

The Vigil of Easter



“He is not here, but has risen.”

Luke 24:6a

April 19, 2025

**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (LCMS)
Council Bluffs, IA**

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 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.

P 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 desire for life with You, we may be found rightly prepared to share in the Feast of Light which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The pastor traces the cross on the candle while saying:

P Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever, the beginning and the ending,

and then traces the Greek letters Alpha and Omega on the candle while saying:

the Alpha and the Omega.

He traces the year on the candle, saying:

P His are time and eternity; His are the glory and dominion, now and forever.

He puts the five wax nails into the candle, saying:

P By His wounds we have healing both now and forever. Amen.

Then, lighting the candle from the newly kindled fire, he says:

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

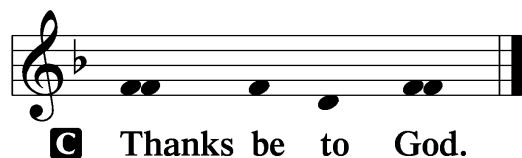
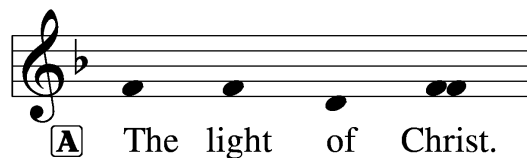
P Let us pray.

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.

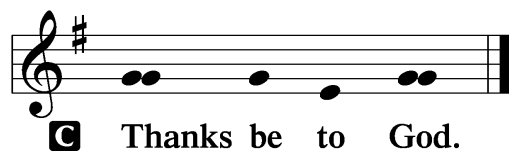
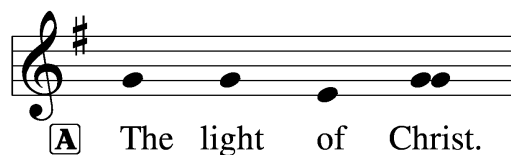
C Amen.

All light their candles from the paschal candle and then follow the candle bearer in procession into the darkened church.

At the entrance of the nave, the bearer of the paschal candle stops and chants:

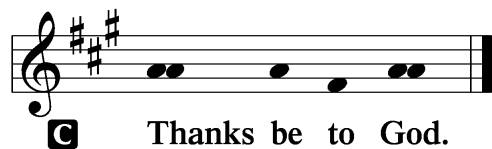
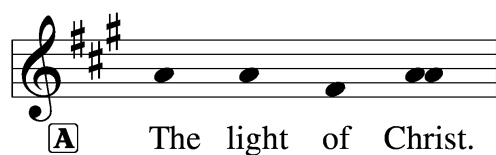


When the candle bearer reaches the middle of the nave, he chants for the second time:



When the candle bearer arrives at the candle stand, he turns to face the congregation.

After all have reached their places, the candle bearer lifts the candle high and chants the third time:



After the candle bearer places the paschal candle in its stand, the assistant turns to face the people and chants or speaks the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet).

A Re - jice now, all you heav' n - ly choirs of an - gels; re - jice now, all
 cre - a - tion; sound forth, trum-pet of sal - va - tion, and pro-claim
 the tri - umph of our King. Re - jice 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 - jice, 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.

Preface Dialogue



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.

Easter Proclamation

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 Amen.

All may extinguish their candles at this time. The paschal candle remains lighted throughout the service. A few lights in the nave may be turned on.

Sit

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

Genesis 1:1—2:3

After this and each following reading:

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The Flood

Genesis 7:1–5, 11–18; 8:6–18; 9:8–13

The Testing of Abraham

Genesis 22:1–18

Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea

Exodus 14:10—15:1

Salvation Offered Freely to All

Isaiah 55:1–11

A New Heart and a New Spirit

Ezekiel 36:24–28

God's Faithfulness to Israel

Deuteronomy 31:19–30

The Valley of Dry Bones

Ezekiel 37:1–14

Job Confesses the Redeemer

Job 19:20–27

Jonah Preaches to Nineveh

Jonah 3:1–10

The Gathering of God's People *Zephaniah 3:12–20*

The Fiery Furnace *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!

The altar candles may now be lighted from the paschal candle. Lights in the church are turned on, bells may be rung, the chancel may be decorated, and the altar may be prepared for the Sacrament while the congregation sings the Hymn of Praise.

This Is the Feast

LSB 155

Introduced by a setting by Charles Callahan

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.

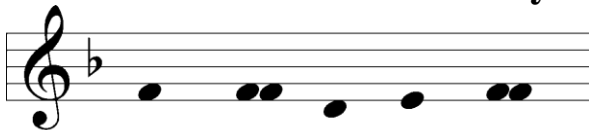
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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 with thy spir - it.



P Let us pray.

P 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.



Holy Gospel

Mark 16:1-8

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



G Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

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

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



Apostles' Creed

LSB 192

Sermon: "God is with us."

Daniel 3:1-30

Service of the Sacrament

We welcome members of our sister congregations of the LCMS to join us in receiving the Lord's Supper. Other visitors are welcomed forward to receive a blessing. Simply cross your arms to indicate this desire.

Preface

LSB 194

Proper Preface

Sanctus

LSB 195

Lord's Prayer

LSB 196

The Words of Our Lord

LSB 197

Pax Domini

LSB 197

Agnus Dei

LSB 198

Sit

Distribution

Hymn: Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds

LSB 465



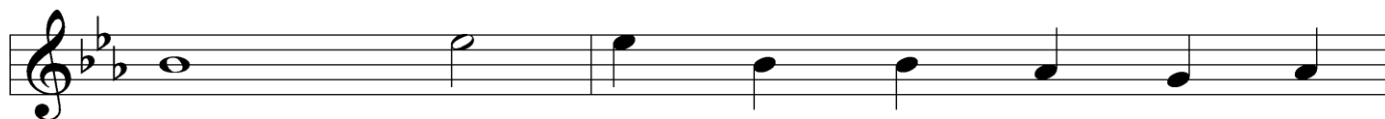
1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds In
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift He brings, There -
 3 O fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love; Set
 △ 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring And



praise of love that still a - bounds: "Christ has tri - umphed!
 fore our heart with rap - ture sings: "Christ has tri - umphed!
 heart and will on things a - bove That we con - quer
 with the heav'n - ly bless - ed sing: "Christ has tri - umphed!



He is liv - ing!" Sing, choirs of an - gels, loud and
 He is liv - ing!" Now still He comes to give us
 through Your tri - umph; Grant grace suf - fi - cient for life's
 Al - le - lu - ia!" Be to the Fa - ther and our



clear! Re - peat their song of glo - ry
 life And by His pres - ence stills all
 day That by our lives we tru - ly
 Lord, To Spir - it blest, most ho - ly



here: "Christ has tri - umphed! Christ has tri - umphed!"
 strife. Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!
 say: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"
 God, All the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!



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

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876–1947, alt. Tune: Geistliche Kirchengesäng, 1623, Köln

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466 Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia



1 Christ has a - ris - en, al - le - lu - ia.
 2 For three long days the grave did its worst
 3 The an - gel said to them, "Do not fear!
 4 "Go spread the news: He's not in the grave;
 5 Christ has a - ris - en; He sets us free;



Re - joice and praise Him, al - le - lu - ia.
 Un - til its strength by God was dis - persed.
 You look for Je - sus who is not here.
 He has a - ris - en this world to save.
 Al - le - lu - ia, to Him prais - es be.



For our Re - deem - er burst from the tomb,
 He who gives life did death un - der - go;
 See for your - selves the tomb is all bare;
 Je - sus' re - deem - ing la - bors are done;
 Je - sus is liv - ing! Let us all sing;



E - ven from death, dis - pel - ling its gloom.
 And in its con - quest His might did show.
 On - ly the grave cloths are ly - ing there."
 E - ven the bat - tle with sin is won."
 He reigns tri - um - phant, heav - en - ly King.

Refrain



Let us sing praise to Him with end - less joy;



Death's fear - ful sting He has come to de - stroy.



Our sin for - giv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!



Je - sus is liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

475 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice and sing! Now is the tri - umph
 2 The Lord of life is ris'n this day; Bring flow'rs of song to
 3 Praise we in songs of vic - to - ry That love, that life which
 4 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, And sing to - day with



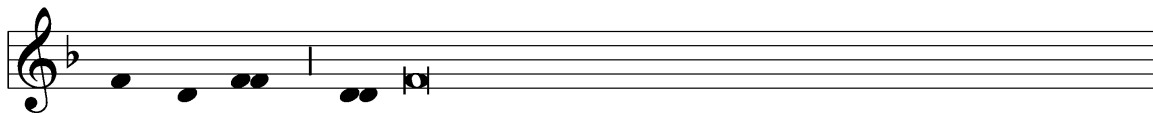
of our King! To all the world glad news we bring:
 strew His way; Let all the world re - joice and say:
 can - not die, And sing with hearts up - lift - ed high:
 one ac - cord The life laid down, the life re - stored:



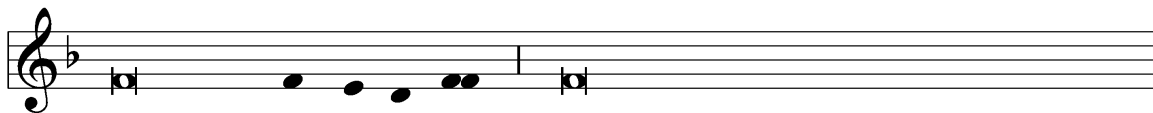
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: 1540, A. Schlegel, 1871-1875, 2nd.
 Tune: Unknown, 16th c., 17th-18th.
 Text © 1978, renewed © 1998 by the American and Western Conf. of the Synod Publishing Co. Used by permission. LHM Hymn License no. 10000022.
 Tune: Public domain.

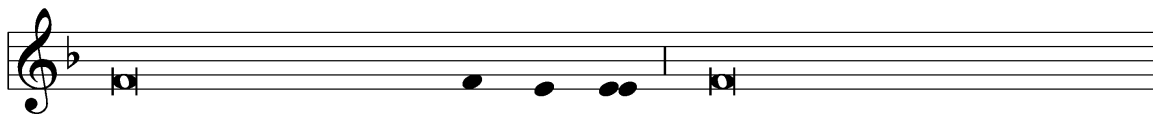
Stand



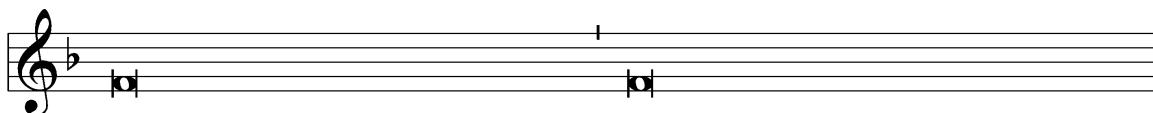
P Let us pray. O God, for our redemption You gave Your only-begotten



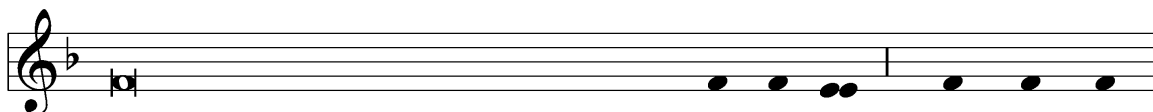
Son to the death of the cross and by His glorious resurrection delivered



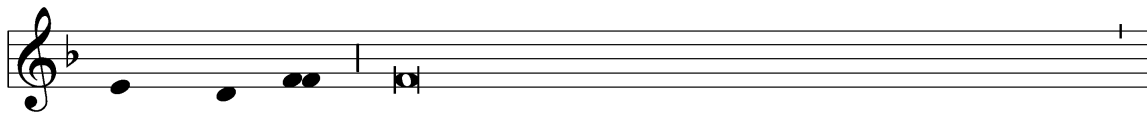
us from the power of the en - e - my. Grant that all our sin may be



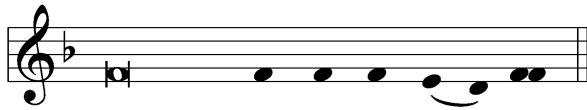
drowned through daily repentance and that day by day we may arise to



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.



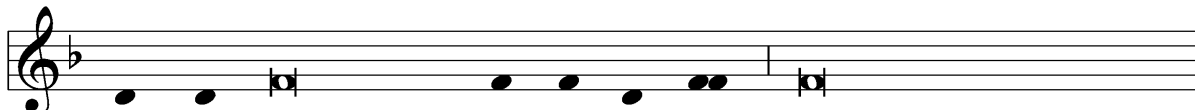
C A - men.



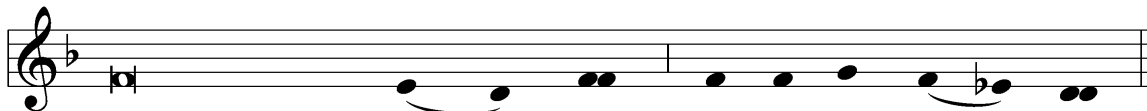
A Let us bless the Lord.



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.



C A - men.

Hymn of Departure

478 The Day of Resurrection



1 The day of res - ur - rec - tion! Earth, tell it out a - broad,
 2 Let hearts be purged of e - vil That we may see a - right
 3 Now let the heav'ns be joy - ful, Let earth its song be - gin,
 △ 4 All praise to God the Fa - ther, All praise to God the Son,



The pass - o - ver of glad - ness, The pass - o - ver of God.
 The Lord in rays e - ter - nal Of res - ur - rec - tion light
 Let all the world keep tri - umph And all that is there - in.
 All praise to God the Spir - it, E - ter - nal Three in One!



From death to life e - ter - nal, From sin's do - min - ion free,
 And, lis - t'ning to His ac - cents, May hear, so calm and plain,
 Let all things, seen and un - seen, Their notes of glad - ness blend;
 Let all the ran - somed num - ber Fall down be - fore the throne



Our Christ has brought us o - ver With hymns of vic - to - ry.
 His own "All hail!" and, hear - ing, May raise the vic - tor strain.
 For Christ the Lord has ris - en, Our joy that has no end!
 And hon - or, pow'r, and glo - ry As - cribe to God a - lone!

Text: Hymn of Departure, © 1972, by J.S. Bach, in J.S. Bach's Hymn Book, 1650-1651, 1652-1653, 1654-1655, 1656-1657, 1658-1659, 1660-1661, 1662-1663, 1664-1665, 1666-1667, 1668-1669, 1670-1671, 1672-1673, 1674-1675, 1676-1677, 1678-1679, 1680-1681, 1682-1683, 1684-1685, 1686-1687, 1688-1689, 1690-1691, 1692-1693, 1694-1695, 1696-1697, 1698-1699, 1700-1701, 1702-1703, 1704-1705, 1706-1707, 1708-1709, 1710-1711, 1712-1713, 1714-1715, 1716-1717, 1718-1719, 1720-1721, 1722-1723, 1724-1725, 1726-1727, 1728-1729, 1730-1731, 1732-1733, 1734-1735, 1736-1737, 1738-1739, 1740-1741, 1742-1743, 1744-1745, 1746-1747, 1748-1749, 1750-1751, 1752-1753, 1754-1755, 1756-1757, 1758-1759, 1760-1761, 1762-1763, 1764-1765, 1766-1767, 1768-1769, 1770-1771, 1772-1773, 1774-1775, 1776-1777, 1778-1779, 1780-1781, 1782-1783, 1784-1785, 1786-1787, 1788-1789, 1790-1791, 1792-1793, 1794-1795, 1796-1797, 1798-1799, 1800-1801, 1802-1803, 1804-1805, 1806-1807, 1808-1809, 1810-1811, 1812-1813, 1814-1815, 1816-1817, 1818-1819, 1820-1821, 1822-1823, 1824-1825, 1826-1827, 1828-1829, 1830-1831, 1832-1833, 1834-1835, 1836-1837, 1838-1839, 1840-1841, 1842-1843, 1844-1845, 1846-1847, 1848-1849, 1850-1851, 1852-1853, 1854-1855, 1856-1857, 1858-1859, 1860-1861, 1862-1863, 1864-1865, 1866-1867, 1868-1869, 1870-1871, 1872-1873, 1874-1875, 1876-1877, 1878-1879, 1880-1881, 1882-1883, 1884-1885, 1886-1887, 1888-1889, 1890-1891, 1892-1893, 1894-1895, 1896-1897, 1898-1899, 1900-1901, 1902-1903, 1904-1905, 1906-1907, 1908-1909, 1910-1911, 1912-1913, 1914-1915, 1916-1917, 1918-1919, 1920-1921, 1922-1923, 1924-1925, 1926-1927, 1928-1929, 1930-1931, 1932-1933, 1934-1935, 1936-1937, 1938-1939, 1940-1941, 1942-1943, 1944-1945, 1946-1947, 1948-1949, 1950-1951, 1952-1953, 1954-1955, 1956-1957, 1958-1959, 1960-1961, 1962-1963, 1964-1965, 1966-1967, 1968-1969, 1970-1971, 1972-1973, 1974-1975, 1976-1977, 1978-1979, 1980-1981, 1982-1983, 1984-1985, 1986-1987, 1988-1989, 1990-1991, 1992-1993, 1994-1995, 1996-1997, 1998-1999, 2000-2001, 2002-2003, 2004-2005, 2006-2007, 2008-2009, 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2192-2193, 2194-2195, 2196-2197, 2198-2199, 2200-2201, 2202-2203, 2204-2205, 2206-2207, 2208-2209, 2210-2211, 2212-2213, 2214-2215, 2216-2217, 2218-2219, 2220-2221, 2222-2223, 2224-2225, 2226-2227, 2228-2229, 2230-2231, 2232-2233, 2234-2235, 2236-2237, 2238-2239, 2240-2241, 2242-2243, 2244-2245, 2246-2247, 2248-2249, 2250-2251, 2252-2253, 2254-2255, 2256-2257, 2258-2259, 2260-2261, 2262-2263, 2264-2265, 2266-2267, 2268-2269, 2270-2271, 2272-2273, 2274-2275, 2276-2277, 2278-2279, 2280-2281, 2282-2283, 2284-2285, 2286-2287, 2288-2289, 2290-2291, 2292-2293, 2294-2295, 2296-2297, 2298-2299, 2300-2301, 2302-2303, 2304-2305, 2306-2307, 2308-2309, 2310-2311, 2312-2313, 2314-2315, 2316-2317, 2318-2319, 2320-2321, 2322-2323, 2324-2325, 2326-2327, 2328-2329, 2330-2331, 2332-2333, 2334-2335, 2336-2337, 2338-2339, 2340-2341, 2342-2343, 2344-2345, 2346-2347, 2348-2349, 2350-2351, 2352-2353, 2354-2355, 2356-2357, 2358-2359, 2360-2361, 2362-2363, 2364-2365, 2366-2367, 2368-2369, 2370-2371, 2372-2373, 2374-2375, 2376-2377, 2378-2379, 2380-2381, 2382-2383, 2384-2385, 2386-2387, 2388-2389, 2390-2391, 2392-2393, 2394-2395, 2396-2397, 2398-2399, 2400-2401, 2402-2403, 2404-2405, 2406-2407, 2408-2409, 2410-2411, 2412-2413, 2414-2415, 2416-2417, 2418-2419, 2420-2421, 2422-2423, 2424-2425, 2426-2427, 2428-2429, 2430-2431, 2432-2433, 2434-2435, 2436-2437, 2438-2439, 2440-2441, 2442-2443, 2444-2445, 2446-2447, 2448-2449, 2450-2451, 2452-2453, 2454-2455, 2456-2457, 2458-2459, 2460-2461, 2462-2463, 2464-2465, 2466-2467, 2468-2469, 2470-2471, 2472-2473, 2474-2475, 2476-2477, 2478-2479, 2480-2481, 2482-2483, 2484-2485, 2486-2487, 2488-2489, 2490-2491, 2492-2493, 2494-2495, 2496-2497, 2498-2499, 2500-2501, 2502-2503, 2504-2505, 2506-2507, 2508-2509, 2510-2511, 2512-2513, 2514-2515, 2516-2517, 2518-2519, 2520-2521, 2522-2523, 2524-2525, 2526-2527, 2528-2529, 2530-2531, 2532-2533, 2534-2535, 2536-2537, 2538-2539, 2540-2541, 2542-2543, 2544-2545, 2546-2547, 2548-2549, 2550-2551, 2552-2553, 2554-2555, 2556-2557, 2558-2559, 2560-2561, 2562-2563, 2564-2565, 2566-2567, 2568-2569, 2570-2571, 2572-2573, 2574-2575, 2576-2577, 2578-2579, 2580-2581, 2582-2583, 2584-2585, 2586-2587, 2588-2589, 2590-2591, 2592-2593, 2594-2595, 2596-2597, 2598-2599, 2600-2601, 2602-2603, 2604-2605, 2606-2607, 2608-2609, 2610-2611, 2612-2613, 2614-2615, 2616-2617, 2618-2619, 2620-2621, 2622-2623, 2624-2625, 2626-2627, 2628-2629, 2630-2631, 2632-2633, 2634-2635, 2636-2637, 2638-2639, 2640-2641, 2642-2643, 2644-2645, 2646-2647, 2648-2649, 2650-2651, 2652-2653, 2654-2655, 2656-2657, 2658-2659, 2660-2661, 2662-2663, 2664-2665, 2666-2667, 2668-2669, 2670-2671, 2672-2673, 2674-2675, 2676-2677, 2678-2679, 2680-2681, 2682-2683, 2684-2685, 2686-2687, 2688-2689, 2690-2691, 2692-2693, 2694-2695, 2696-2697, 2698-2699, 2700-2701, 2702-2703, 2704-2705, 2706-2707, 2708-2709, 2710-2711, 2712-2713, 2714-2715, 2716-2717, 2718-2719, 2720-2721, 2722-2723, 2724-2725, 2726-2727, 2728-2729, 2730-2731, 2732-2733, 2734-2735, 2736-2737, 2738-2739, 2740-2741, 2742-2743, 2744-2745, 2746-2747, 2748-2749, 2750-2751, 2752-2753, 2754-2755, 2756-2757, 2758-2759, 2760-2761, 2762-2763, 2764-2765, 2766-2767, 2768-2769, 2770-2771, 2772-2773, 2774-2775, 2776-2777, 2778-2779, 2780-2781, 2782-2783, 2784-2785, 2786-2787, 2788-2789, 2790-2791, 2792-2793, 2794-2795, 2796-2797, 2798-2799, 2800-2801, 2802-2803, 2804-2805, 2806-2807, 2808-2809, 2810-2811, 2812-2813, 2814-2815, 2816-2817, 2818-2819, 2820-2821, 2822-2823, 2824-2825, 2826-2827, 2828-2829, 2830-2831, 2832-2833, 2834-2835, 2836-2837, 2838-2839, 2840-2841, 2842-2843, 2844-2845, 2846-2847, 2848-2849, 2850-2851, 2852-2853, 2854-2855, 2856-2857, 2858-2859, 2860-2861, 2862-2863, 2864-2865, 2866-2867, 2868-2869, 2870-2871, 2872-2873, 2874-2875, 2876-2877, 2878-2879, 2880-2881, 2882-2883, 2884-2885, 2886-2887, 2888-2889, 2890-2891, 2892-2893, 2894-2895, 2896-2897, 2898-2899, 2900-2901, 2902-2903, 2904-2905, 2906-2907, 2908-2909, 2910-2911, 2912-2913, 2914-2915, 2916-2917, 2918-2919, 2920-2921, 2922-2923, 2924-2925, 2926-2927, 2928-2929, 2930-2931, 2932-2933, 2934-2935, 2936-2937, 2938-2939, 2940-2941, 2942-2943, 2944-2945, 2946-2947, 2948-2949, 2950-2951, 2952-2953, 2954-2955, 2956-2957, 2958-2959, 2960-2961, 2962-2963, 2964-2965, 2966-2967, 2968-2969, 2970-2971, 2972-2973, 2974-2975, 2976-2977, 2978-2979, 2980-2981, 2982-2983, 2984-2985, 2986-2987, 2988-2989, 2990-2991, 2992-2993, 2994-2995, 2996-2997, 2998-2999, 3000-3001, 3002-3003, 3004-3005, 3006-3007, 3008-3009, 3010-3011, 3012-3013, 3014-3015, 3016-3017, 3018-3019, 3020-3021, 3022-3023, 3024-3025, 3026-3027, 3028-3029, 3030-3031, 3032-3033, 3034-3035, 3036-3037, 3038-3039, 3040-3041, 3042-3043, 3044-3045, 3046-3047, 3048-3049, 3050-3051, 3052-3053, 3054-3055, 3056-3057, 3058-3059, 3060-3061, 3062-3063, 3064-3065, 3066-3067, 3068-3069, 3070-3071, 3072-3073, 3074-3075, 3076-3077, 3078-3079, 3080-3081, 3082-3083, 3084-3085, 3086-3087, 3088-3089, 3090-3091, 3092-3093, 3094-3095, 3096-3097, 3098-3099, 3100-3101, 3102-3103, 3104-3105, 3106-3107, 3108-3109, 3110-3111, 3112-3113, 3114-3115, 3116-3117, 3118-3119, 3120-3121, 3122-3123, 3124-3125, 3126-3127, 3128-3129, 3130-3131, 3132-3133, 3134-3135, 3136-3137, 3138-3139, 3140-3141, 3142-3143, 3144-3145, 3146-3147, 3148-3149, 3150-3151, 3152-3153, 3154-3155, 3156-3157, 3158-3159, 3160-3161, 3162-3163, 3164-3165, 3166-3167, 3168-3169, 3170-3171, 3172-3173, 3174-3175, 3176-3177, 3178-3179, 3180-3181, 3182-3183, 3184-3185, 3186-3187, 3188-3189, 3190-3191, 3192-3193, 3194-3195, 3196-3197, 3198-3199, 3200-3201, 3202-3203, 3204-3205, 3206-3207, 3208-3209, 3210-3211, 3212-3213, 3214-3215, 3216-3217, 3218-3219, 3220-3221, 3222-3223, 3224-3225, 3226-3227, 3228-3229, 3230-3231, 3232-3233, 3234-3235, 3236-3237, 3238-3239, 3240-3241, 3242-3243, 3244-3245, 3246-3247, 3248-3249, 3250-3251, 3252-3253, 3254-3255, 3256-3257, 3258-3259, 3260-3261, 3262-3263, 3264-3265, 3266-3267, 3268-3269, 3270-3271, 3272-3273, 3274-3275, 3276-3277, 3278-3279, 3280-3281, 3282-3283, 3284-3285, 3286-3287, 3288-3289, 3290-3291, 3292-3293, 3294-3295, 3296-3297, 3298-3299, 3300-3301, 3302-3303, 3304-3305, 3306-3307, 3308-3309, 3310-3311, 3312-3313, 3314-3315, 3316-3317, 3318-3319, 3320-3321, 3322-3323, 3324-3325, 3326-3327, 3328-3329, 3330-3331, 3332-3333, 3334-3335, 3336-3337, 3338-3339, 3340-3341, 3342-3343, 3344-3345, 3346-3347, 3348-3349, 3350-3351, 3352-3353, 3354-3355, 3356-3357, 3358-3359, 3360-3361, 3362-3363, 3364-3365, 3366-3367, 3368-3369, 3370-3371, 3372-3373, 3374-3375, 3376-3377, 3378-3379, 3380-3381, 3382-3383, 3384-3385, 3386-3387, 3388-3389, 3390-3391, 3392-3393, 3394-3395, 3396-3397, 3398-3399, 3400-3401, 3402-3403, 3404-3405, 3406-3407, 3408-3409, 3410-3411, 3412-3413, 3414-3415, 3416-3417, 3418-3419, 3420-3421, 3422-3423, 3424-3425, 3426-3427, 3428-3429, 3430-3431, 3432-3433, 3434-3435, 3436-3437, 3438-3439, 3440-3441, 3442-3443, 3444-3445, 3446-3447, 3448-3449, 3450-3451, 3452-3453, 3454-3455, 3456-3457, 3458-3459, 3460-3461, 3462-3463, 3464-3465, 3466-3467, 3468-3469, 3470-3471, 3472-3473, 3474-3475, 3476-3477, 3478-3479, 3480-3481, 3482-3483, 3484-3485, 3486-3487, 3488-3489, 3490-3491, 3492-3493, 3494-3495, 3496-3497, 3498-3499, 3500-3501, 3502-3503, 3504-3505, 3506-3507, 3508-3509, 3510-3511, 3512-3513, 3514-3515, 3516-3517, 3518-3519, 3520-3521, 3522-3523, 3524-3525, 3526-3527, 3528-3529, 3530-3531, 3532-3533, 3534-3535, 3536-3537, 3538-3539, 3540-3541, 3542-3543, 3544-3545, 3546-3547, 3548-3549, 3550-3551, 3552-3553, 3554-3555, 3556-3557, 3558-3559, 3560-3561, 3562-3563, 3564-3565, 3566-3567, 3568-3569, 3570-3571, 3572-3573, 3574-3575, 3576-3577, 3578-3579, 3580-3581, 3582-3583, 3584-3585, 3586-3587, 3588-3589, 3590-3591, 3592-3593, 3594-3595, 3596-3597, 3598-3599, 3600-3601, 3602-3603, 3604-3605, 3606-3607, 3608-3609, 3610-3611, 3612-3613, 3614-3615, 3616-3617, 3618-3619, 3620-3621, 3622-3623, 3624-3625, 3626-3627, 3628-3629, 3630-3631, 3632-3633, 3634-3635, 3636-3637, 3638-3639, 3640-3641, 3642-3643, 3644-3645, 3646-3647, 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