**Easter Vigil**

“Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.” *John 20:3-4*

**AS WE GATHER**

This evening we gather to participate in an ancient rite of the Church, the Vigil of Easter. Easter Vigil is the first official celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. It is held to introduce our wait from the evening of Holy Saturday to the sunrise of Easter Day for the Lord’s resurrection from His tomb.

The readings for Easter Vigil help us meditate on the wonderful works of God for His people since the beginning of time. As we remember those of the past, so we anticipate it this night in the Son’s return to life.

**+ SERVICE OF LIGHT +**

**INVOCATION and OPENING SENTENCES**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord, on this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, we gather here in vigil and prayer. This is the Passover of the Lord in which, by hearing His Word and celebrating His Sacrament, we share in His victory over death.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Pastor: 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 prepared to share in the Feast of Light that 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.

**People: Amen.**

**EASTER PROCLAMATION**

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

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: 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 we remember that 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 we remember that all who believe in Christ are delivered from bondage to sin and are restored to life.

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.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF READINGS +**

Pastor: 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

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

(*Time of silence for reflection*)

Pastor: Almighty God, through Your Word and Spirit You most wonderfully created all things, and through the Word made flesh You brought new life to fallen humanity. Grant that in Your mercy we may be conformed to the image of Him who shares fully in our humanity, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

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

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

(*Time of silence for reflection*)

Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

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

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

(*Time of silence for reflection*)

Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

**THE FIERY FURNACE** Daniel 3:1-30

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

(*Time of silence for reflection*)

Pastor: O God, You 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.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF PRAYER +**

**LITANY OF THE RESURRECTION**

Pastor: O Lord,

**People: have mercy.**

Pastor: O Christ,

**People: have mercy.**

Pastor: O Lord,

**People: have mercy.**

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

**People: hear us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Who was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification,

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Who appeared to Mary Magdalene and was worshiped by her,

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Who revealed Yourself to the two disciples on the Emmaus road and made Yourself known to them in Scriptures and in the breaking of the bread.

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: 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,

**People: have mercy on us.**

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

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: By Your glorious resurrection from the dead,

**People: good Lord, deliver us.**

Pastor: By Your victory over sin and death,

**People: good Lord, deliver us.**

Pastor: By the majesty of Your risen body,

**People: good Lord, deliver us.**

Pastor: We poor sinners implore You

**People: to hear us, Lord Jesus.**

Pastor: That we may daily die and rise with You in our Baptism and walk in the freedom of Your forgiveness,

**People: grant us, good Lord.**

Pastor: That we may set our minds on things above and not on earthy things, serving others as we have been served by You,

**People: grant us, good Lord.**

Pastor: That we may dwell with You forever in the new creation as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, together with all the saints,

**People: grant us, good Lord.**

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**People: have mercy on us.**

Pastor: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**People: grant us Your peace.**

Pastor: O Lord,

**People: have mercy.**

Pastor: O Christ,

**People: have mercy.**

Pastor: O Lord,

**People: have mercy. Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**EASTER ACCLAMATION**

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

**HYMN OF PRAISE** *“This Is the Feast”* (*LSB* pg. 155)

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** John 20:1-18

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However, if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing.*

**COMMUNION LITURGY** (*LSB*, pg. 160-163)

**DISTRIBUTION**

*“At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”* (*LSB* 633)

**PRAYER and BLESSING**

Pastor: 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 enemy. 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 forever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**BENEDICTION**

**HYMN** *“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing”* (*LSB* 475)

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Easter Morning’s Services are at 8 and 10:30.

**Easter Morning**

**8:00 a.m. Easter Divine Service**

9:15 Carry-In Breakfast

**10:30 a.m. Easter Divine Service**

11:45 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt

**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH,**

Rev. Curt Hoover, Rev. Alebachew Teshome,

Rev. Craig Fiebiger, Rev. Doug DeWitt

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**All are welcome …**

**… Christ is honored.**