

All Saints' Parish Church

Four Oaks



The Easter Liturgy

The Service of Light

*We gather around the fire,
and the service is introduced with the words*

I am the light of the world, says the Lord

Minister: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
on this most holy night,
in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,
the Church invites her children throughout the world
to come together in vigil and prayer.
This is the Passover of the Lord.
We remember his death and resurrection
by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries,
confident that we shall share his victory over death
and live with him for ever in God.

Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**

Hymn

AHOAN 732

1. The Spirit lives to set us free,
walk, walk in the light.
He binds us all in unity,
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, (x3)
walk in the light of the Lord.
2. Jesus promised life to all,
walk, walk in the light
The dead were wakened by his call
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, (x3)
walk in the light of the Lord.

3. He died in pain on Calvary,
walk, walk in the light
to save the lost like you and me.
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, (x3)
walk in the light of the Lord.
4. We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light.
He gave his Spirit to be our friend.
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, (x3)
walk in the light of the Lord.
5. By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light
The Father's kindness is revealed.
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, (x3)
walk in the light of the Lord.
6. The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light
His light will shine for all to see.
walk, walk in the light.
Walk in the light, (x3)
walk in the light of the Lord.

Damian Lundy (1944-1997)

Father we share in the light of your glory
through your Son,
the light of the world.
Make this fire holy,
and inflame us with new hope.
Purify our minds by this Easter celebration,
and bring us one day to the feast of eternal light,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Easter Candle may be marked here:

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. **Amen.**

Nails or incense studs may be inserted into the Easter Candle.

By his holy and glorious wounds
may Christ our Lord guard and keep us. **Amen.**

The president lights the Easter Candle saying:

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

The minister bearing the Candle enters the building, followed by the other ministers, and they pause just inside the entrance.

The minister bearing the Candle raises it and says or sings

The light of Christ.
All Thanks be to God.

The procession of the Easter Candle moves further into the building and then stops.

The versicle and response are repeated, and the candles of those around are lit from the Easter Candle.

The procession continues to the centre of the building and stops once more.

The versicle and response are again repeated, and the candles of those around are lit.

The Easter Candle is placed on a stand in the midst of the building

The Exsultet

(the Easter Song of Praise)

1. 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!
2. 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 has past; the day of life is here!
3. 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 shout the long Amen!

Minister The Lord be with you
All and also with you

Minister Lift up your hearts
All We lift them to the Lord.

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

It is right and good that with full hearts and minds and
voices we should praise you, the 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.
Glory to you for ever.

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

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

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

Glory to you for ever.

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.

Glory to you for ever.

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

Glory to you for ever.

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.

Glory to you for ever.

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.

Glory to you for ever.

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! **Amen.**

The Vigil

Please sit and extinguish candles. During the Vigil we listen to the story of God's love for us in the words of the Old Testament. We listen in darkness; waiting for the resurrection story to be proclaimed.

A period of silence after each reading will end with a short prayer.

Minister As we await the risen Christ, let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, recalling how he saved his people in ages past and in the fullness of time sent his Son to be our Redeemer; and let us pray that through this Easter celebration God may bring to perfection in each of us the saving work he has begun.

First Reading

A reading from the Book of Genesis, chapter 1

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the 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. ³Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

²⁶ 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.'

²⁷ So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸God 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.'

²⁹God 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. ³⁰And 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. ³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Genesis 1:1-5, 26-end

Pause

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in your own image
and yet more wonderfully restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,
so we may share the life of his divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Second Reading

A reading from the Book of Genesis, chapter 22

After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' ²He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' ³So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. ⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.'

⁶Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. ⁷Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' ⁸Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together.

⁹ When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill his son. ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' ¹²He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' ¹³And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. ¹⁴So Abraham called that place 'The LORD will provide'; as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.'

¹⁵ The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, ¹⁶and said, 'By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, ¹⁸and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.'

Genesis 22:1-18

Pause

Almighty God,
whose chosen servant Abraham
faithfully obeyed your call
and rejoiced in your promise
that, in him, all the families of the earth should be blessed:
give us a faith like his,
that, in us, your promises may be fulfilled;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Third Reading

A reading from the Book of Exodus, chapter 14

¹⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. ¹⁶But 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. ¹⁷Then 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. ¹⁸And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers.'

¹⁹ 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. ²⁰It 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.

²¹ 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. ²²The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers.

²⁴At 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. ²⁵He 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.'

²⁶ 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.' ²⁷So 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.

²⁸The 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.

²⁹But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

³¹Israel 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.

Exodus 14:15-15:1a

Pause

Lord God our redeemer,
who heard the cry of your people
and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery:
free us from the tyranny of sin and death
and, by the leading of your Spirit,
bring us to our promised land;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Fourth Reading

A reading from the Book of Ezekiel chapter 37

¹The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord GOD, you know.' ⁴Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath^[a] to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.'

⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath,^[d] and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' ¹⁰I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." ¹²Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people.

¹⁴I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.'

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Pause

Lord God of our salvation,
you speak the word to your scattered people,
and bring up our life from the valley of death:
breathe your Spirit upon your Church,
that we may live and stand before you
confident in your risen Son,
Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

The Easter Greeting and the Gospel of the Resurrection

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

During the Gloria candles are lit again as we prepare to hear the Gospel of the Resurrection

The Gloria

**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 Easter Collect

Grant, Lord,
that we who are baptized into the death of your Son our
Saviour Jesus Christ
may continually put to death our evil desires and be buried
with him;
and that through the grave and gate of death
we may pass to our joyful resurrection;
through his merits,
who died and was buried and rose again for us,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Epistle

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴Therefore 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.

⁵ 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. ⁶We 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. ⁷For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:3-11

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Gospel

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

Alleluia.

He has defeated the powers of death.

Alleluia.

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing.

Alleluia.

He has the words of eternal life.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ²And 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. ³His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. ⁵But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he* lay. ⁷Then 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.' ⁸So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹Suddenly Jesus met them and said, 'Greetings!' And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

Matthew 28:1-10

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to Christ, O Christ.

Please sit and extinguish candles.

The dismissal Gospel: John 21:3-12

Simon Peter said to the disciples, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."

Following the invitation of Jesus, we move to the church hall to share breakfast together.