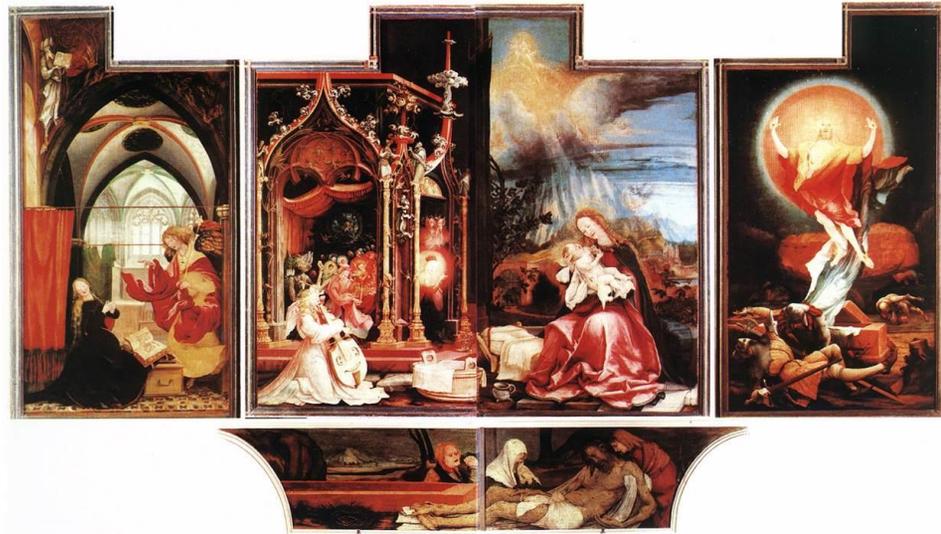


# Holy Saturday The Vigil of Easter



And they were saying to one another,  
“Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?”

Mark 16:3

## Holy Saturday ~ The Vigil of Easter

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### Holy Saturday ~ The Vigil of Easter

Many Lutherans assume the Easter Vigil is "new" because they don't remember participating in the service in younger years. On the contrary, the Easter Vigil is actually one of the oldest formalized services of the Christian Church. Already in A.D. 190, Melito, bishop of Sardis, preached a sermon entitled, "*On the Passion*," in which he described the Vigil of Easter in use at that time. In a fuller description, a Christian named *Egeria* described the Vigil of Easter used in Jerusalem in A.D. 385. According to her description, the use of this service was a long-standing custom.

Christians today are often unfamiliar with the Great Vigil because it fell into disuse during the Middle Ages. While the immediate goals of the Reformation were to restore the Gospel to the current practice of the day, since the Easter Vigil was largely not practiced, it was not of primary focus for the reformers. (Pittelko, Lutheran Worship Notes, 1985) Interestingly however, a variety of miscellaneous practices have been assumed by our churches that stem from the Vigil. Three examples include the practice of an "*Easter Sunrise Service*," the annual creation and use of a "*Paschal Candle*," and the joyful refrain heard throughout Christendom on Easter, "*Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!*"

The historic service was a true vigil in every sense of the word. The early Christians "kept watch" throughout the night by candlelight in expectation of Christ's resurrection from the dead. At the break of day the congregation rejoiced in the announcement of the Gospel with loud alleluias. The rich theology of new life in the resurrection was practically witnessed through the lengthy vigil through the inclusion of baptism, holding vigil until the rising of the sun, and the culminating joyful reception of the Lord's Supper.

The vigil consisted of four sections: 1) the lighting of the Paschal candle, procession, and Easter proclamation; 2) the service of readings recounting the message of salvation throughout the OT; 3) the service of Holy Baptism; 4) the Easter Gospel and Service of Holy Communion. While the full Vigil may not be practical for every congregation, elements of the Vigil are definitely edifying and possible. This evening's vigil will incorporate most elements of the historic vigil beginning at the outdoor steps leading to the sanctuary.

May the message of Christ and Him crucified, died, buried and risen for you dwell within you richly and bring you peace this holy night.

# ✠ Easter Vigil ✠

## Service of Light

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 death into life, we are gathered here in vigil 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.

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, this new flame and those who keep this joyful Easter festival that, burning with the desire of 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.**

P: 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.

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.**



P: The light of Christ.



C: Thanks be to God.  
*(repeat three times)*



# Exsultet

P: Re - joice now, all you heav' n - ly choirs of an - gels; re - joice now, all  
cre - a - tion; sound forth, trum - pet of sal - va - tion, and pro - claim  
the tri - umph of our King. Re - joice too, all the earth,  
in the radiance of the light now poured up - on you  
and made brilliant by the brightness of the ev - er - last - ing King;  
know that the an - cient dark - ness has been for - ev -  
er ban - ished. Re - joice, O Church of Christ, clothed in the  
bright - ness of this light; let all this house of God ring out with re -

joic - ing, with the prais - es of all God's faith-ful peo - ple.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And al - so with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places, with all our heart and mind and voice, praise You, O Lord, Holy Father, almighty everlasting God, and Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. For He is the very Paschal Lamb who offered Himself for the sin of the world, who has cleansed us by the shedding of His precious blood. This is the night when You brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt and led them through the Red Sea on dry ground. This is the night when all who believe in Christ are delivered from bondage to sin and are restored to life and immortality. This is the night when Christ, the Life, arose from the dead. The seal of the grave is broken and the morning of the new creation breaks forth out of night. Oh, how wonderful and beyond all telling is Your mercy toward us, O God, that to redeem a slave You gave Your Son. How holy is this night when all wickedness is put to flight and sin is washed away. How holy is this night when innocence is restored to the fallen and joy is given to those downcast. How blessed is the 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: A - men.

## Service of Readings

**P** In this most holy night our Savior, Christ the Lord, broke the power of death and by His resurrection brought life and salvation to all creation. Let us praise the Lord, for He truly keeps His word. The sun of righteousness has dawned upon us who have sat in darkness and in the shadow of death.

### The Creation

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Genesis 1:1 —2:3*

### The Flood

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

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

### The Testing of Abraham

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Genesis 22:1–18*

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

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Exodus 14:10—15:1*

## **Salvation Offered Freely to All**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Isaiah 55:1–11*

## **A New Heart and a New Spirit**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Ezekiel 36:24–28*

## **God's Faithfulness to Israel**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Deuteronomy 31:19–30*

## **The Valley of Dry Bones**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Ezekiel 37:1–14*

## **Job Confesses the Redeemer**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Job 19:20–27*

## **Jonah Preaches to Nineveh**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Jonah 3:1–10*

## **The Gathering of God's People**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Zephaniah 3:12–20*

## **The Fiery Furnace**

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

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Daniel 3:1–30*

## Service of Prayer

### Litany of the Resurrection

A O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

A O Christ,

C **have mercy.**

A O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

A Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

C **hear us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

A 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.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

A 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.**

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

C **have mercy on us.**

A By Your glorious resurrection from the dead,

C **good Lord, deliver us.**

A By Your victory over sin and death,

C **good Lord, deliver us.**

A By the majesty of Your risen body,

C **good Lord, deliver us.**

A We poor sinners implore You

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

**A** 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.**

**A** 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.**

**A** 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.**

**A** Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C have mercy on us.**

**A** Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C have mercy on us.**

**A** Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C grant us Your peace.**

**A** O Lord,

**C have mercy.**

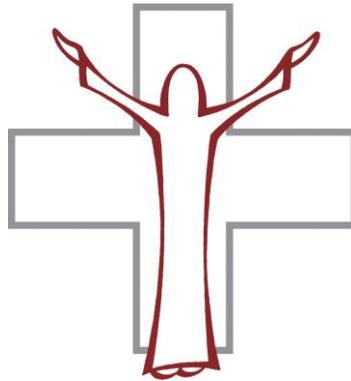
**A** O Christ,

**C have mercy.**

**A** O Lord,

**C have mercy. Amen.**

## Service of the Word



### Easter Acclamation

**P** Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

## Hymn of Praise

### This is the Feast (Setting One)

**C: 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.**

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

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

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

**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.**

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

**For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign.**

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

## 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, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## Holy Gospel

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-eighth chapter.

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

### Matthew 28:1–10

<sup>1</sup>Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. <sup>2</sup>And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. <sup>4</sup>And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup>But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. <sup>6</sup>He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup>Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you." <sup>8</sup>So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup>And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Sermon:** "You Will See Him" ~ Matthew 28:1-7

## The Service of the Sacrament

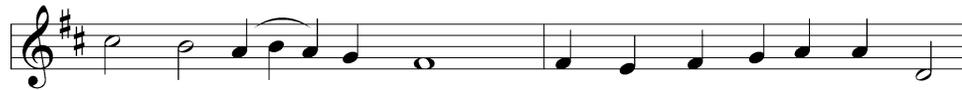
Preface.....LSB p.194

**Distribution Hymns:**

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



1 At the Lamb's high feast we sing Praise to  
2 Praise we Him, whose love di - vine Gives His  
3 Where the pas - chal blood is poured, Death's dread  
4 Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, Pas - chal



our vic - to - rious King, Who has washed us in the tide  
sa - cred blood for wine, Gives His bod - y for the feast—  
an - gel sheathes the sword; Is - rael's hosts tri - um - phant go  
vic - tim, pas - chal bread; With sin - cer - i - ty and love



Flow - ing from His pierc - ed side. Al - le - lu - ia!  
Christ the vic - tim, Christ the priest. Al - le - lu - ia!  
Through the wave that drowns the foe. Al - le - lu - ia!  
Eat we man - na from a - bove. Al - le - lu - ia!

5 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!

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

7 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!

8 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!

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“This Joyful Eastertide”.....LSB #482



1 This joy - ful Eas - ter - tide A - way with sin and  
 2 Death's flood has lost its chill Since Je - sus crossed the  
 3 My flesh in hope shall rest And for a sea - son



sor - row! My love, the Cru - ci - fied,  
 riv - er; Lov - er of souls, from ill  
 slum - ber Till trump from east to west



Has sprung to life this mor - row:  
 My pass - ing soul de - liv - er:  
 Shall wake the dead in num - ber:



*Refrain*  
 Had Christ, who once was slain, Not burst His three-day pris - on,



Our faith had been in vain: But now has Christ a - ris - en, a -



ris - en, a - ris - en; But now has Christ a - ris - en!

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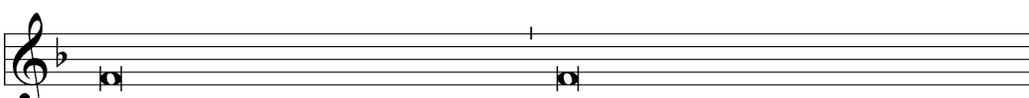
P: Let us pray. O God, for our redemption You gave Your only-begotten



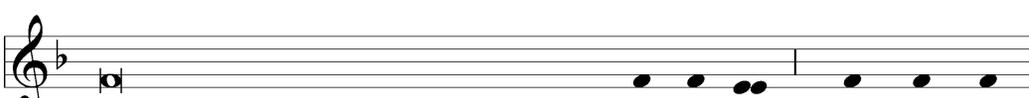
Son to the death of the cross and by His glorious resurrection delivered



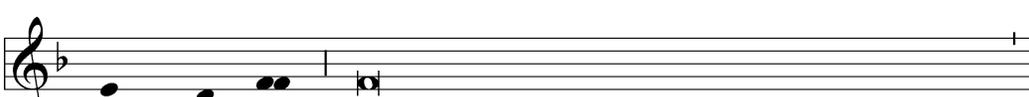
us from the power of the en - e - my. Grant that all our sin may be



drowned through daily repentance and that day by day we may arise to



live before You in righteousness and purity for - ev - er; through Je - sus



Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,



one God, now and for - ev - er.



C: A - men.



P: Let us bless the Lord.



C: Thanks be to God.

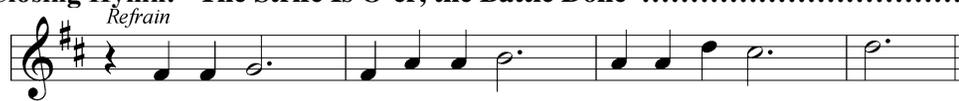


P: The al - mighty and mer - ci - ful Lord, the Father, the Son,



and the Holy Spir - it, bless and pre - serve you.

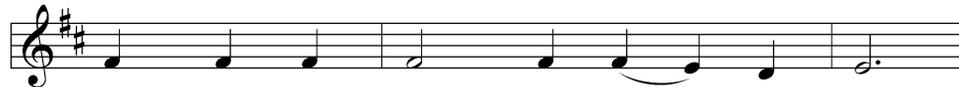
**Closing Hymn: "The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done".....LSB #464**



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



1 The strife is o'er, the bat - tle done;  
2 The pow'rs of death have done their worst,  
3 The three sad days have quick - ly sped,  
4 He broke the age - bound chains of hell;  
5 Lord, by the stripes which wound - ed Thee,



Now is the vic - tor's tri - umph won;  
But Christ their le - gions hath dis - persed.  
He ris - es glo - rious from the dead.  
The bars from heav'n's high por - tals fell.  
From death's dread sting Thy ser - vants free

*The Refrain is repeated after st. 5.*



Now be the song of praise be - gun. Al - le - lu - ia!  
Let shouts of ho - ly joy out - burst. Al - le - lu - ia!  
All glo - ry to our ris - en Head! Al - le - lu - ia!  
Let hymns of praise His tri - umph tell. Al - le - lu - ia!  
That we may live and sing to Thee. Al - le - lu - ia!

*Postlude: "Toccata" (from Suite Gothique).....Boellmann*

**Acknowledgments**

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