

The Great Vigil of Easter

***St. George's Church, Glenn Dale Parish
The Episcopal Diocese of Washington***

The Lighting of the Paschal Fire

*As we gather this evening as a dispersed community to celebrate the vigil of our Lord's Resurrection,
you are invited to have a candle nearby as the service begins.*

The new fire is kindled and the Celebrant addresses the People.

Dear friends in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by receiving his Word and celebrating his Sacraments, we share in his victory over death.

Celebrant: Let us pray:

O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

The Celebrant prays over the Paschal Candle, saying:

Christ yesterday and today,
the beginning and the end.
Alpha and Omega,
All time belongs to him
and all the ages;
to him be glory and power
through every age forever. ***Amen.***

The Paschal Candle is lighted from the new fire, the Celebrant saying:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Those watching this service from home are invited to light their candle.

The Celebrant then proclaims:

The Light of Christ.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Exsultet

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty King. Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor, for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King. Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, and let your holy courts, in radiant light, resound with the praises of your people. All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame, pray with me to God the Almighty for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light; through Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



Deacon The Lord be with you.

People And al - so with you.

Deacon Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

The Vigil

Celebrant: We receive the record of God's saving deeds in history, how God saved the people in ages past; and we pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

The First Reading

Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea: Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish 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 keep still."

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This is the night, when you brought our fathers and mothers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land. This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

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Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

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This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave. How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you gave a Son.

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Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

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How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord.

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Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

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How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and we are reconciled to God. Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning—he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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

Hymn: LEVAS # 141 Shall We Gather at the River



Shall we ga - ther at the ri - ver, Where bright an - gel feet have trod;
On the mar - gin of the riv - er, Wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,
Ere we reach the shin - ing riv - er, Lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;
Soon we'll reach the shin - ing riv - er, Soon our pil - grim - age will cease,



With its crys - tal tide for - ev - er Flow - ing by the throne of God;
We will walk and wor - ship ev - er, All the hap - py gold - en day.
Grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, And pro - vide a robe and crown.
Soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er With the mel - o - dy of peace.



Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, The beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er,



Gath - er with the saints at the riv - er That flows by the throne of God.

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The Second Reading

The Gathering of God's People: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Celebrant: Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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

We now officially celebrate Jesus' resurrection with the traditional words of the Easter service.

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ is risen!

***People:* The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

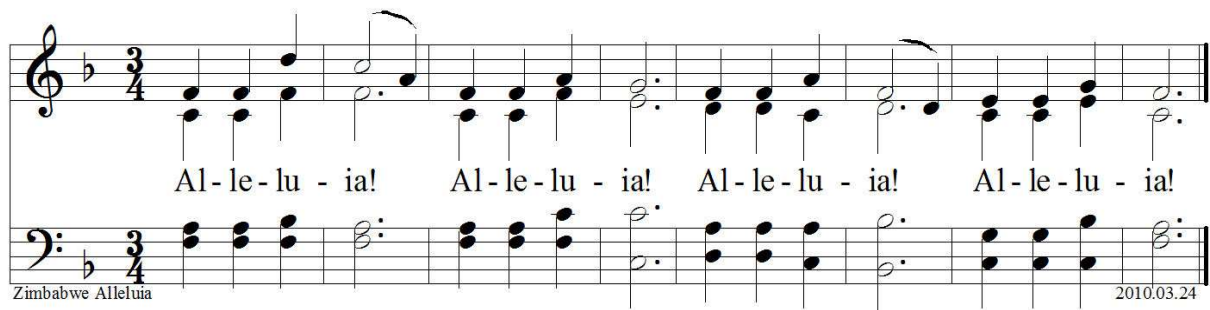
Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

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

Celebrant: Let us pray:

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

The Gospel Alleluia is sung



The Easter Gospel

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew. **Glory to you, Lord Christ**

Matthew 28:1-10

It was at dawn on the first day of the week, and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised. Come and see the place where he had been laid. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘Jesus has been raised from the dead. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there.’ Listen, I have told you!” So they left the tomb quickly, afraid but with great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. But Jesus met them, saying, “Greetings!” They came to him, held on to his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my followers to go to Galilee. They will see me there.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Litany of the Resurrection

Let us pray, thanking God for the victory that Jesus, God’s Son and our Brother, has won by his death and resurrection. It is for us that he has triumphed.

Christ died for all, in order that they who are alive may live no longer for themselves but for him who died for them and rose again.

Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

If then any are in Christ, we are a new creation; the former things have passed away: behold, they are made new.

Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts, to give enlightenment concerning the knowledge of the glory of God, shining on the face of Christ Jesus.

Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For we were once darkness, but now we are light in the Lord.

Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us walk then as children of light, for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and justice and truth, and test what is well pleasing to God.

Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For if we live, we live to the Lord, or if we die, we die to the Lord.

Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

We were buried together with Christ in Baptism, and in him also we rose again through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead.

Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

“Death is swallowed up in victory! O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?”

Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Offertory Anthem: El Shaddai by Michael Card and John Thompson

*El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
El-elyon na Adonai,
Age to age you're still the same,
By the power of the Name.
El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
Erkamka na adonai,
We will praise and lift you high,
El Shaddai.*

*Through your love and through the ram,
You saved the son of Abraham;
Through the power of your hand,
You turned the sea into dry land.
To the outcast on her knees,
You were the God who really sees,
And by your might,
You set your children free.*

*Through the years you made it clear,
That the time of Christ was near,
Though the people couldn't see
What messiah ought to be.
Your most awesome work was done
Through the frailty of your Son.
I will praise and lift you high,
El Shaddai.*

It is traditional to renew our baptismal promises and celebrate the first Eucharist of Easter at this service. To meet this year's particular circumstances, tonight we offer prayers reflecting on our baptism and on Holy Communion.

Prayer of Reflection on our Baptism

Holy and gracious God, as we celebrate with Jesus this night his journey from death to resurrection, we recall that through our baptism by water and the Holy Spirit his journey is also ours, for he calls us to walk with him from death to new life. This night we remember how Christ once sealed us by the Holy Spirit in baptism and marked us as his own forever; with his help and yours, may we live as his baptized and renewed people as a light to the world, now and always. **Amen.**

Prayer of Reflection on Holy Communion

Christ Jesus, you share yourself with us in the bread and the wine that we know to be your real presence with us. Though we cannot share the sacrament right now, we pray that you would open our hearts to your presence and let our longing for you be the spiritual communion we seek. In your holy name we pray. **Amen.**

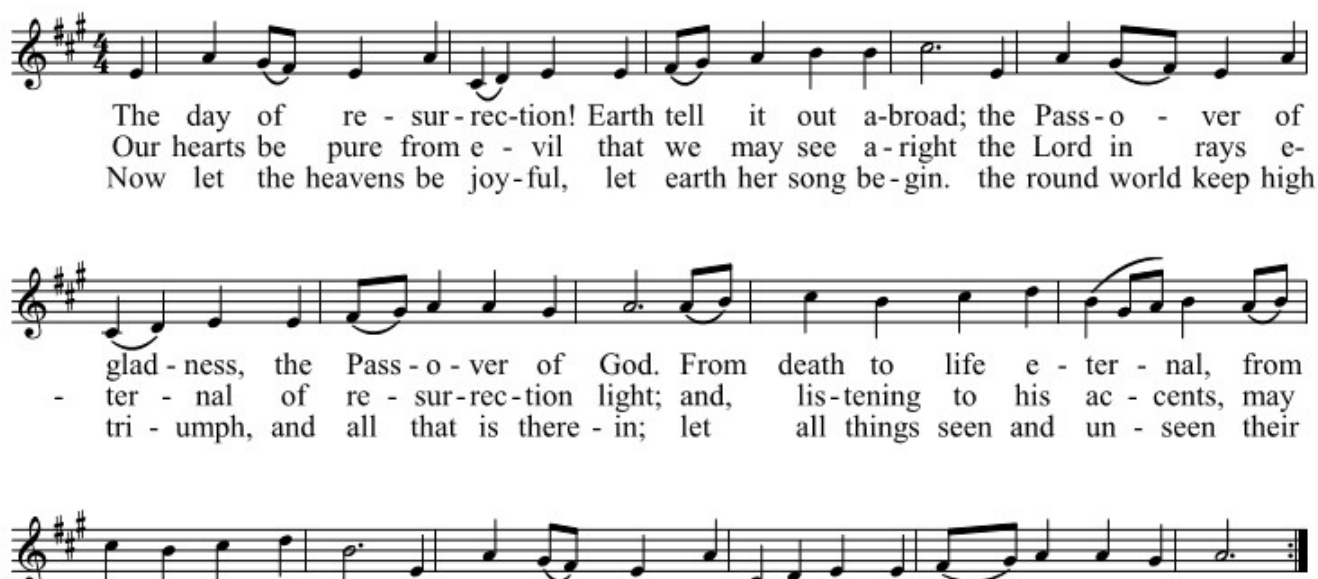
Celebrant: And now, in the spirit of Christ, we pray:

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

The Blessing

May the loving power of God, which raised Jesus to new life,
strengthen you in hope, enrich you with love, and fill you with joy.
And may the blessing of God be with you now, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal Hymn: Hymnal 1982 #210 - *The Day of Resurrection*



The day of re - sur-rec-tion! Earth tell it out a-broad; the Pass-o - ver of
Our hearts be pure from e - vil that we may see a-right the Lord in rays e-
Now let the heavens be joy-ful, let earth her song be-gin. the round world keep high
glad-ness, the Pass-o-ver of God. From death to life e - ter - nal, from
- ter - nal of re - sur-rec-tion light; and, lis-tening to his ac - cents, may
tri - umph, and all that is there - in; let all things seen and un - seen their
earth un - to the sky, Our Christ has brought us o - ver with hymns of vic-to - ry.
hear so calm and plain his own "All hail!" and, hear-ing, may raise the vic-tor strain.
notes to-geth - er blend, for Christ the Lord is ris - en, our joy that hath no end.

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The Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth in the name of the Risen Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia!

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!**

