

VIGIL OF EASTER  
APRIL 3, 2021  
RETURN TO THE CHURCH

The gathering of the followers of Jesus Christ has special meaning on every occasion. On the day between the commemoration of His death on the cross at Calvary and the celebration of His resurrection from the garden tomb, there is a singular opportunity for reflection and for worship. Through the death of Christ upon it, the cross has become a symbol for the end and the beginning of life. As we who are the Church keep an Easter vigil, we rejoice that our Lord has called us into an eternal relationship with Him and with one another. Honoring our Lord, we keep this feast with sincerity and truth.

+ SERVICE OF LIGHT +

INVOCATION

PB In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

INVITATION

PB Beloved in the Lord, on this holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death into life, we are gathered here in Word and in 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.

COLLECT

PB Let us pray.

Creator God, in the beginning you said, "Let there be light," and there was light. By that same voice you called forth Jesus from the tomb, and He arose imperishable. By His voice you now call us to life to follow you. As our Lord Jesus was the light of the world, so He declared us, the Church, to be the light of the world to reflect His light into the darkness. As we kindle this fire, let your Word enlighten our hearts and our lives with the light of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

*The Elder lights the paschal candle.*

BLESSING OF THE PASCHAL CANDLE

PB Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever, the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and the Omega. His are time and eternity; His are the glory and dominion, now and forever. By His wounds we have healing both now and forever. Amen. May the light of Christ, who is risen in glory from the dead, scatter all the darkness of our hearts and minds.

COLLECT

PB 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.**

+ SERVICE OF READINGS +

INTRODUCTION TO READINGS

PB The Holy Scriptures tell the story of God's love. In love, God created the heavens and the earth, all creatures, and humanity. In love, God did not abandon humanity when Adam and Eve fell into sin. In love, God promised redemption through His Suffering Servant. In love, God promises restoration of all creation in the fullness of time. These five stories tell of God's creating, redeeming, and restoring love for us and for all of humanity, and they foreshadow the means by which redemption and restoration come—through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

THE CREATION *Genesis 1:1–2:3*

L A reading from Genesis, the first and second chapters.

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup> 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, <sup>15</sup> and

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let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> 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.” <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>25</sup> 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.

<sup>26</sup> 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.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

<sup>28</sup> 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.” <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> 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. <sup>31</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all His work that He had done in creation.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN #578

“Thy Strong Word”

Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; At Thy speaking it was done.  
For created light we thank Thee, While Thine ordered seasons run.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, Dark as night and deep as death,  
Broke the light of Thy salvation, Breathed Thine own life breathing breath.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness,  
Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives, our hopes confess.  
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!  
Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

God the Father, light-creator, To Thee laud and honor be.  
To Thee, Light of Light begotten, Praise be sung eternally.  
Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to Thee.  
Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the holy Trinity!

PN Let us pray.

Lord of all, you created the universe—light and darkness, atoms and stars, black holes and planets.

C **You also created us, the world, and all living creatures.**

PN Help us to care for your creation as good stewards.

C **Fill our hearts and minds with thanks and praise for your creating love.**

PN Sustain us as we await that day when all creation will be made new through the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

THE FLOOD *Genesis 7:1–5, 11–18; 8:6–18; 9:8–13*

PB A reading from Genesis, the seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters.

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> 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, <sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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.” <sup>5</sup> And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

<sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> And rain fell upon the earth forty days and

forty nights. <sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. <sup>16</sup> And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.

<sup>17</sup> The flood continued forty days on the earth. <sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made <sup>7</sup> and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. <sup>9</sup> Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth had dried out. <sup>15</sup> Then God said to Noah, <sup>16</sup> "Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. <sup>17</sup> 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." <sup>18</sup> So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him.

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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." <sup>12</sup> 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: <sup>13</sup> I have set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.

PB This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN #809

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.  
Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.

**Refrain: Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. *Refrain*

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! *Refrain*

PB Let us pray.

O Lord, you kill and you raise to life; you brought the flood upon a wicked and perverse generation, and yet you saved faithful Noah and his family in the ark. Keep us in safety in the ark of Christ's Body, the Church, that your mercy may come to its fullness and your salvation be preached to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE AT THE RED SEA *Exodus 14:10–15:1*

L A reading from Exodus, the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters.

<sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> 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? <sup>12</sup> 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." <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

<sup>15</sup> The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

<sup>19</sup> 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, <sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> 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.

<sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. <sup>24</sup> 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, <sup>25</sup> 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.”

<sup>26</sup> 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.” <sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> 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.

<sup>30</sup> Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. <sup>31</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.”

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

CANTICLE #733

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter form the stormy blast, And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood Or earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God, To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight Are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;  
We fly forgotten as a dream Dies at the op’ning day.

O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while troubles last And our eternal home!

**PN** Let us pray.

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

**C** Amen.

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES *Ezekiel 37:1–14*

**PB** A reading from Ezekiel, the thirty-seventh chapter.

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord GOD, You know.” <sup>4</sup> Then He said to me, “Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> 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.”

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> Then He said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, 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.” <sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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 clean cut off.’ <sup>12</sup> Therefore prophesy, 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. <sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise

you from your graves, O My people. <sup>14</sup> 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.”

PB This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

HYMN #913 “O Holy Spirit, Enter In”

O Holy Spirit, enter in, And in our hearts Your work begin,  
Your dwelling place now make us.

Sun of the soul, O Light divine, Around and in us brightly shine,  
To joy and gladness wake us That we may be Truly living,  
To You giving Prayer unceasing And in love be still increasing.

Give to Your Word impressive pow’r,  
That in our hearts from this good hour As fire it may be glowing,  
That in true Christian unity We faithful witnesses may be,  
Your glory ever showing. Hear us, cheer us By Your teaching;  
Let our preaching And our labor Praise You, Lord, and serve our neighbor.

O mighty Rock, O source of life, Let Your dear Word, in doubt and strife,  
In us be strongly burning That we be faithful unto death  
And live in love and holy faith, From You true wisdom learning.  
Your grace and peace On us shower; By Your power Christ confessing,  
Let us see our Savior’s blessing.

PB Let us pray.

Lord of Life, when God’s people of old were like a dried-up valley of bones, you restored them and brought them back to you with the promise of a redeemer to restore them.

**C When we feel like a valley of dry bones, breathe your Spirit into us through your Word and Sacraments.**

PB Enliven your Church, O Lord, that we may fulfill your promise that your people will be a blessing to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C Amen.**

THE FIERY FURNACE *Daniel 3*

PB A reading from Daniel, the third chapter.

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Then the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers,

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. <sup>4</sup> And the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> And whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace.” <sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and maliciously accused the Jews. <sup>9</sup> They declared to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into a burning fiery furnace. <sup>12</sup> 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.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. <sup>14</sup> 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? <sup>15</sup> 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?”

<sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> 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.”

<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.

<sup>24</sup> 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." <sup>25</sup> 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."

<sup>26</sup> 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.

<sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> 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." <sup>30</sup> Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

PB This is the Word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

PB 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.**

CANTICLE #930 "All You Works of God, Bless the Lord"

All you works of God, bless the Lord! All you angels, now bless the Lord;  
Come, you heavens and pow'rs that be, Praise the Lord and His majesty:

*Refrain*

*Raise your voices high, praise and magnify, All you works of God, bless the Lord!*

*Raise your voices high, praise and magnify, All you works of God, bless the Lord!*

Sing, you sun and you moon above, Stars of heaven, now sing His love;

Dew and showers, you winds that blow, Heat and fire, you ice and snow: *Refrain*

Frost of winter with song so cold, Dews of summer, your song unfold;

Light and darkness, you day and night, Clouds of thunder, you lightnings bright: *Refrain*

Hills and mountains, now sing His worth, All you green things that grow on earth;

Seas and rivers, you springs and wells, Beasts and cattle, you birds and whales: *Refrain*

Come, humanity, sing along, Sing, you people of God, a song:

Priests and servants, your Lord now bless, Join, you spirits and souls at rest: *Refrain*

(Rise)

Bless the Lord, all you pure of heart; All you humble, His praise impart;

God the Father and Son adore, Bless the Spirit forevermore! *Refrain*

+ SERVICE OF HOLY BAPTISM +

#### BAPTISMAL ADDRESS

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

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

#### THE FLOOD PRAYER

PN 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 all 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 has 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, serving your name at all times, so that, we would be declared worthy of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C Amen.**

## RENUNCIATION

PN Do you renounce the devil?

**C Yes, I renounce him.**

PN Do you renounce all his works?

**C Yes, I renounce them.**

PN Do you renounce all his ways?

**C Yes, I renounce them.**

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

PN 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.**

PN 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.**

PN 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.**

+ SERVICE OF PRAYER +

## LITANY OF THE RESURRECTION

PN O Lord,

**C have mercy.**

PN O Christ,

**C have mercy.**

PN O Lord,

**C have mercy.**

PN Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

**C hear us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

PN Who destroyed death by dying, and by rising to life again brought life and immortality to light,

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

PN Who appeared to Mary Magdalene and was worshiped by her,

**C have mercy on us.**

PN 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.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

PN By your glorious resurrection from the dead,

**C good Lord, deliver us.**

PN By your victory over sin and death,

**C good Lord, deliver us.**

PN By the majesty of your risen body,

**C good Lord, deliver us.**

PN We poor sinners implore you

**C to hear us, Lord Jesus.**

PN 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.**

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

**C grant us, good Lord.**

PN 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.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C have mercy on us.**

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

**C grant us your peace.**

PN O Lord,

**C have mercy.**

PN O Christ,

**C have mercy.**

PN O Lord,

**C have mercy. Amen.**

SERVICE OF THE WORD +

#### EASTER ACCLAMATION

PN Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**C He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

#### HYMN OF PRAISE

“This Is the Feast”

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**Refrain** *This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,  
whose blood set us free to be people of God. *Refrain*

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,  
and honor, blessing, and glory are His. *Refrain*

Sing with all the people of God,  
and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing, honor, glory, and might  
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen. *Refrain*

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.  
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

#### SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

PB The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

PB Let us pray.

Lord God, you gather us together on this holy night in remembrance and celebration of our Lord’s resurrection. Cause your Church to demonstrate the unity for which Jesus prayed. Send us as the Church into our broken world as a beacon of light, as a demonstration of your redeeming grace, and as a foretaste of the great multitude who will be gathered on the Last Day when you restore all things to yourself; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

#### HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 16:1–8*

PB The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the sixteenth chapter.

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

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. <sup>3</sup> And they were saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?” <sup>4</sup> And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. <sup>5</sup> And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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.” <sup>8</sup> 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.

PB This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

#### HOMILY

+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +

#### PREFACE

PB The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

PB Lift up your hearts.

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

PB Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PB It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who burst forth from the darkness of death and the tomb to eternal life, so that dying with Him through our Baptism, we might also be raised with Him. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and saying:

#### SANCTUS

**C Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might:  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna. Hosanna.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *LSB*, p. 161

PB Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on those whom you created and sent your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg you, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To you alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

#### THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PB Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PB As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

**C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

PB O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us your body and blood to eat and to drink, you lead us to remember and confess your holy cross and passion, your blessed death, your rest in the tomb, your resurrection from the dead, your ascension into heaven, and your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**C 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 forever and ever. Amen.**

#### PAX DOMINI

PB The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C Amen.**

#### AGNUS DEI

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**C Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

DISTRIBUTION Wait for the usher to direct you to come forward. Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.

#### HYMN #633 "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing"

At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to our victorious King.  
Who has washed us in the tide Flowing from His pierced side. Alleluia!

Praise we Him, whose love divine Gives His sacred blood for wine,  
Gives His body for the feast-Christ the victim, Christ the priest. Alleluia!

Where the paschal blood is poured, Death's dread angel sheathes the sword:  
Israel's hosts triumphant go Through the wave that drowns the foe. Alleluia!

Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Pas'chal victim, paschal bread;  
with sincerity and love Eat we manna from above. Alleluia!

Mighty Victim from the sky, Hell's fierce pow'rs beneath You lie;  
You have conquered in the fight, You have brought us life and light. Alleluia!

Now no more can death appall, Now no more the grave enthrall;  
You have opened paradise, And Your saints in You shall rise. Alleluia!

Easter triumph, Easter joy! This alone can sin destroy;  
From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free, Newborn souls in You to be. Alleluia!

Father, who the crown shall give, Savior, by whose death we live,  
Spirit, guide through all our days; Three in One, Your name we praise. Alleluia!

HYMN #488 "He Is Arisen! Glorious Word"

He is arisen! Glorious Word! Now reconciled is God, my Lord;  
The gates of heav'n are open. My Jesus did triumphant die,  
And Satan's arrows broken lie, Destroyed hell's fiercest weapon.  
O hear what cheer!  
Christ victorious, Rising glorious, Life is giving.  
He was dead but now is living!

HYMN #482 "This Joyful Eastertide"

This joyful Eastertide Away with sin and sorrow!  
My love, the Crucified, Has sprung to life this morrow:

**Refrain: Had Christ, who once was slain, Not burst His three-day prison,  
Our faith had been in vain: But now has Christ arisen,  
Arisen, arisen; But now has Christ arisen!**

Death's flood has lost its chill Since Jesus crossed the river;  
Lover of souls, from ill My passing soul deliver: **Refrain**

My flesh in hope shall rest And for a season slumber  
Till trump from east to west Shall wake the dead in number: **Refrain**

COMMON DISMISSAL

COLLECT

PB God our Father, we thank you that you have gathered us together this night around  
Font, Word, and Table to receive the hope, forgiveness, and joy that come from  
Christ alone. For His suffering on our behalf, His dying on the cross, and His  
rising in glory, we give you thanks. Empower your Church, reborn in Baptism,  
nourished by your Word, and fed with Christ's body and blood, to love you and  
serve the world until the return of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with  
you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

BLESSING

PB The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless  
and preserve you.

C Amen.

HYMN #805 "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below:  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Preacher  
Liturgist  
Lector  
Director of Parish Music

Pastor Noah Kegley  
Pastor Harold Bender  
Russell Hurst  
Michelle Prince

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