

Grace Episcopal Church St. Helena



Holy Week at Home
Triduum: The Great Three Days
April 9-12, 2020



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Sources:

The Book of Common Prayer, Church Publishing, 1979.

The Book of Occasional Services, Church Publishing, 2018

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Easter Vigil Liturgy provided by The Rev. Josephine Robertson, All Saints Episcopal Church, Bellevue, WA and the Rev. Joseph Peters-Mathews, St. Hilda St. Patrick, Edmonds, WA, www.barefoottheology.com

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Dear Ones,

Holy Week, 2020

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter--these are the greatest celebrations of the Christian faith. Traditionally the celebration that began Maundy Thursday evening and concluded at sunrise on Easter morning was considered one service-- there is no dismissal on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday, as we are meant to remain in prayer. The commemoration of what we call the "paschal mystery"--of Christ's loving service, willing suffering, death and resurrection-- is normally held in time-honored rituals and grand celebrations in packed sanctuaries. This year, many around the world will celebrate differently, more quietly, at home. We are still the Church, and we are still at prayer. And the paschal mystery--of life, death, and more life-- is as present to us as ever. God has a great gift for us at this time of global pandemic. Celebrating the Great Three Days at home is one way to unwrap and live into that spiritual gift as you join in prayer with your siblings from Grace and with Christians around the world.

This booklet is a complete resource for celebrating the Great Three Days (*Triduum* in Latin) at home. It contains readings, reflections, and suggestions for prayers and songs, as well as adaptations for families with children and for people living or praying alone. It may be paired with the short film series *Triduum: The Great Three Days* by Grace member and filmmaker Brian Capener, available on Grace's website. If you play the films, there are sections of the services in this booklet you may want to skip, as they are contained in the films--these are noted. If you want to find even more scripture readings and prayers than are included in this booklet, see the *Book of Common Prayer* liturgies beginning on page 274. Additional resources, including background on each of these holy days can be found on Grace's website under the Holy Week @ Home tab.

There is no one "right" way to pray these prayers and engage in these rituals-- this is a "choose your own Holy Week adventure!" Take what speaks to you, what works for you and yours, and leave the rest. Directions and background for each celebration are in the "rubrics" in italics. Your prayer time will benefit from a little preparation: each day has items you may prepare ahead of time; you could read through the service to see what you would like to do and how you might share leadership. Each part of the service is either meant to be read by a single person, "One," or by "All." The "One" parts may be shared among those present; a single leader is not required. Don't be afraid to let children read and lead! If you don't have time to prepare, grabbing this booklet, cuing up the videos if you wish, and finding what you need along the way is fine!

We pray in many places these Great Three Days, but we pray as one... we are many parts, but one body. I invite you to keep these holy days in whatever way seems right to you. By walking with Jesus and his disciples through his passion, death and resurrection, may we discover anew the way of the cross, the way of love, which is the way of life that can never be taken away. I can't wait to hear about your Holy Week @ Home!

In the deep peace of the Risen One, Amy+
The Rev. Amy Denney Zuniga, Rector, Grace Episcopal Church, St. Helena

Maundy Thursday

The Three Days Begin in Love, Service, And Prayer

Maundy Thursday Agapé Meal

Concerning the Service

This Maundy Thursday service was designed for use in the home, around the dinner table (whatever shape that takes). When Jesus shared his Last Supper with his disciples, it was in the home tradition and setting of the Passover meal. The washing of feet, the sharing of bread and wine, and the new commandment to love one another all happened in a home, in a room where Jesus drew his friends together as host, teacher, friend, and master who was there to serve them all. We can join now with each other on this holy night, as we pray, sing, and hear the Word of God while we eat together, each in our own homes but joined in fellowship. This service weaves together parts of the Maundy Thursday liturgy within the frame of the Agape Meal as outlined in the Book of Occasional Services. It includes washing of feet if desired, in households where there are two or more people. It concludes with the stripping, or making bare, a common or sacred space in the home, as we strip the altar in the sanctuary this night in preparation for Good Friday. The evening ends in silence, and we are invited to “watch and pray” with Jesus the night before his passion and death.

To prepare ahead of time:

- *Dinner. A simple meal in a simple setting, including some form of bread and wine or other staple drink.*
- *Water: This could be hot water in a pitcher, a bowl or basin, and clean towels (soap if desired) for footwashing, a whole bath, or a simple bowl of water. (See directions under Footwashing below for options.)*
- *Space that can be completely cleared—this could be a sacred space you have created in your home, or your dining table. (See direction under Stripping below for options.)*
- *Option: A candle and a bowl or pot it will fit inside.*
- *Laptop, computer, or smart device with Zoom downloaded set near your eating space if you will participate in the Zoom potluck.*

Opening

One Dear Ones, Tonight is a holy night. Tonight we begin our celebration of the Great Three Days when we remember Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. This is one great service, from Maundy Thursday to our celebration of Easter. We join tonight with Christians around the world as we remember the last night our Lord spent with his friends before his passion. We join with our ancestors in the faith and those who will come after us remembering that it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Though we are dispersed, we join together, in spirit and in truth. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

All Therefore let us keep the feast.

The Blessings

At the time appointed, all gather around the table, standing as able. A simple song such as "Ubi Caritas" may be sung.

Ubi Caritas

Ubi caritas et amor

Ubi caritas

Deus ibi est

Ubi Caritas *(translation)*

Where charity and love are

Where charity is

There God is.

After a time of silence, one voice offers each of the following blessings.

Over Wine

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Over Bread

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; and you have fed us on our way with the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. Let us be fed again soon with that bread of life. And as grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Over the Other Foods

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Meal

The meal is now eaten. If several are gathered, they first serve one another, then dine.



The Word and the Prayers

At the end of the meal, the Maundy Thursday: Mandatum video is begun or the following portion of the gospel of John is read.

A reading from the Gospel of John (13:1–17, 31b–35)

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all

things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord — and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

One The Gospel of the Lord.
All Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Tonight is about love, about service, about community. This year we'll be celebrating Maundy Thursday with our families and those closest to us, in the context of our homes. How do we wash the feet of those we interact with every day? Jesus gave the commandment to "love one another as I have loved you" after Judas had gone out to betray him. How do we wash the feet of those who have betrayed us? Of those we struggle to forgive? How do we love like Jesus? Our ability to love others is grounded in our knowledge of and deep connection to our own belovedness in God. There is another invitation to ponder tonight, that might be a special opportunity if you are celebrating alone: Get in touch with your own belovedness. Feel Jesus loving you, washing you,

holding you. It is from, in, and through the place deep within where we know ourselves loved by God, that the Holy Spirit can work in us, giving us the servant love of Jesus. "We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19

Have near at hand a bowl, a pitcher of water and a clean towel.

Pray together the prayer for this night:

**All Holy God, source of all love,
on the night of his betrayal,
Jesus gave us a new commandment,
to love one another as he loves us.
Write this commandment in our hearts,
and give us the will to serve others as he was servant of all,
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.**

The Footwashing

One The Lord Jesus, after he had supped with his disciples and had washed their feet, said to them Do you know what I, your Lord and Master, have done to you? I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done.

All Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.

One I give you a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you.

All Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.

One By this shall the world know that you are my disciples: That you have love for one another.

Here those gathered are invited to take turns washing one another's feet. If alone, you may pour water over and wash your own hands or feet, remembering Jesus' loving care for you. You could even take a bath! As you wash, remember the blessedness and belovedness of the one being washed, and pray a prayer for them, silently or aloud. A foot washing prayer could go something like this: May God bless these feet, the feet of

God's beloved child. God loves you so much! May these feet be cleansed and refreshed, may they walk in peace. May they be the feet of one who proclaims the good news!
A simple hymn, such as Ubi Caritas, can be sung during the footwashing.

Ubi Caritas

Ubi caritas et amor
Ubi caritas
Deus ibi est

Ubi Caritas (*translation*)

Where charity and love are
Where charity is
There God is.

The Stripping and Prayer Watch

Here the following is read from the Gospel of Mark, or the video Maundy Thursday: Watch is begun.

A reading from the Gospel of Mark (14:26-42)

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter said to him, "Even though all become deserters, I will not." Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same. They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

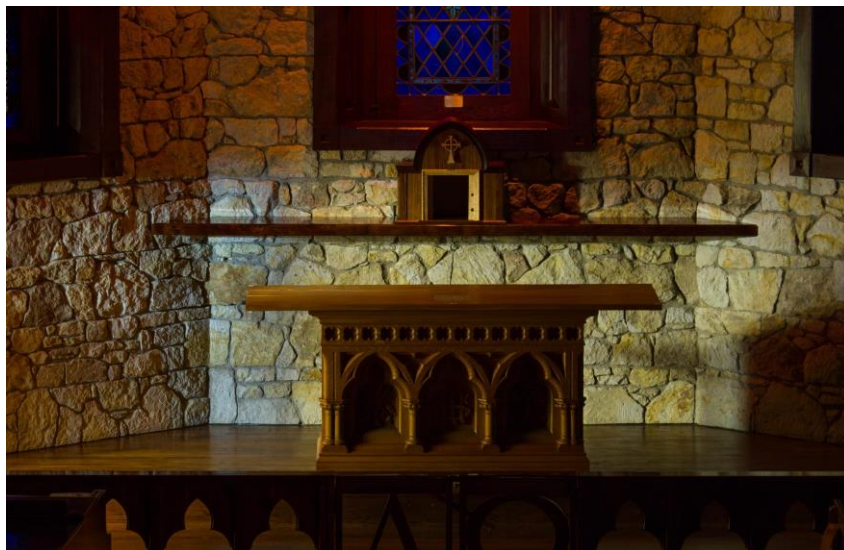
Reflection

Jesus knew the sense of utter desolation, suffering, death and separation that is a basic component of the human experience. Jesus wrestled with suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, and in the end, found surrender: “Not my will but yours be done.” If we are paying attention, we will also struggle. Where is God in all of this? Sometimes silence and emptiness will be the answer we receive. The mystics all write about this—St. John of the Cross calls it the “dark night of the soul.” We are invited to enter into that silence, that emptiness, that darkness this night. We are invited to “watch and pray” in the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus.

Silence is kept for a time. The lights may be dimmed in the room. The song “Stay with Me” is sung several times, or else the words repeated:

Stay with me, remain here with me, watch and pray, watch and pray.

Slowly and reverently, in silence or else while the song is being sung those gathered begin to clear away the dishes and items from the footwashing. The table is completely cleared in this way, wiped down, and left bare. If you have set up a sacred space at home, in the same slow, reverent, and quiet manner clear it off and put away all the items. Crosses or icons may be wrapped in a cloth. Options: Let children help with the stripping. Find holy and beautiful objects in your home and put them away in a closet. Spend some time with the emptiness of the space. Light a candle in a pot, bowl, or jar for the all-night prayer watch. This is a way to “watch and pray” with Jesus. Make sure to put it in a safe location, like a sink or bathtub. This night ends in silence and the service of the Great Three Days continues tomorrow with Good Friday.



Good Friday

His Meaning Was Love

Concerning the Day

Good Friday is often a day of fasting. We are in a time of great fasting—fasting from one another's physical presence, from Eucharist, from many cherished routines and activities. To fast is to abstain from something for a time for a higher good—usually to seek God or a deeper knowledge of God. Whatever fasting means to you in this context, Good Friday is an excellent day for fasting and quiet reflection.

The service usually begins around noon, the hour of Jesus' crucifixion. If a candle in a container was used for the all night prayer watch, it is brought in for this observance.

To prepare ahead of time: A cross: large, simple and rustic if possible, but any cross you have at home will do. You could make a simple, rustic cross by tying together sticks or vines, or nailing together two pieces of wood.

The service begins with a time of silence.

One Blessed be our God.

All **For ever and ever. Amen.**

One Let us pray.

One Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

The Passion story is announced in the following manner

One Today we follow Jesus to the cross and the grave. Let us hear together the story that we might remember God's love for us, especially when we are afraid, isolated, or sick.

Here the passion is read or the video Good Friday is played. As the story of Jesus' passion is long, if you have not watched the video, consider telling it paragraph by paragraph with each person present reading in turn until the whole story is told.

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ According to John (18:1-19:42)

Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas bought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots." And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge

full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

At the end of the reading or viewing of the Passion Gospel, a cross is placed in the empty space created the night before in the Stripping. If one was used, and if it is still burning, the prayer watch candle may be extinguished. Silence is kept for a time.

Reflection

Julian of Norwich, a 14th century mystic who lived through the Black Plague, asked to enter into the experience of Jesus as he bore his Passion—body, heart, mind, and soul, to experience what he experienced. Her prayer was answered. Fifteen years after her visions, she wrote that as she continued to ponder their meaning, she received this answer: *'Would you know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well, love was his meaning. Who showed it to you? Love. What did he show you? Love. Why did he show it? For love. Keep yourself therein and you shall know and understand more in the same. But you shall never know nor understand any other thing, forever.'* Christ did not have to die for our sins because God was angry or somehow demanded payment or justice. Jesus joined us in our humanity to the point of taking on the separation, sin, suffering, and

death that are part of the human experience—and in doing so, he transformed them. This is Emmanuel, “God-with-us.” Into our emptiness, into our desolation, into our struggle, God places the cross. And the cross is now no longer a symbol of torture, shame and death, but a symbol of God’s incompressible, inexhaustible, unending love for each and every one of us. His meaning was love.

The Solemn Prayers

One Dear members of God’s family: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life. We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

One United with Christians around the globe on this Good Friday, let us pray for the church, the earth, our troubled world, and all in need, responding to each petition with the words Your mercy is great.

A brief silence.

One Blessed are you, holy God, for the church. Gather all the baptized around your presence in the Word. Strengthen the body of your people even when we cannot assemble for worship. Grant Bishop Megan and all our clergy faithfulness and creativity for their ministry in this time, and accompany those preparing for baptism, especially Isaiah and Noah.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, bountiful God, for this good earth and for the flowering of springtime. Save dry lands from destructive droughts. Protect the waters from pollution. Allow in this time the planting of fields for food. Make us into care-givers of your plants and animals.

A brief silence.

Hear us, bountiful God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, sovereign God, for our nation. Inspire all people to live in peace and concord. Grant wisdom and courage to heads of state and to legislators as they face the coronavirus. Lead our elected officials to champion the cause of the needy.

A brief silence.

Hear us, sovereign God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, faithful God, for you accompany suffering humanity with love. Abide wherever the coronavirus has struck. Visit all who mourn their dead; all who have contracted the virus; those who are quarantined or stranded away from home; those who have lost their employment; those who fear the present and the future. Especially we pray for those we name before you now...

A brief silence.

Hear us, faithful God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, God our healer, for you give us peace and strength for the tasks ahead. Support physicians, nurses, and home health aides; medical researchers; members of departments of health, and the World Health Organization. Especially we pray for those we name before you now...

A brief silence.

Hear us, faithful God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, gracious God, for you care for the needy. We beg you to feed the hungry, protect the refugee, embrace the distressed, house the homeless, nurse the sick, and comfort the dying. Especially we pray for those we name before you now...

A brief silence.

Hear us, gracious God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, loving God, that your Son gave himself for us, your wayward children. Preserve our lives, comfort us in our anxiety, and receive now the petitions of our hearts.

A longer period of silence.

Hear us, loving God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Blessed are you, eternal God, for all who have died in the faith, and those whom we name before you here.

A brief silence.

At the end, bring us with them into your everlasting glory.

Hear us, eternal God. **Your mercy is great.**

One Receive, merciful God, our prayers, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died and rose that we might live with you, now and forever. **Amen.**

One O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being

made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

All may say together the anthem:

One We glory in your cross, O Lord,

All and praise and glorify your holy resurrection; for by virtue of your cross joy has come to the whole world.

One May God be merciful to us and bless us, show us the light of his countenance, and come to us.

***All* Let your ways be known upon earth, your saving health among all nations.**

One Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

***All* We glory in your cross, O Lord, and praise and glorify your holy resurrection; for by virtue of your cross joy has come to the whole world.**

A simple song, such as "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord," may be sung.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

O sometimes it causes me to tremble! tremble! tremble!

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nail'd him to the cross?

Were you there when they nail'd him to the cross?

O sometimes it causes me to tremble! tremble! tremble!

Were you there when they nail'd him to the cross?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

O sometimes it causes me to tremble! tremble! tremble!

Were you there when they pierced him in the side?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

O sometimes it causes me to tremble! tremble! tremble!

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Finally, we pray the Lord's Prayer.

This observance ends in silence; the service of the Great Three Days continues tomorrow with the observance of Holy Saturday and the Great Vigil of Easter.



Holy Saturday: The Great Vigil of Easter “This is the Night”

Holy Saturday

Concerning the Day

Holy Saturday, the day when the creeds say Jesus “descended to the dead,” is a day both of rest and of preparation. It is a day of rest, as Jesus’ body rested in the tomb the day between his death and resurrection. Ancient tradition also describes this day as the “harrowing of hell,” when Jesus descended into the underworld and freed all the souls trapped there before his salvific work on the cross was accomplished. Therefore it is also a day of great activity! Just as Christ shared the first-fruits of salvation with those who had gone before him on this day, so too we make ready for the first celebration of the resurrection in the Great Vigil of Easter and our celebrations on Easter Day. This is a day of “now and not yet,” a time of waiting not unlike the one in which we find ourselves. Many of us have experienced loss or abrupt endings and will not see a resolution or new life for months. Holy Saturday is the day where we can be with Jesus’ disciples as they mourned his death not knowing the new life that would come unexpectedly. This brief Holy Saturday observance marks the day. You might choose to conclude it by wrapping the cross in a cloth to remember Joseph of Arimathea.

To prepare ahead of time: Optional: A cloth in which to wrap the cross you placed in your sacred space the day before.

One O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Read Psalm 31 together.

- 1 In you O Lord, have I taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame;*
deliver me in your righteousness.**
- 2 Incline your ear to me*
make haste to deliver me.**
- 3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
for you are my crag and my stronghold;*
for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.**
- 4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me,*
for you are my tower of strength.**
- 5 Into your hands I commend my spirit, *
for you have redeemed me,
O Lord, O God of truth.**

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (27:57-66)

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead,’ and the last deception would be worse than the first.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard^[a] of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.” So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

One: The Gospel of the Lord

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Pray the Lord’s Prayer. Remove the cross and anything else from your sacred space so you may begin to prepare it for Easter.



Martha and Mary from the Grace Church Sacristy.

The Great Vigil of Easter

Concerning the Service

This is the night when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave. This Vigil for the Night Before Easter was designed for praying at home — either as an individual or a gathering of friends and family. Individuals or families wishing to share the vigil might do so electronically. Someone keeping this Vigil alone might choose to journal about the conversation questions below--and remember that you keep the feast with all of the saints, past, present, and yet to come! Comfortable seating is encouraged for this service... gather in the living room, curl up on the couch, or sit around the campfire to tell the stories of the salvation of God. Ideally the service begins after sunset, after dinner and before dessert.

To prepare ahead of time:

- *Fire or light: This could be a fire pit or fireplace, candle or electric votive, flashlight, or other small light or lamp. If you light a larger fire, have a candle, preferably a large, new, white candle (but any will do!) handy as well.*
- *A bowl that is beautiful to you, filled with water.*
- *Bells, percussion, or other noisemakers if desired.*
- *Sparkling beverage, desert, music, or whatever makes for a good party for you!*



Lighting an Easter Light

If possible, the home should be in darkness.

One Beloved in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to linger in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord in which, by virtue of our baptism into his death, into the hope of his resurrection, we celebrate the New Life we have received by his mercy, awaiting the time when we may gather again around his holy table.

Someone responsible lights the fire, candle, or light. If a fire is lighted, a candle is also lit from the new fire.

One This is the light of Christ!

All **Thanks be to God!**

Here the video Easter Vigil: Darkness may be played. If the video is not viewed, those present take turns reading or chanting portions of the Exsultet.

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty King!

Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor,
for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King!

Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, and let your holy courts, in radiant light,
resound with the praises of your people!

One The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

One Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night, when you brought our ancestors, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

All Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this light in your honor. May Christ, the light of the world, bring us healing. May Christ, your light in us, drive away darkness and fear. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find our faith ever burning, our love of mercy and justice ever afire – he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

This candle can be burned for the remainder of the Great Fifty Days whenever a family gathers to eat or someone sits for quiet prayer.

Hearing Salvation's History

Reflection

This is the night... ancient Christians gathered to spend the night before Easter in vigil and prayer. They sang songs, told stories, and prayed as they watched and waited for the resurrection, which was proclaimed at dawn with the rising of the sun. People have gathered around fire as long as there have been people. Fire is the source of our safety, our light, our warmth, health... even in its modern form, electricity. People have been telling stories as long as there have been people... stories make us who we are. The stories we tell tonight are the stories of God's deliverance, of God's salvation... when things have been hopeless, time and again, God has surprised us with new life. It's a big story, and it is our story. Tonight the invitation is to find ourselves in that great story of God's people. Where has God been present in your lives, how has God delivered you?

The following stories may be read aloud. After each story, those who have memories of the stories are invited to share those memories — a funny time they heard this story, who they associate with it, where they learned it most truly, etc. This is a night for telling stories of good news. After the story and conversation, a prayer and/or song may be offered. Suggestions follow each story. Lights should be kept dim for these stories — just enough light for a reader.

Story 1: The story of Creation —Genesis 1:1--2:2

Options: Read the creation story from a Children's Bible, the Message translation, a story or a poem, or art about creation. Or skip the reading and have the conversation!

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, “Be

fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s People.
All Thanks be to God.

Conversation

Stories about the Creation story — and stories about creation, its beauty, and God’s work — may be shared. When or where have you known God in creation most fully?

Song/Prayer Response

A simple song, such as “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” may be sung.

He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands
He's got the whole world in His hands

He's got the little tiny baby ...
He's got you and my sister ...
He's got you and me brother ...
He's got everybody here ...
He's got the whole world ...

This prayer, or an extemporaneous prayer rising out of the shared conversation may be offered.

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Story 2: The Flood — Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:8-18; 9:8-13

Options: Read the flood story from a Children’s Bible, the Message translation, a story or a poem or view art about the Flood. Or skip the reading and have the conversation!

Then the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.” And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him.

In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah’s wife and the three wives of his sons entered the ark, they and every wild animal of every kind,

and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature. They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.

The flood continued forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

In the six hundred first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying. In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

Then God said to Noah, “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

All Thanks be to God.

Conversation

Stories about torrential downpours, rainbows, and fun and scary times with water may be shared. When in your life have you had to start over completely? What does the promise of the rainbow mean to you?

Song/Prayer Response

A simple song, such as "De Colores" may be sung.

De colores,
De colores se visten los campos en la primavera.
De colores,
De colores son los pajaritos que vienen de afuera.
De colores,
De colores es el arco iris que vemos lucir.
Why por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores
Me gustan a mi.

This prayer, or an extemporaneous prayer rising out of the shared conversation may be offered.

Almighty God, you have placed in the skies the sign of your covenant with all living things: Grant that we, who are saved through water and the Spirit, may worthily offer to you our sacrifice of thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Story 3: Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea — Exodus 14:10--15:1

Options: Read the Exodus story from a Children's Bible, the Message translation, a story or a poem about the Exodus. Act it out! Or skip the reading and have the conversation!

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord

will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers.” The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.” So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses. Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord: “I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s People.
All Thanks be to God.

Conversation

Stories about getting away safe, God delivering the people, or unexpected blessings may be shared. When has God rescued you from between a rock and a hard place? When in your life has God made a way where there seemed to be no way?

Song/Prayer Response *A simple song, such as “Go Down Moses” may be sung.*

When Israel was in Egypt’s land, let my people go.
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go.

Refrain: Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt’s land;
Tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.

The Lord told Moses what to do, let my people go.
To lead the children of Israel through, let my people go.
Refrain

They journeyed on at his command, let my people go.
And came at length to Canaan’s land, let my people go.
Refrain

Oh let us all from bondage flee, let my people go.
And let us all in Christ be free, let my people go.
Refrain

This prayer, or an extemporaneous prayer rising out of the shared conversation may be offered.

O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Remembering Baptism and Telling Its Story

One Before we hear the Good News of our Savior's resurrection, let us pray for those who are being baptized this night, those who are awaiting baptism, especially Isaiah, Noah, and Theodore, and remember our own baptism through Water and the Spirit.

After some silence

Story 4: Baptized into Christ's Death and Resurrection — Romans 6.3-11

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But 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. 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.

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people
All Thanks be to God.

Conversation

Stories about baptism may be shared: stories of one's own, or by witnesses of others. This would be a good night to be in touch with parents, grandparents, and godparents and ask their memories of our baptisms. What could it mean that in our baptism, we have died and been raised with Christ? That this new life that nothing can ever take away... is ours? How are we to live then, as baptized people, as people of the resurrection, as people of the light, as people of love?

One Having remembered those who will be baptized, and hearing how we have been joined to Christ in baptism, let us reaffirm our baptismal promises.

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.
With God's help, I will continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the
breaking of bread, and in the prayers.
With God's help, I will persevere in resisting evil, and whenever I fall into sin,
return to the Lord.
With God's help, I will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in
Christ. With God's help, I will seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving my
neighbor as myself.
With God's help, I will strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the
dignity of every human being.**

One O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Proclaiming Christ's Resurrection

All the lights are turned on and bells rung and noisemakers employed! Everyone present takes a turn leading the following exchange.

One Alleluia! Christ is risen!
All The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

After everyone has proclaimed the resurrection, this prayer may be offered:

All O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection: Stir up in your Church that Spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

One Let's hear one more story: the story of an empty tomb.

Here the video Easter Vigil: Dawn is played or the following Easter Gospel read.

Story 5: Jesus' Resurrection — John 20:1–18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' " Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.
All **Thanks be to God.**

Reflection

Resurrection sneaks in. It's surprising. It's often in retrospect that God's deliverance, God's mighty acts are clear—at the time it's happening, it's harder to recognize. Resurrection was the last thing Jesus' friends expected. But it is what God always does—all we have to do to see that is to look at nature—God is in the life out of death business. Our bones, our bodies, our hearts and our spirits are a part of that fabric of the universe—that pattern of life, death, and more life. As we ignite a spark or flip a switch or watch the sunrise, we remember that this night. *Anamnesis* is a Greek work that means literally to re-member—to put back together again in bodily form. And *anamnesis*—remembering—is a central act of the Eucharist. Remembering who we are and who God is, and giving thanks for that, celebrating that, we are making Eucharist in a very real way. As you re-member resurrection, also remember and give thanks for all the ways we are being fed right now, and all the ways that we are being the body of Christ for one another and God's world. And give thanks—that is how we keep the feast. Alleluia, Alleluia!

The following prayer may be offered:

O God of love, you are the true sun of the world, evermore risen and never going down: We pray you shine in our hearts and drive away the darkness of sin and the mist of error. We pray that we may, this day and all our lives long, walk without stumbling in the way you have prepared for us, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in glory everlasting. Amen.

Sharing the Easter Feast

One We are many parts
All **But one Body.**

One Alleluia! Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us!
All **Therefore let us keep the feast! Alleluia!**

Stories of Easters past may be shared as preparations for sharing Easter treats take place. An in-home party commences. Dancing, excited music, and playlists full of alleluias are encouraged.

A Word on the Continuing Celebration

Easter will be kept at home this year—do what feels right to make it special. The disciples discovered the empty tomb at sunrise—why not take a sunrise walk or eat a sunrise breakfast?

Your home sacred space can be made resplendent with white cloth and flowers, and all the beautiful elements removed at the Maundy Thursday Stripping restored.

If a cloth was used to wrap the cross on Holy Saturday, it might be found empty, folded in a place by itself, echoing the Easter gospel of the empty tomb.

The candle lit at the Easter Vigil can have a prominent place all through the Great Fifty Days of Easter.

In addition to taking part in online services, you can introduce an additional faith element to family traditions by using the following Blessings Over Food at Easter from the Book of Occasional Services.

Blessings Over Food at Easter

These blessings are appropriate for use by households at the principal meal on Easter Day.

Over Wine

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of the fruit of the vine: Grant that we who share this wine, which gladdens our hearts, may share for ever the new life of the true Vine, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Over Bread

Blessed are you, O Lord our God; you bring forth bread from the earth and make the risen Lord to be for us the Bread of life: Grant that we who daily seek the bread which sustains our bodies may also hunger for the food of everlasting life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Over Lamb

Stir up our memory, O Lord, as we eat this Easter lamb that, remembering Israel of old, who in obedience to your command ate the Paschal lamb and was delivered from the bondage of slavery, we, your new Israel, may rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the true Lamb who has delivered us from the bondage of sin and death, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Over Eggs

O Lord our God, in celebration of the Paschal feast we have prepared these eggs from your creation: Grant that they may be to us a sign of the new life and immortality promised to those who follow your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Over Other Foods

Blessed are you, O Lord our God; you have given us the risen Savior to be the Shepherd of your people: Lead us, by him, to springs of living waters, and feed us with the food that endures to eternal life; where with you, O Father, and with the Holy Spirit, he lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*Alleluia! Christ is risen! **The Lord is risen indeed!** Alleluia!*

Soon we will keep his feast together, beloved.

Don't forget to send pictures or short videos of your family celebration of the Great Three Days to michelle@grace-episcopal.org so we can share our celebration with one another!

