

Vigil of Easter

• Service of Light • Blessing of the Great Fire • Lighting of the Paschal Candle • Service of Readings • Service of Holy Communion • The Story of God Saving Noah and his Family • Poem Written for the Easter Vigil

Service of Light

People will be invited to gather in the hallway or outside, depending upon the weather. They will be given candles and worship folders. Encouraged not to enter into worship space until the procession enters.

Fire will be made ahead of time. Will be put out once the procession begins to enter the worship space.

Worshippers will gather on East side of fire. Worship leaders will gather on West side of fire. One worship leader will have the Paschal candle, other will have the candlelighter.

Ushers will be sure that the doors to the worship space are opened once Service of Light begins.

One usher will hold the worship folder and flashlight for the presider.

Blessing of the Great Fire

Presider: Dear friends in Christ, on this most holy night, when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life, the Church invites believers throughout the world to come together in vigil and prayer. This is the Passover of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. We remember his death and celebrate his resurrection, confident that we shall share his victory and live with him forever in God.

Let us pray: Holy God, you gave your Name to Moses from the burning bush. By the blessing of this new fire, bring us to stand with awe on this holy ground, our eyes alight with the glory we have seen in Christ, and our hearts aflame with resurrection joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lighting of the Paschal Candle

Worship leader holding candlelighter gets fire from the New Fire and lights the

Paschal Candle, held by the presider.

Candle is lifted as the words are said

P: May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds. The Light of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.

Those with electric candles light them and follow the Paschal Candle in the procession

Ushers will open the outside doors.

Procession

Presider will invite the congregation to follow the Light of Christ into the worship space and to fill in the seats upon arriving in the worship space.

Presider will stop and lift candle once inside the outside doors and once inside the worship space with the words "The Light of Christ". **Thanks be to God.**

Dialogue of Light

Presider stands in front of congregation as they take their seats. Two ushers stand to either side of Paschal candle with large candles.

Ushers take light from Paschal Candle and begin to distribute it to congregation.

Paschal Candle is placed on altar

Evening Hymn

Candles are extinguished following the evening prayer.

Ushers set low light setting

Prayer

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 forever. Amen.

Service of Readings

The Word

Presider: Dear friends in Christ, we have begun our solemn vigil. Let us now listen attentively to the Word of God, recalling how our God saved Israel throughout history and, in the fullness of time, sent the only Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer. Through this Easter celebration, may God bring to completion the saving work already begun in us by the divine mercy. Let us attend to the Word of God.

The Story of God's Creating Act (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

Response: Silence

The Story of God Saving Noah (Genesis 7-9)

Response: WOV 781 Thy Holy Wings

The Story of God Saving Israel (Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21)

Response: WOV 670 When Israel was in Egypt's Land

The Story of God Saving Ninevah (Jonah 1-4)

Response: Silence

Service of Holy Baptism

The sacrament will also be an affirmation by all the baptized

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Apostles' Creed

Sharing the Peace

Prayers of the Church

Hymn: LBW 92 Were You There?

Service of Holy Communion

Easter Gospel

Mark 16:1-8

Gospel Response

P: Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

C: Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

P: Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

C: Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

P: Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

C: Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

Ushers turn on all lights

Hymns Jesus Christ is Risen Today
 Thine is the Glory

During the hymns the fine arts team will begin to remove the Good Friday decorations and replace them with the Easter decorations.

Pastors put on stoles and put the communion elements on the altar

Words of Promise

Includes the proper Preface for Easter

The Meal

Two ushers will help with the distribution of communion

Prayer

P: Eternal God, through our baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ you give us the water of life and nourish at this table with the food and drink of the promised land. Send us forth as light into the world, that we may be witnesses to your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord.

C: Amen.

Benediction

Hymn WOV 674 Alleluia! Jesus is Risen!

Sending

P: Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

C: Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

P: Go in peace. Share the Good News. Serve the Risen Lord!

C: Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

You are invited to stay and celebrate at the Resurrection Reception

Offering baskets will be located at doors.

The Story of God Saving Noah and his Family

Easter Vigil (Narrator part and stage directions)

Long, long ago, before the birth of Jesus, before Moses, even before Abraham and Sarah, there lived a man named Noah and his family. Noah was a good and righteous man. The rest of humanity, however, did deeds that were so evil (people doing evil deeds, killing each other, stealing, etc.... These can be the ones that will later play the sons) that they grieved the Lord's heart and he was sorry he had made humankind. So the Lord said, "I will blot out from the earth all living things that I have created. I'm sorry I made them." But Noah found favor in the sight of the Lord.

God told Noah of the plan to destroy all living creatures and instructed Noah to build a large boat. Noah was to build a huge ark (Noah and his sons take out tape measures, wood, hammers). It was to be longer than the tallest tree and taller than the highest hill. For the Lord told Noah, "I will establish my covenant with you; you and your wife, your sons, and your son's wives will come into the ark. And with you, you will bring two of every kind of animal. Also take with you food to eat and to serve to the animals. (Women start bringing in baskets of food) For forty days and forty nights I will make it rain on the earth; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the earth." And Noah did as the Lord commanded him.

Now Noah was 600 years old when he and his wife, and his children entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. (Animal procession begins into the ark) And with them they brought two of every kind of living creature that creeps upon the earth. There were small creatures and large, animals that were ferocious and animals that were gentle. There were furry creatures, scaly creatures, hopping creatures and running creatures. All of them came two by two, male and female, and entered into the ark. Peacefully they came, the lion and the lamb together, to live in the ark and be saved from the waters of the flood.

Then the rain began. (Noah and family put up umbrellas) It rained and rained and RAINED. And the waters began to rise, higher and higher and higher (People in front row have blue crepe paper "shakers" to signify the flood, which they begin to shake and make rise with flood) The ark began to pitch and to swirl, to shake and to turn (Noah, etc. begin to sway back and forth like they are on a rocky boat) And still it rained the waters grew. The ark began to float...and the waters of the flood covered all the earth.

For forty days and forty nights it rained while Noah, his family and the animals waited in the ark (Sons start playing cards) Then God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; (food shakers begin to lower) the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain was restrained, and the waters gradually receded from the earth. Noah put his head out the window of the ark (release dove on fishing wire) and he sent a dove to fly over the earth to see if the waters were dried up from the earth; but the dove found nowhere to set her foot, so she flew and flew and flew, and finally returned to Noah. Seven days later, Noah sent the dove out again. She flew over the face of the earth, over the land that had been destroyed, over the places where living creatures had once lived. When the dove returned, she held an olive branch in her beak. And Noah was happy. Seven days later he sent the dove out again; and this time the dove did not return, for she had found a dry place to make her nest.

Noah, his family, and all the living creatures left the ark and they praised God for saving them from the mighty flood. God came to them and said to Noah, his family, and all the living creatures, "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth again with life." Noah built an altar to the Lord and God blessed Noah and his family and said to them, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant that I am making with you; I have set my bow in the clouds. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. This is the sign of the covenant that I have established with those whom I have saved."

The Word of the Lord

Poem Written for the Easter Vigil

THE GUIDE

Text: **Exodus 13:1-15:20**

Perspective: a poetic reflection by Moses on the Exodus from Egypt, the perils at the Red Sea, and the hope for continued deliverance.

I question, God, why you chose me
To confront the Pharaoh to please set free
The Hebrew slaves whom he controlled
Whose bondage built Egypt, and his kingdom so bold

But God, your wisdom guided me
Now Pharaoh has set my people free

Toward the Red Sea wilderness we now impart
My people are dancing with such happy hearts

With the bones of Joseph at our side
Now you, dear God, will be our guide
With a pillar of cloud, You lead us by day
A pillar of fire by night, that You may light our way

Your pillars of cloud and fire, oh God, night and day
Have stayed right beside us, and shown us the way
Now by the Red Sea we shall stop for a rest
But I wish You had told me this would be our first test

You've hardened the heart of Pharaoh, oh Lord
He's gathered his army, he's sharpened his sword
Pharaoh's consumed by the fact we are gone
He'll come to destroy us, to give his heart song

Now Pharaoh is coming, and my people have fear
My God, what are you thinking, to have us die here
Yet, God as my guide, You made me firmly stand
To behold the deliverance from your Mighty hand

But God, you must hurry, Pharaoh's army is here
But again you said, "Moses, please have no fear
Lift up your staff, stretch it out to the sea
The waters will part, from the power in Me"

God, I did what you asked, and the Red Sea did part
And my people moved forward, with animals and carts
And God led them through the parted Red Sea
The strong hand of guidance, found only in Thee

But then Pharaoh's army tried to cross the Red Sea
Horses thundered with chariots, Pharaoh's sword drawn with glee
His heart God had hardened, his victory won
But God, our deliverer, had only begun

My people were safe on the opposite shore
And Pharaoh's strong army would harm us no more
The sea closed on Pharaoh, his army was gone
God took His vengeance, and filled my heart with song

"I will sing to the Lord" my people did sing
"The Lord is Victorious" our voices did ring
"Our Lord is a warrior, God is His name"
"God destroyed Pharaoh, and put him to shame"

And Miriam sang, and danced with glee
"Pharaoh and his army have been thrown in the sea"
"Sing to the Lord, our hope and our guide"
"May God protect us through all of our lives"

Dear God, with Your help my people I'll lead
Please give them the law You would have them to heed
Be our Deliverer, and stand by our side
Your will I will follow, with You as my Guide

Written by Steven Edwardson, member of Calvary Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, ND

Submitted by Calvary Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, ND