

GRACE LUTHERAN

Easter Vigil



**EASTER VIGIL
SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2026
6:30 PM**

EASTER VIGIL LITURGY

Saturday, April 4, 2026

6:30 PM

SERVICE OF LIGHT

*INVOCATION AND PASCHAL LITANY

(Begin in Narthex - people face the entrance to the sanctuary.)

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: 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, we share in His victory over death.

Leader: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. *(minister traces cross)*

People: **The beginning and the end.**

Leader: He is the Alpha and the Omega. *(minister traces Greek letters)*

People: **Time and eternity are His, as are the glory and dominion, both now and forever.**

Leader: By His wounds we have healing now and forever. *(minister traces 5 wax nails)*

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

Leader: 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 the 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, who is Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

(Christ Candle is carried into the sanctuary.)

Leader: The Light of Christ!

People: **Thanks be to God.**

(The procession proceeds down the aisle.)

Leader: The Light of Christ!
People: **Thanks be to God.**

(The Christ Candle arrives at the front.)

Leader: The Light of Christ!
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Leader: Rejoice now, all you heavenly 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 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.

***SALUTATION AND PROPER PREFACE**

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Leader: 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.
People: **This is the night when You brought our forefathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt and led them through the Red Sea on dry ground.**

Leader: This is the night when all who believe in Christ are delivered from bondage to sin and are restored to life and immortality.
People: **This is the night when Christ, the Life, arose from the dead.**

Leader: 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.

People: How holy is this night when all wickedness is put to flight and sin is washed away.

Leader: How holy is this night when innocence is restored to the fallen and joy is given to those downcast.

People: 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.

Leader: 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 & THE WORD

Leader: 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

John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

A moment of silence for meditation and reflection on God's Word.

Leader: Let us pray. Almighty God, You wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In Your mercy, let us share the divine life of Him who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ Your Son, our Lord.

People. Amen.

HYMN "God, Whose Almighty Word"



1 God, whose al - might - y word Cha - os and
2 Lord, who once came to bring, On Your re -
3 Spir - it of truth and love, Life - giv - ing,
△ 4 Ho - ly and bless - ed Three, Glo - ri - ous



dark - ness heard And took their flight: Hear us, we
deem - ing wing, Heal - ing and sight, Health to the
ho - ly dove, Speed forth Your flight; Move on the
Trin - i - ty, Wis - dom, love, might! Bound - less as



hum - bly pray, And where the Gos - pel day
sick in mind, Sight to the in - ly blind:
wa - ter's face, Bear - ing the lamp of grace,
o - cean's tide, Roll - ing in full - est pride,



Sheds not its glo - rious ray, Let there be light!
Oh, now to hu - man-kind Let there be light!
And in earth's dark - est place Let there be light!
Through the earth, far and wide, Let there be light!

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE THROUGH THE RED SEA *Exodus 14:10-22, 14:30-15:6*

¹⁰When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹They said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?" ¹²Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us

alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." ¹³ And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent." ¹⁵ The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷ And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen." ¹⁹ Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, ²⁰ coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided: ²² And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left... ³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses. ¹ Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying,

Refrain

I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider He has thrown in - to the sea.

² The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. ³ The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name. ⁴ "Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea. ⁵ The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone. ⁶ Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

HYMN

“Rejoice, O Pilgrim Throng”
(vv. 1, 2, 4, 6 & 7)

Hymn 813



1 Re - joice, O pil - grim throng! Re - joice, give
 2 With voice as full and strong As o - cean's
 4 Yet on and on - ward still, With hymn and
 6 At last the march shall end; The wea - ried
 Δ 7 Praise Him who reigns on high, The Lord whom



thanks, and sing; Your fes - tal ban - ner
 surg - ing praise, Send forth the stur - dy
 chant and song, Through gate and porch and
 ones shall rest; The pil - grims find their
 we a - dore: The Fa - ther, Son, and



wave on high, The cross of Christ your king.
 hymns of old, The psalms of an - cient days.
 col - umned aisle The hal - lowed path - ways throng.
 home at last, Je - ru - sa - lem the blest.
 Ho - ly Ghost, One God for - ev - er - more.

Refrain



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!

DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN

Daniel 6:1-27 (CSB)

¹Darius decided to appoint 120 satraps over the kingdom, stationed throughout the realm, ²and over them three administrators, including Daniel. These satraps would be accountable to them so that the king would not be defrauded. ³Daniel distinguished himself above the administrators and satraps because he had an extraordinary spirit, so the king planned to set him over the whole realm. ⁴The administrators and satraps, therefore, kept trying to find a charge against Daniel regarding the kingdom. But they could find no charge or corruption, for he was trustworthy, and no negligence or corruption was found in him. ⁵Then these men said, “We will never find any charge against this Daniel unless we find something against him concerning the law of his God.” ⁶So the administrators and satraps went together to the king and said to him, “May King Darius live forever. ⁷All the

administrators of the kingdom—the prefects, satraps, advisers, and governors—have agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an edict that, for thirty days, anyone who petitions any god or man except you, the king, will be thrown into the lions’ den.⁸ Therefore, Your Majesty, establish the edict and sign the document so that, as a law of the Medes and Persians, it is irrevocable and cannot be changed.”⁹ So King Darius signed the written edict.¹⁰ When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house. The windows in its upstairs room opened toward Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

¹¹Then these men went as a group and found Daniel petitioning and imploring his God.¹² So they approached the king and asked about his edict: “Didn’t you sign an edict that for thirty days any person who petitions any god or man except you, the king, will be thrown into the lions’ den?” The king answered, “As a law of the Medes and Persians, the order stands and is irrevocable.”¹³ Then they replied to the king, “Daniel, one of the Judean exiles, has ignored you, the king, and the edict you signed, for he prays three times a day.”

¹⁴As soon as the king heard this, he was very displeased; he set his mind on rescuing Daniel and made every effort until sundown to deliver him.¹⁵ Then these men went together to the king and said to him, “You know, Your Majesty, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no edict or ordinance the king establishes can be changed.”¹⁶ So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you continually serve, rescue you!”¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing in regard to Daniel could be changed.¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting. No diversions were brought to him, and he could not sleep.¹⁹ At the first light of dawn the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den.²⁰ When he reached the den, he cried out in anguish to Daniel. “Daniel, servant of the living God,” the king said, “has your God, whom you continually serve, been able to rescue you from the lions?”²¹ Then Daniel spoke with the king: “May the king live forever.²² My God sent his angel and shut the lions’ mouths; and they haven’t harmed me, for I was found innocent before him. And also before you, Your Majesty, I have not done harm.”²³ The king was overjoyed and gave orders to take Daniel out of the den. When Daniel was brought up from the den, he was found to be unharmed, for he trusted in his God.²⁴ The king then gave the command, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel, were brought and thrown into the lions’ den—they, their children, and their wives. They had not reached the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to those of every people, nation, and language who live on the whole earth: “May your

prosperity abound. ²⁶ I issue a decree that in all my royal dominion, people must tremble in fear before the God of Daniel: For he is the living God, and he endures forever; his kingdom will never be destroyed, and his dominion has no end. ²⁷ He rescues and delivers; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth, for he has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God.**

A moment of silence for meditation and reflection on God’s Word.

Leader: Let us pray. O God, Your Son protected faithful Daniel in the lions’ den. 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.**

HYMN

“All You Works of God, Bless the Lord”

Hymn 930



1 All you works of God, bless the Lord!
 2 Sing, you sun and you moon a - bove,
 3 Frost of win - ter with song so cold,
 4 Hills and moun - tains, now sing His worth,



All you an - gels, now bless the Lord;
 Stars of heav - en, now sing His love;
 Dews of sum - mer, your song un - fold;
 All you green things that grow on earth;



Come, you heav - ens and pow’rs that be,
 Dew and show - ers, you winds that blow,
 Light and dark - ness, you day and night,
 Seas and riv - ers, you springs and wells,

Hymn continues on next page →

Praise the Lord and His maj - es - ty:
 Heat and fire, you ice and snow:
 Clouds of thun - der, you light - nings bright:
 Beasts and cat - tle, you birds and whales:

Refrain

Raise your voic - es high, praise and mag - ni - fy,

All you works of God, bless the Lord!

Raise your voic - es high, praise and mag - ni - fy,

All you works of God, bless the Lord!

- 5 Come, humanity, sing along,
 Sing, you people of God, a song;
 Priests and servants, your Lord now bless,
 Join, you spirits and souls at rest: Refrain

***RESURRECTION MORNING**

Mark 16:1-8

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the sixteenth chapter.

People: **Glory to You O Lord.**

¹When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they could go and anoint him. ²Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb at sunrise. ³They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone from the entrance to the tomb for us?" ⁴Looking up, they noticed that the stone—which was very large—had been rolled away. ⁵When they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side; they were alarmed. ⁶"Don't

be alarmed," he told them. "You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they put him.⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee; you will see him there just as he told you.'⁸ They went out and ran from the tomb, because trembling and astonishment overwhelmed them. And they said nothing to anyone, since they were afraid.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: **Praise to You O Christ!**

A moment of silence for meditation and reflection on God's Word.

(The lights in the church are turned on and the altar candles are lit from the Christ Candle while the church bells are rung and the congregation begins to sing.)

"The Day of Resurrection" (vv. 1-4)

Hymn 478



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,
 Δ 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!

***EASTER ACCLAMATION**

Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

(Please be seated)

MEDITATION

SERVICE OF BAPTISMAL REMEMBRANCE

Leader: On this holiest of nights, the whole Church of our Lord Jesus Christ recalls His death and burial, rejoicing with great joy in the Gospel of His glorious and mighty resurrection from the dead. The apostle Paul says:

Lector: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. *(Romans 6:3-11)*

Leader: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, according to Your strict judgment You condemned the unbelieving world through the flood, yet according to Your great mercy You preserved believing Noah and his family, eight souls in all. You drowned hard-hearted Pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea, yet led Your people Israel through the water on dry ground, foreshadowing this washing of Your Holy Baptism. Through the Baptism in the Jordan of Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, You sanctified and instituted all waters to be a blessed flood and a lavish washing away of sin.

We pray that You would behold us all according to Your boundless mercy and bless us with true faith by the Holy Spirit, that through this saving flood all sin in us, which has been inherited from Adam and

which we ourselves have committed since, would be drowned and die. Grant that we be kept safe and secure in the holy ark of the Christian Church, being separated from the multitude of unbelievers and serving Your name at all times with a fervent spirit and a joyful hope, so that, with all believers in Your promise, we would be declared worthy of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

(Please stand)

Leader: Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?

People: **Yes, I renounce him.**

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

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

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son?

People: **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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: **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.**

Leader: The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you the new birth through water and of the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with His grace to life + everlasting.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Peace be with you.

People: **Amen.**

SERVICE OF PRAYER

(Please kneel)

LITANY OF THE RESURRECTION

Leader: O Lord,

People: have mercy.

Leader: O Christ,

People: have mercy.

Leader: O Lord,

People: have mercy.

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

People: hear us.

Leader: Paschal Lamb, who has taken away the sin of the world,

People: have mercy on us.

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

People: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Who destroyed death by dying, and by raising to life again brought life and immortality to light,

People: have mercy on us.

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

People: have mercy on us.

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

People: have mercy on us.

Leader: By Your glorious resurrection from the dead,

People: good Lord, deliver us.

Leader: By Your victory over sin and death,

People: good Lord, deliver us.

Leader: By the majesty of Your risen body,

People: good Lord, deliver us.

Leader: We poor sinners implore You,

People: to hear us, Lord Jesus.

Leader: 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.

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

People: grant us good Lord.

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

People: grant us good Lord.

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

People: have mercy on us.

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

People: have mercy on us.

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

People: grant us Your peace.

(Please stand)

***CONCLUDING PRAYER**

Leader: 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 enemy. Grant that all our sin may be drowned through daily repentance, and that day by day we may rise to live before You in righteousness and purity forever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

***BENEDICAMUS**

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

***BENEDICTION**

Leader: The almighty and merciful Lord, The Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

People: Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

“He Is Arisen! Glorious Word”

Hymn 488

He is a - ris - en! Glo - rious Word! Now rec - on - ciled
is God, my Lord; The gates of heav'n are o - pen.
My Je - sus did tri - um - phant die, And Sa - tan's ar -
rows bro - ken lie, De - stroyed hell's fierc - est weap - on.
O hear what cheer! Christ vic - to - rious, Ris - ing glo - rious,
Life is giv - ing. He was dead but now is liv - ing!

PARTICIPANTS

Preacher
Liturgists
Organist
Elder on Duty
Greeters
Ushers

Vicar Stephen Moore
The Rev. Charles T. Reich, The Rev. Steven M. Braun
Thomas Schulteis
Jennifer Smith
Peggy Jo Griffin, Sharon Wilson
Chuck & Carol Smith