

## EASTER LITURGY

*We were to meet on Holy Saturday/Easter Eve to share in what is usually known as the Easter Liturgy. This is an ancient part of the Church's worship. The service can be done on the Saturday evening but is often done as a sunrise service on Easter Day. It is important to remember that in the Jewish calendar and Christian Liturgy, the new day begins at sunset. During our worship, we both anticipate and begin to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus. However, it is important to try and connect with the emotions of those few people waiting in Jerusalem for the Sabbath to end and for them to have the opportunity of completing the burial ceremony of the body of Jesus. These people, among others, would have included a rather chastened Peter and John brother of James, as well as Mary the Mother of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. Therefore, our initial connections are still with the cross and no doubt the wonderings of our tiny group, who are searching for the significance of what has happened up until now. Hopes are dashed and an uncertain future lies ahead...*

*So, we begin the service in quiet worship and a number of suitable songs come to mind. I will make some suggestions as to what they might be and also add in the 3 readings, which I have selected for this part of the service. If you wish to enact the service at home you could play these from YouTube. Numbers given are from Mission Praise.*

### **THE VIGIL**

- 69 Come and see (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gizXMaQ7Y5o>)  
1022 Above all powers ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5\\_cxhf5ISeg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_cxhf5ISeg))  
574 Purify my heart (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Y8zP34AhuU>)

First reading: Exodus 14: 21-31

*Pause for Silence*

- 1000 King of kings, majesty (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5VutCGsVXE>)

Second reading: Isaiah 55: 1-11

*Pause for silence*

- 1087 Lord I come before your throne of grace  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4fo1UV9pfrs>)

Third reading: Ezekiel 37: 1-14

*Pause for Silence*

- 895 Lord I come to you (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL1POv2eY04>)

### **SERVICE OF LIGHT**

*At this point we would go outside the church, where a small fire would have been kindled and each of us would carry an unlit candle, which we would take with us together with the new Paschal (Easter) candle. If you wish to follow suit and do this part of the liturgy outdoors, then please do. However, you may simply prefer to light a candle. The Easter candle normally carries the Greek letters Alpha and Omega, these could be simply traced over the candle at the appropriate point.*

*You may light your own mini bonfire and use this prayer:*

Leader: Eternal God,  
who made this most holy night  
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:  
set us aflame with the fire of your love,  
and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

*The Easter Candle is marked here with these words.*

Leader: Christ yesterday and today,  
the beginning and the end,  
Alpha and Omega,  
all time belongs to him,  
and all ages;  
to him be glory and power,  
through every age and for ever.

**All Amen.**

*The Easter Candle is lit with these words,*

**All May the light of Christ, rising in glory,  
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.**

Gospel Reading: Luke 24: 1-12

*At this point if you are outside, use the Easter/your personal candle to light the candles of everyone else with you and return into your home saying:*

Leader: The light of Christ. *(with others responding)*  
**All Thanks be to God.**

*Repeat with each getting louder each time as you go in.  
When you get to the place where you will set your candle down, proclaim:*

Leader: Alleluia Christ is Risen  
**All He is risen indeed, Alleluia**

### **THE EXULT** *(is sung)*

*The exult given is a metrified version of an ancient hymn. It fits any tune in a 10,10,10,10 format. I have generally used Woodlands, which is used for Tell Out My Soul. If you can't sing it you could just read it as a poetic prayer.*

**All Sing, choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!  
Around God's throne exult in harmony!  
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!  
Salute your King in glorious symphony!**

**Sing, choirs of earth! Behold, your light has come!  
The glory of the Lord shines radiantly!  
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!**

**The night is past, the day of life is here!**

**Sing, Church of God! Exult with joy outpoured!  
The gospel trumpets tell of victory won!  
Your Saviour lives; he's with you evermore!  
Let all God's people sound the long Amen!**

*The Resurrection is proclaimed.*

Leader: The Lord be with you  
**All and also with you.**

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

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

Leader: It is right and good that with hearts and minds and voices  
we should praise you, Father almighty, the unseen God,  
through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who has saved us by his death,  
paid the price of Adam's sin,  
and reconciled us once again to you.

For this is the Passover feast,  
when Christ, the true Lamb of God, is slain  
whose blood consecrates the homes of all the faithful.

This is the night when you first saved our ancestors,  
freeing Israel from her slavery  
and leading her safely through the sea.

This is the night when Jesus Christ vanquished hell,  
broke the chains of death  
and rose triumphant from the grave.

This is the night when all who believe in him are freed from sin,  
restored to grace and holiness,  
and share the victory of Christ.

This is the night that gave us back what we had lost;  
beyond our deepest dreams  
you made even our sin a happy fault.

Most blessed of all nights!  
Evil and hatred are put to flight and sin is washed away,  
lost innocence regained, and mourning turned to joy.

Night truly blessed, when hatred is cast out,  
peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth  
and all creation reconciled to you.

Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy  
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering.  
Grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.  
For Christ the morning star has risen in glory;  
Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us!  
Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!  
Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever!

**All Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.**

### **THE COLLECT**

Leader: Let us pray that we may reign with the risen Christ in glory.

*Silence is kept.*

**All Lord of all life and power,  
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son  
overcame the old order of sin and death  
to make all things new in him:  
grant that we, being dead to sin  
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,  
may reign with him in glory;  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit  
be praise and honour, glory and might,  
now and in all eternity.  
All Amen.**

New Testament Reading

Romans 6: 3-11

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

### **RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS**

*If we were in church we would stand around the font and pray over the water as if someone were to be baptised. Instead I invite you to share the following:*

Leader: As we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the Paschal Mystery we have died and have been buried with Him in Baptism, so that we may rise with Him to a new life within the family of His Church. Now that we have completed our observance of Lent, we renew the promises made at our Baptism, affirming our allegiance to Christ, and our rejection of all that is evil.

Therefore I ask these questions:

Do you turn to Christ?

**All I turn to Christ**

Do you repent of your sins?

**All I repent of my sins**

Do you renounce evil?

**All I renounce evil**

Leader: And now I ask you to make the profession of Christian faith into which you were baptised, and in which you live and grow.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, who made the world?

**All I believe and trust in Him**

Do you believe and trust in His son Jesus Christ, who redeemed humankind?

**All I believe and trust in Him**

Do you believe and trust in His Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?

**All I believe and trust in Him**

This is the faith of the Church

**All This is our faith, we believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Spirit.**

Leader: Almighty God, we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith with all those who have been baptised in your name. Keep us faithful to our Baptism, and so make us ready for that day when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son as our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen**

*You may wish to sprinkle yourself and those around you with a little water as a sign of renewal of your baptism.*

*At this point we would go on to have a short Eucharistic Prayer. If you wish to break bread and take a little wine or juice, then please do. However, it would be good to end the liturgy in sharing the Peace with everyone.*

Leader: The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, Peace be with you!  
Then they were glad when they saw the Lord.

Leader: Alleluia! The peace of the risen Christ be always with you  
All **And also with you. Alleluia!**

*Please do exchange a sign of Peace*

Greeting: The Lord is risen

Response: **He is risen indeed**

*The liturgy should end with the singing of a triumphal Easter hymn or worship song, such as*  
689 *Thine be the glory* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbBOOmKMLmI>)  
or 453 *Low in the grave he lay* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0arouoCJ8es>)  
or 1105 *See what a morning.* ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LgE\\_E7yaz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LgE_E7yaz4))  
(or from Coventry Cathedral: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57C7uBkbQ5E>)