



## **The Vigil of Easter**

**8 April 2023 + 7:00 p.m.**

**Zion Lutheran Church and School  
Kearney, NE + (308) 234-3410**

**Rev. James DeLoach, Pastor + (308) 627-5260**

**Rev. Doug Gaunt, Pastor + (308) 455-0552**

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*The congregation is asked to be seated in silence. The service begins at the entry to the church.*

## **The Vigil of Easter**

*From Lutheran Service Book – Altar Book*

The Vigil of Easter, which begins at sundown on Holy Saturday and ends at sunrise on Easter Sunday, is the conclusion to the sacred Triduum. The Vigil of Easter connects the days of Holy Week, especially Holy Thursday and Good Friday, with the culminating celebration of the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

In some places throughout the early centuries of the Church's life, the people of God would hold vigil, which means "keep watch," throughout the night in expectation of Christ's return. A vigil in expectation of Christ's return at Easter became a common feature of the celebration of His crucifixion and resurrection. As the Church gathered in vigil, she waited in hopeful expectation for the appearance of the resurrected Christ in those most recently born in Him, the newly baptized. During the vigil, those who had prepared throughout Lent to be joined to Christ were baptized. At the dawn of the new day at Easter sunrise, the newly baptized joined the entire Church in the chorus of alleluias at Christ's resurrection from the dead.

While making a vigil through the night may not be common today, Christians nonetheless gather on Holy Saturday to wait in expectation for the news of Christ's resurrection and for His real presence in the Divine Service. The Great Vigil of Easter is comprised of six parts: 1) The Service of Light, 2) The Readings, 3) Renewal of Baptismal Vows, 4) The Service of Prayer, 5) The Service of the Word, 6) The Service of the Sacrament. The first part of the Vigil begins at dusk on Easter Eve and concludes after the Renewal of the Baptismal Vows. The second part of the Vigil begins at sunrise on Easter, starts with the Service of Prayer, and culminates in the celebration of the resurrection with the Lord's Supper.

## ✠ The Service of Light ✠

*Pastor speaks from the entrance to the sanctuary.*

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

**C: Amen.**

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, 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.**

*An assistant lights the Paschal Candle.*

P: May the light of the gloriously risen Christ dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

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.**

## LUX CHRISTI -- *The Light of Christ*

*Those on the inside end of the pew are asked to light their candle from the Paschal Candle as the candle bearer walks down the aisle. Please do not tip a lit candle. Parents, please do not allow your child to hold a lit candle until you are certain that they can do so without spilling any wax.*

*The Candle Bearer stands at the entrance in back as we sing:*

**P** The light of Christ



**C** Thanks be to God.

*The Candle Bearer stops in the middle of the sanctuary and we sing:*

**P** The light of Christ



**C** Thanks be to God.

*After the Candle Bearer reaches the stand, turns, and faces the congregation we sing:*

**A** The light of Christ



**C** Thanks be to God.

## The Easter Proclamation

**P** Rejoice now, all you heavenly 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.



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And al-so 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 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.**

*All may be seated and extinguish their candles at this time. The cove lights in the sanctuary are turned on. The ushers will collect the candles. Please do not spill any wax on the pew cushions.*

### † 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 Flood

P A reading from Genesis, chapters seven, eight, and nine.

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

*Each reading is followed by a brief 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.**

**Hymn #599 ~ O Gracious Lord, with Love Draw Near**

## **The Testing of Abraham**

**A** A reading from Genesis, chapter 22.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.    **C** **Thanks be to God.**

**P** Let us pray.

O God, since You promised faithful Abraham that he would be the father of a great multitude, You provided a substitute for his son Isaac. In the fullness of time, You sent Your Son, the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, to lay down His life that we might live as faithful children of Abraham. Grant to all people a living trust in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C** **Amen.**

## **Hymn #547 ~ *The Lamb***

## **The Fiery Furnace**

**A** A reading from Daniel, chapter three.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.                      **C** **Thanks be to God.**

**P** Let us pray.

O God, Your Son protected faithful Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace of the king. Grant us protection in our time of testing that we would boldly confess Your name, reject all false worship, and live and die in confidence, knowing that we are safe in Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## **Hymn #850 ~ *God of Grace and God of Glory***

## **The Sermon**

## † Renewal of Baptismal Vows †

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. 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 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.

**C: Amen.**

## **Renunciation of the Devil and Confession of Faith**

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: Yes, I 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 #467 (vss. 1-2, 5-7) ~ Awake, My Heart, with Gladness**

*The congregation will not be ushered out this evening. You are welcome to stay as long as you desire. We will recess until the Easter Sunrise Service tomorrow 7:00 a.m., when the Vigil continues with the Services of Prayer, of the Word, and of the Sacrament.*

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<p><b>Serving Zion This Evening</b></p>
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Preacher: Pr. James DeLoach

Liturgist: Pr. Doug Gaunt

Elder: Keith Nuttelman

Head Usher: Steve Junge

Acolyte: Jamie Wilkens

Organist: Carol DeLoach

Cantor: Zach DeLoach

Engineer: Reilly Fisher

Altar Guild: Sue Bartels & Ellen Hockemeier

## Easter Morning at Zion

Easter Sunrise Service ~ The Vigil (Part Two)

7:00 a.m.

Easter Breakfast

8:00 a.m.

The Festival of the Resurrection of our Lord

9:00 a.m.