

March 31, 2018  
6:30 PM  
Vigil of Easter



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**WELCOME!** We are happy you are with us today. It would be a pleasure to get to know you better. We invite you to join any of our activities. See the schedule in the bulletin. To our guests: Please sign the friendship register as it is passed down the pews.

The **ushers** are here to help you during the service. If you need anything (**temperature adjustment, restrooms, large print worship materials, hearing amplifiers, etc.**) feel free to ask them. **Rest rooms and a drinking fountain** can be found across the breezeway in Grace Hall. Our **Information Table** contains free devotions, Bibles, pamphlets, and other things for you to take home.

Five or ten minutes before the service, the organist will be playing music to encourage worshippers to find seats and get ready for worship. We ask that during the time before the service, everyone refrain from loud talking so that those who wish to pray and meditate silently may do so. **Please turn off cell phones when you enter the church.**

The **Nursery** is available for parents whose children become restless. It is located behind the right pews.

To **request prayers, hymns** for future services, etc. please fill out an index card and hand it to an usher or Pastor.

**HOLY COMMUNION TODAY:** Please register for communion using the sheets in the entry way. If you are a guest today, please wait until you have had the chance to talk with Pastor before coming to communion. We practice “close communion” because we believe that in order to receive the greatest benefit and avoid misuse of the sacrament it is important to understand and agree with all that Scripture teaches on the sacrament.

## **VIGIL OF EASTER: CELEBRATION OF OUR LORD’S RESURRECTION AND OF OUR BAPTISM**

*The congregation may gather in a convenient place outside the nave of the church. All are given candles to be lit later from the paschal candle.*

*In the semidarkness a fire is kindled.*

**M:** In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

**C:** Amen.

**M:** On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus Christ 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.

**M:** O God, you are like a refiner's fire, and your Spirit kindles the hearts of your faithful people with the fire of your love. Bless, we ask you, this new flame and those who keep this joyful Easter festival. Burning with desire for life with you, may we 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.**

*The candle bearer, holding the paschal candle, steps forward. The minister traces the cross and the Greek letters A and Ω (Alpha and Omega) upon it, saying:*

**M:** Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever, the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.

*The minister traces the year upon the candle, saying:*

**M:** His are time and eternity; his are the glory and dominion now and forever.

*The minister puts the five wax nails representing the wounds of Christ into the candle, saying:*

**M:** By his wounds we are healed now and forever. Amen.

*Then, lighting the candle from the newly kindled fire, the minister says:*

**M:** May the light of Christ, who is risen in glory from the dead, scatter all the darkness of our hearts and minds.

**M:** Almighty and most merciful Father, once we were darkness, but now we are light in Jesus Christ our Lord. Bless abundantly all who joyfully celebrate this night in faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Fill them with your heavenly blessing in him, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*All light their candles from the paschal candle. Then, the paschal candle held aloft by the candle bearer, all follow in procession into the dark church.*

*As the procession begins, or at the doors of the nave, the candle bearer pauses and says:*

**B:** The light of Christ.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*Halfway to the altar, the candle bearer pauses and says a second time:*

**B:** The light of Christ.

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

*When the candle bearer arrives before the altar, he faces the congregation, lifts the candle high, and sings a third time:*

**B:** The light of Christ.

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

### **EXSULTET**

*The candle bearer places the paschal candle in its stand in the center of the chancel. Standing in its light, the minister says:*

**M:** Rejoice now, all you heav'nly choirs of angels; rejoice now, all creation; sound forth, trumpet of salvation, and proclaim the triumph of our King.

Rejoice too, all the earth, in the radiance of the light now poured upon you and made brilliant by the brightness of the everlasting King; know that the ancient darkness has been forever banished.

Rejoice, O Church of Christ, clothed in the brightness of this light; let all this house of God ring out with rejoicing, with the praises of all God's faithful people.

*The following is said.*

**M:** The Lord be with you.

**C:** **And also with you.**

**M:** Lift up your hearts.

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

**M:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C:** **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**M:** It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places, with all our hearts and minds and voices, praise you, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, and your one and only Son, Jesus Christ.

For he is the true 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 gives light to all creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **SERVICE OF LESSONS**

*The congregation extinguishes its candles. A few lights in the nave may be turned on.*

**M:** On 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 on those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death.

*An assisting minister, lectors chosen from the congregation, or the minister reads the Vigil lessons consisting of seven or four of the following selections of Holy Scripture. Genesis 1:1–2:3 and Exodus 14:10–15:1 should always be read. Each reading may be followed by silence for reflection on God's Word. The minister says the appointed prayer. The congregation may sit throughout or may stand or kneel for each prayer.*

## **CREATION**

### ***Genesis 1:1–2:3 (excerpts)***

**M:** Let us pray.

Almighty God, you most wonderfully created human nature and yet more wonderfully redeemed it. By your mercy renew us in the image of him who came to share our humanity, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** Amen.

## **THE FLOOD**

### ***Genesis 7:1-5,11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13***

**M:** Let us pray.

O Lord, whose wrath burned against the evil of humanity, you kill and bring again to life according to your own purpose; you brought the flood on a wicked and perverse generation and yet saved faithful Noah and his family. Gather your elect into your Church, and so complete your work of mercy, that the ends of the earth may know your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** Amen.

## **TESTING OF ABRAHAM**

### ***Genesis 22:1-18***

**M:** Let us pray.

O God, you promised to faithful Abraham that he would be the father of many nations, and through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, you increase your chosen people throughout the world. Give to your Church a living trust in all your promises, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C:** Amen.

## **ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE AT THE RED SEA**

### ***Exodus 14:10–15:1***

**M:** Let us pray.

O God, you once delivered your people Israel from slavery under Pharaoh and led them safely through the Red Sea. By this you gave us a picture of Baptism. Lead us always to rejoice in your baptismal promise, that we may live in its grace and declare to all people your desire to make them children of Abraham, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **SALVATION OFFERED FREELY TO ALL**

***Isaiah 55:1-11***

**M:** Let us pray.

Almighty God, you created and sustain all things by the power of your Word. You send forth your Spirit to renew your creation. Give your saving water of life to all who thirst, that they may bear much fruit in your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **A NEW HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT**

***Ezekiel 36:24-28***

**M:** Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, in the miracle of Easter you raised your Son for our justification and through him have given us a new heart and spirit. Give power to your holy people to show in their lives what they confess with their lips, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **FAITH STRAINED BUT VICTORIOUS**

***Job 19:20-27***

**M:** Let us pray.

Almighty God, by the Passover of your Son, you brought us out of sin into righteousness and out of death to life. Give your servants patience and endurance that, looking in faith to your Son, we may see beyond the trials of this life to the joys of the life to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

### *Zephaniah 3:12-20*

**M:** Let us pray.

O Lord, let all the world see that what has been cast down is raised up, what has grown old is made new, and the work you have begun in your faithful people is being brought to its joyful fulfillment in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C:** **Amen.**

## ALL YOU WORKS OF THE LORD

### *Benedicite, Omnia Opera*

*The canticle is said as the paschal candle is carried to the font. The minister gathers there.*

**M:** All you works of the Lord, / bless the Lord—  
Praise him and magnify him forever.  
You angels of the Lord, / bless the Lord;  
you heavens, / bless the Lord;  
all you powers of the Lord, / bless the Lord—

**C:** **Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You sun and moon, / bless the Lord;  
you stars of heaven, / bless the Lord;  
you showers and dew, / bless the Lord—

**C:** **Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You winds of God, / bless the Lord;  
you fire and heat, / bless the Lord;  
you winter and summer, / bless the Lord—

**C:** **Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You dews and frost, / bless the Lord;  
you frost and cold, / bless the Lord;

you ice and snow, / bless the Lord—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You nights and days, / bless the Lord;  
you light and darkness, / bless the Lord;  
you lightning and clouds, / bless the Lord—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** Let the earth / bless the Lord;  
you mountains and hills, / bless the Lord;  
all you green things that grow on the earth, / bless the Lord—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You wells and springs, / bless the Lord;  
you rivers and seas, / bless the Lord;  
you whales and all who move in the seas, / bless the Lord—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** All you birds of the air, / bless the Lord;  
all you beasts and cattle, / bless the Lord;  
all you children of mortals, / bless the Lord—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You people of God, / bless the Lord;  
you priests of the Lord, / bless the Lord;  
you servants of the Lord, / bless the Lord—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

**M:** You spirits and souls of the righteous, / bless the Lord;  
you pure and humble of heart, / bless the Lord;  
let us bless the Father and the Son and the Holy / Spirit—

**C: Praise him and magnify him forever.**

## SERVICE OF HOLY BAPTISM

*The minister addresses the congregation with these words:*

**M:** On this holiest of days, the whole Church of our Lord Jesus Christ recalls his death and burial, rejoicing in the gospel of his glorious resurrection from the dead. Holy Baptism is the precious means of grace by which our Father in heaven connects us with Christ in his life, death, and resurrection. The apostle Paul says: “Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

### HYMN 299 “All Who Believe and Are Baptized”

**M:** In Holy Baptism, God takes away our sins and gives new life in Christ our Lord. We solemnly renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways; we confess the gift of faith in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I ask you: Do you reject the devil along with all his lies and empty promises?

**C:** **Yes, and I ask God to help me.**

**M:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?

**C:** **Yes, I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**M:** 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**M:** 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. Amen.**

**M:** Do you intend to continue in this faith, to be diligent in the use of Word and sacrament, and in faith and action remain true to God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—as long as you live?

**C:** **Yes, and I ask God to help me.**

**M:** Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you the new birth of water and of the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with his grace to life everlasting.

**C:** **Amen.**

*The paschal candle is returned to its stand.*

## **SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*The altar candles and other candles in the church are now lit from the paschal candle. The lights of the church are fully lit, the bells may be rung, and the minister proclaims:*

**M:** ALLELUIA! CHRIST IS RISEN!

**C:** **HE IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!**

*The choir, cantor, or minister introduces the Alleluia refrain immediately after the Easter greeting.*

**M:** Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**C:** **Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**M:** For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

This is the day the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

**C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL: JOHN 20:1-18**

**C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**M:** O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the resurrection of our Lord, preserve in all your people the Spirit of adoption which you have given, that they may serve you in faith and joy, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**M:** The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**M:** Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them up unto the Lord.**

**M:** Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

**C: It is good and right so to do.**

**M:** It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and we praise you especially for the glorious resurrection of your Son, the true Passover Lamb, who by his sacrifice took away the sins of the world and by his resurrection restored everlasting life. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

*Sanctus*

**C: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts: heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he, blessed is he, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**M:** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

**M:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C:** Amen.

## **O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD**

*Agnus Dei*

**C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us your  
peace. Amen.**

## **DISTRIBUTION**

## **SONG OF SIMEON**

**C: Lord, now you let your servant depart in peace according to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.**

**M: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.**

**C: And his mercy endures forever.**

**M: We thank you, Lord, that you have nourished us with your Easter sacraments. Fill us with your Spirit, the Spirit of your love, that those whom you have satisfied with one heavenly bread may be united in one holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**C: Amen.**

**M: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.**

**C: Amen. Amen. Amen.**

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**Thank you to David Stansfield for musical accompaniment.**

**Join us at 7 am and 9:30 am for Easter Day worship.**