

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

EASTER VIGIL SERVICE

Easter Vigil



Saturday 5pm 8 April 2023

Welcome and Announcements

Rev Allison Cornell

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

In the semi-darkness, the Presider says:

Dear friends 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 gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing his Word and celebrating his Sacraments, we share in his victory over death.

Presider Let us pray.

ALL: O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new light, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(The Paschal candle is lighted. A minister then uses the candle lighter to take flame from the paschal candle and light the votive candles others are holding.

Then the Deacon leads the procession to the chancel, pausing three times and singing or saying:)

Deacon The light of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

Paschal candle is placed in its stand, the people bring their candles to the front of the church, place them on the tray, and then go to their seats.

Deacon: 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 around the 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.

Deacon The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Deacon Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Deacon 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 Pass over 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 fathers, 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.

How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and man is reconciled to God.

Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning -- he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns forever and ever. **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Presider Let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, how he saved his people in ages past; and let us pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

First Part of the Summary of the Origin Lessons:

Reader: Let us remember the stories of our origin and God's love, faithfulness, and compassion for us, his children.

Remember in Genesis how: "In the beginning" when God created the heavens and the earth, waters, skies, stars, plants, birds, fish, animals and humankind in God's own image and declared that it was all "good".

Remember how God gave us a sign after Noah and the great flood, a bow in the clouds, to be a sign that God would save us through water and God's loving-kindness from being destroyed again.

Remember how God provided a ram for sacrifice in place of Abraham's son Isaac, saving Isaac's life as a sign that God does not desire the death of his children, but rather that we would have life and have it abundantly.

Let us also remember Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea, from the Book of Exodus (14:10--15:1):

"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 were in awe of the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Reader The Word of the Lord People Thanks be to God

Second Part of the Summary of Origin Lessons:

Reader: Let us also recall the promises God made to the Prophet Isaiah, Saying That the city of Jerusalem will one day be restored and that God's presence will be seen as a column of smoke and fire — a sign of God's glory that will protect and purify those who live there.

How God told the people through Isaiah that God's ways and thoughts are not like human ways and thoughts. That God has promised to satisfy all our needs and to give us life that is full of God's blessing.

How God told Ezekiel the prophet that God would wash us clean of any sins, replace our hearts of stone with new hearts and new minds, and that God would place God's own spirit within us so that we would willingly and joyfully follow God's ways.

How God shared a vision with Ezekiel (EZ 37:1-14) who described it in this way:

“I felt the powerful presence of the Lord, and his spirit took me and set me down in a valley where the ground was covered with bones. He led me all around the valley, and I could see that there were very many bones and that they were very dry.

He said to me, **“Mortal man, can these bones come back to life?”**

I replied, “Sovereign Lord, only you can answer that!”

He said, **“Prophecy to the bones. Tell these dry bones to listen to the word of the Lord. Tell them that I, the Sovereign Lord, am saying to them: I am going to put breath into you and bring you back to life. I will give you sinews and muscles, and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you and bring you back to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.”**

So I prophesied as I had been told. While I was speaking, I heard a rattling noise, and the bones began to join together. While I watched, the bones were covered with sinews and muscles, and then with skin. But there was no breath in the bodies.

God said to me, **“Mortal man, prophecy to the breath. Tell the breath that the Sovereign Lord commands it to come from every direction, to breathe into these dead bodies, and to bring them back to life.”**

So I prophesied as I had been told. Breath entered the bodies, and they came to life and stood up. There were enough of them to form an army.

God said to me, **“Mortal man, the people of Israel are like these bones. They say that they are dried up, without any hope and with no future. So prophesy to my people Israel and tell them that I, the Sovereign Lord, am going to open their graves. I am going to take them out and bring them back to the land of Israel. When I open the graves where my people are buried and bring them out, they will know that I am the Lord. I will put my breath in them, bring them back to life, and let them live in their own land. Then they will know that I am the Lord. I have promised that I would do this—and I will. I, the Lord, have spoken.”**

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

Presider Let us pray. (Silence)

All: 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. Amen.

(Church lights are brought up to full illumination)

Presider Alleluia! Christ is risen!

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

Gospel Hymn “Jesus Christ is Risen Today”

#207

(altar candles are lighted during the Praise Hymn, the Alleluias are released from the treasure chest)

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

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.**

(Please be seated for the next lessons)

Reader: **A reading from the letter to the 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord

People Thanks be to God

Gospel Lesson:

Reader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to **Matthew (28:1-10)**

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.

For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said.

Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you."

So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Reader The Gospel of the Lord

People Praise to you, Lord Christ

HOMILY

Renewal of Baptismal Vows:

Presider Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his death, and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you, therefore, now that our Lenten observance is ended, to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his holy Catholic Church.

Presider Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People I do.

Presider Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Presider Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People 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.

Presider Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People 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.

Presider Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you persevere in resisting evil, and , whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

Presider May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you

Offertory

Presider Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself as an offering and sacrifice to God.

Doxology (Hymn #380 v. 3)

All: ♪ **Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. ♪**

The Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Presider *The Lord be with you.*

People **And also with you.**

Presider *Lift up your hearts.*

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

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

Presider:

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Pascal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus -

Hymnal 1982 #S-129

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Presider continues:

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit (+) to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also (+) that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

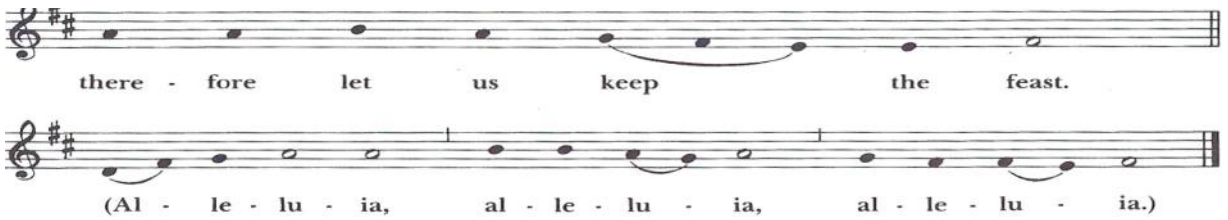
Presider: *As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread *(Presider breaks the consecrated bread)*

Fraction Anthem : Hymnal 1982 #S-154

(Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.)
Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;



Invitation to Communion:

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God.

(All are invited and welcome to come forward and receive communion in this church. We have two different ways to receive communion. First way = go to the right of the altar, receive the bread, eat the bread, then take a sip of wine from the cup. Second way = go to the left of the altar, receive the bread, dip the bread in the wine in the cup and then eat the bread. If you are not ready to receive the bread and wine, you may come forward and cross your arms over your chest to receive a blessing instead. Bread is gluten free).

Communion Hymn: “Alleluia No. 1”

G#462

Post Communion Prayer *The people stand as they are able.*

Presider; Let us pray.

All: **Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

Blessing

Presider: May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Recessional Hymn “We know that Christ is raised “

#296

Dismissal

Deacon: People of St. Stephen’s, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in God’s Spirit. Alleluia! Alleluia!

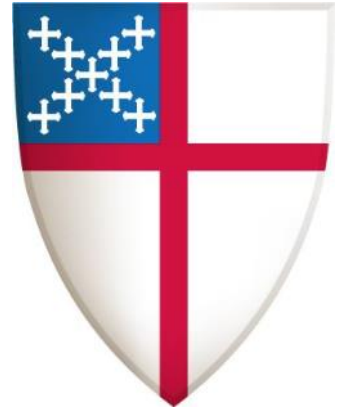
People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (Alleluia!)

Postlude: “Reflection” by Todd Beaney

Notice: All church activities may be internet streamed, video recorded, and photographed for church uses. Entry on to the church campus or in to any church building constitutes consent to be streamed, videotaped, or photographed for church purposes.



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Welcome Visitor!!!

Please leave your name and contact info below. If you'd like to speak with someone, please check here

Or you can also use the QRC here to fill this out online.



Info Update Giving Envelopes Mail News Letter

Name _____
(first) (Mid.) (Last)

Hm: _____ Cell _____

Email: _____ Anv. Date _____
BrthDay _____

Adrs: _____

City, St., Zip: _____, _____, _____