is Risen Today Burgundy Hymn 469
*[The bells ring out; all of the lights are turned on,
and the aisle and altar candles are lighted during the singing of the hymn.]*

The Lord be with you.



Collect for the Great Vigil of Easter: *Let us pray: O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the resurrection of our Lord, preserve in all Your people the spirit of adoption which You have given that, made alive in body and soul, they may serve You purely; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*



Sequence Hymn Christ Is Arisen Burgundy Hymn 459
[As the Gospel is processed, all join in to sing Hymn 459, as printed in the hymnal.]

Holy Gospel St. Mark 16:1-8

Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord!

Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

[The congregation is seated after the cross is returned to its place.]

Offering

Voluntary

Our congregation is a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, a family of congregations who pledge themselves to believe, confess and practice the same doctrine. With the historic Christian Church since her earliest days, we believe that we are given a great responsibility to commune only those persons who are communicant members of our congregation, or of a sister congregation which is committed to the same doctrine. Members of such sister congregations should announce to our pastor their desire to receive the sacrament with us.

To other guests with us this day, we express to you our sincere interest, friendship, and concern for you. We assure you that it is for the spiritual welfare of all that we practice "closed communion." You may come forward, crossing your arms over your chest, to receive a blessing. Those desiring to learn more about our beliefs are asked to speak with our pastor.

[Rise] **Preface**

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

And with thy spir - it.

We lift them up un - to the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

Proper Preface for Easter, Sanctus

It is truly meet, right and salutary ever more praising You and saying:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



Heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry; Ho - san-na Ho - san-na, Ho -



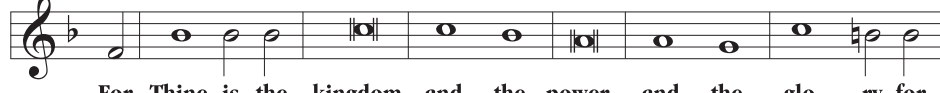
san-na in the high-est. Bless-ed is He, Bless-ed is He, Bless-ed is He that



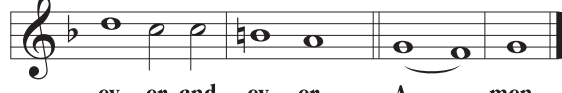
com-eth in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na, Ho - san-na, Ho-san-na in the highest.

[Remain standing] **Lord's Prayer**

[Pastor chants:] *Our Father who art in heaven; but deliver us from evil.*



For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glo - ry for -



ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

Words of Institution, Pax Domini

The peace of the Lord be with you always!



A - men.

Agnus Dei



1-3. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world,



Stanzas 1 and 2



Stanza 3

have mer-cy up - on us. Grant us Thy Peace. A - - - men!

[Be Seated]

Distribution Hymns The Strife is O'er Burgundy Hymn 464

[Rise] **Eucharistic Benediction**

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. ✠ Depart in Peace! Amen!

Post-Communion Canticle **The Nunc Dimittis**



1. Lord now— lettest Thou Thy
servant, de— part— in — peace, ac— cord— ing to Thy Word.

2. For mine__ eyes have seen
Thy Salvation,
which Thou hast pre— pared__ be— fore the face of all__ people.



3. a Light to light—en the Gen—tiles and the Glo— ry of Thy peo—ple Is - - - ra-el.



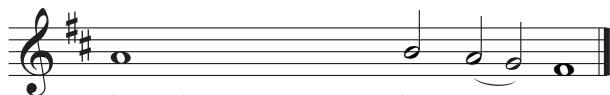
4. Glo— ry__ be to the
Father, and to__ the __ Son, and to the Ho—ly Ghost.



5. As it__ was in the
beginning, is
now, and e—ver shall be, world with—out end. A-men.

Post Communion Rite

Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.



And His mercy endureth for — ev — er.

Prayer of Thanksgiving ... now and forever.



A — men.

The Lord be with you.



And with thy spi — rit.

Bless we the Lord.



Thanks be to God.

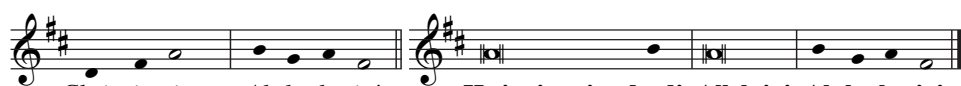
Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



A—men, A—men, A — men.

Easter Acclamation



Christ is risen. Al—le—lu—ia!

He is risen in— deed! Alleluia! Al—le—lu—ia!

[During the Recessional, the Congregation turns and faces the Processional Cross, the symbol of Christ's promise to remain with and lead His people as they now go and live in the world in His name.]

Recessional Hymn Now All the Vault Burgundy Hymn 465

Tomorrow is Easter, The Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord

Easter Sunrise Matins 7:00 a.m.

Easter Breakfast 7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Festival Divine Service 9:00 a.m.

(No Sunday School and Adult Bible Class tomorrow.

An Easter Egg Hunt will be held for children grade 2 and younger.)

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Readings for the Great Vigil of Easter

The Creation — Genesis 1:1–2:2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their

kinds.” And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done in creation.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Let us pray: Almighty God, through Your Word and Spirit ... Amen.

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

Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate, and seven pairs of the birds of the heavens also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him....

In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, according to its kind,

and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

The flood continued forty days on the earth. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ...

At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. Then God said to Noah, "Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. ...

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Let us pray: O Lord, You kill and You raise to life ... Amen.

The Testing of Abraham — Genesis 22:1-18

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the

mountains of which I shall tell you.” So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.” And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here am I, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here am I.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Let us pray: O God, since You promised faithful Abraham ... Amen.

Israel’s Deliverance at the Red Sea — Exodus 14:10–15:1

When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you

today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.” So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying,
“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Let us pray: O God, You once delivered your people ... Amen.

The Valley of Dry Bones — Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.” Then he said to me, “Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD.”

So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.” So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.’ Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.”

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Let us pray: O God, Your Son came as the Son of Man ... Amen.

Jonah Preaches to Nineveh — Jonah 3:1-10

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows?

God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it..”.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Let us pray: O God, as the prophet Jonah spent three days **Amen.**

The Fiery Furnace — Daniel 3:1-30

King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent to gather the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! You, O king, have made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image. And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, pay no attention to you; they do not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?”

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He ordered the furnace heated seven times more than it was usually heated. And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. Because the king’s order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.” He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king’s command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to rescue in this way.” Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.
Let us pray: O God, Your Son protected ... Amen.

Gospel for the Great Vigil of Easter

The Gospel is St. Mark 16:1-8

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.” And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Hymns for the Great Vigil of Easter

LSB601 All Who Believe and Are Baptized

Thomas Hansen Kingo

1. All who believe and are baptized
Shall see the Lord's salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ,
They are a new creation.
Through Christ's redemption they will stand
Among the glorious, heav'nly band
Of every tribe and nation.
2. With one accord, O God, we pray:
Grant us Your Holy Spirit.
Help us in our infirmity
Through Jesus' blood and merit.
Grant us to grow in grace each day
That by this sacrament we may
Eternal life inherit.

LSB469 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

Charles Wesley

1. "Christ the Lord is ris'n today!" Saints on earth and angels say;
Raise your joys and triumphs high; Sing, ye heav'ns, and earth, reply.
2. Love's redeeming work is done, Fought the fight, the battle won;
Lo! Our Sun's eclipse is o'er; Lo! He sets in blood no more.
3. Vain the stone, the watch, the seal; Christ hath burst the gates of hell.
Death in vain forbids His rise; Christ has opened Paradise.
4. Lives again our glorious King! Where, O death, is now thy sting?
Once He died our souls to save; Where thy victory, O grave?
5. Soar we now where Christ has led; Foll'wing our exalted Head.
Made like Him, like Him we rise; Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.
6. Hail the Lord of earth and heav'n! Praise to Thee by both be giv'n!
Thee we greet triumphant now: Hail, the Resurrection Thou!.

LSB459 Christ Is Arisen

German 12th-15th cent.

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1. Christ is arisen From the grave's dark prison.
So let our joy rise full and free; Christ our comfort true will be.
Alleluia!

2. Were Christ arisen, Then death were still our prison.
Now, with Him to life restored, We praise the Father as our Lord.
Alleluia!
3. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Now let our joy rise full and free; Christ our comfort true will be.
Alleluia!

LSB464 The Strife Is O'er

Symphonia Sirenum Selectarum, Köln

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

1. The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the victor's triumph won;
Now be the song of praise begun. Alleluia!
2. The pow'rs of death have done their worst,
But Christ their legions hath dispersed.
Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!
3. The three sad days have quickly sped,
He rises glorious from the dead.
All glory to our risen Head! Alleluia!
4. He broke the age-bound chains of hell;
The bars from heav'n's high portals fell.
Let hymns of praise His triumph tell. Alleluia!
5. Lord, by the stripes which wounded Thee,
From death's dread sting Thy servants free
That we may live and sing to Thee. Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

LSB465 Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds

Paul D. Strodach

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1. Now all the vault of heav'n resounds
In praise of love that still abounds:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!
Repeat their song of glory here:
"Christ has triumphed! Christ has triumphed!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2. Eternal is the gift He brings,
Therefore our heart with rapture sings:
“Christ has triumphed, He is living!”
Now still He comes to give us life,
And by His presence stills all strife.
“Christ has triumphed! He is living!”
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
3. O fill us, Lord, with dauntless love;
Set heart and will on things above
That we conquer through your triumph;
Grant grace sufficient for life’s day
That by our lives we truly say,
“Christ has triumphed! He is living!”
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- Δ 4. Adoring praises now we bring
And with the heav’nly blessed sing,
“Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!”
Be to the Father, and our Lord,
To Spirit blest, most holy God,
All the glory, never ending!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!