

## **The Vigil of Easter**

**April 4, 2026 + 7:00 p.m.**

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# The Vigil of Easter

*Taken from Lutheran Service Book – Altar Book*

The Vigil of Easter, which is celebrated at the end of Holy Saturday as the conclusion to the sacred Triduum, ushers in the celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord on Easter Sunday. 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," through 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. The vigil consisted of prayer, psalms and hymns, and readings, especially from the Old Testament, culminating in the celebration of the resurrection at dawn with the Lord's Supper. 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 second coming.

## ✠ The Service of Light ✠

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

**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 Christ Candle.*

P: May the light of the gloriously risen Christ dispel 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.**

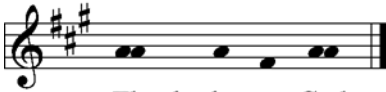
**LUX CHRISTI -- *The Light of Christ***

*Those on the inside end of the pew are asked to light their candle from the Christ Candle as it is carried 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 begins at the entrance to the church.*



The light of Christ.



Thanks be to God.

*At the center of the nave.*



The light of Christ.

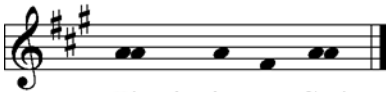


Thanks be to God.

*The Christ Candle is placed on its stand.*



The light of Christ.



Thanks be to God.

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 with your spirit.**

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 meet and right so to do.**

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.

*Each reading is followed by a brief silence.*

## **The Flood**

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

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.**

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 #487 (v. 1-3) -- *Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain***

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

P: A reading from Exodus, chapters 14 and 15.

Exodus 14:10—15:1

.....

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

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.**

**Hymn #487 (v. 1, 4-5) -- *Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain***

## **✠ Renewal of Baptismal Vows ✠**

### **Baptismal Address**

P: On this holiest of nights . . .

## **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.**

## **Hymn #594 (v. 1-3) -- *God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It***

*Please stand*

## **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.**

*Please be seated*

**Hymn #594 (v. 4-5) -- God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It**

## † Service of Prayer †

### **Litany of the Resurrection**

P: O Lord,

**C: Have mercy.**

P: O Christ,

**C: Have mercy.**

P: O Lord,

**C: Have mercy.**

P: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

**C: Hear us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

P: Who destroyed Death by dying, and by rising to life again has brought life and immortality to light,

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

P: Who appeared to Mary Magdalene and was worshiped by her:

**C: Have mercy on us.**

P: 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,

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

P: 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,

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

P: By Your glorious resurrection from the dead,

**C: Good Lord, deliver us.**

P: By Your victory over sin and death,

**C: Good Lord, deliver us.**

P: By the majesty of Your risen body,

**C: Good Lord, deliver us.**

P: We poor sinners implore You,

**C: To hear us, Lord Jesus.**

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

**C: Grant us, good Lord.**

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

**C: Grant us, good Lord.**

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

**C: Grant us, good Lord.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Have mercy on us.**

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

**C: Grant us Your peace.**

P: O Lord,

**C: Have mercy.**

P: O Christ,

**C: Have mercy.**

P: O Lord,

**C: Have mercy. Amen.**

*Please stand*

## ✠ Service of the Word ✠

*After the litany is complete, the lights in the Church are brought to full brightness.*

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**C: The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

*During the Hymn of Praise the altar candles are lighted from the Christ Candle, the chancel is decorated with the lilies, the paraments are unfolded, and the pastor is vested.*

↑ **Hymn of Praise -- This is the Feast**

**p 155**

### **Salutation and Collect of the Day**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: *Let us pray.* O God, You made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection. Preserve in us the spirit of adoption which You have given so that, made alive in body and soul, we may serve You purely; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

### **Epistle:**

**Romans 4:23–25**

**P** The Epistle is from Romans, the fourth chapter.

The words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in Him who raised

from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand in reverence to Christ*

**Holy Gospel:**

**St. John 20:1-18**

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twentieth chapter.

**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am

ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”  
Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to You, O Christ.** *Please be seated*

### **Sermon – Raised for Our Justification**

#### **Offering**

**↑**Offertory -- *What shall I render to the Lord...* **p 159**

✠ **Service of the Sacrament** ✠

**Preface + Sanctus** **p 160-161**

**The Lord’s Prayer + The Words of Institution** **p 162**

**The Pax Domini + The Agnus Dei** **p 163**

*Please be seated*

#### **The Distribution**

**Distribution Hymn #467 – Awake, My Heart, with Gladness**

**Post-Communion Prayer** *Please stand.*

**P** *Let us pray.*

O God, for our redemption You gave Your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross and by His glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy. Grant that all our sin may be drowned through daily repentance and that day by day we may arise to live before You in righteousness and purity forever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

**P** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

**P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

**C** **Amen.**

**Hymn #466 – Christ is Arisen, Alleluia**