

St Hilda's Ashford



The Easter Vigil

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FACEBOOK PAGE**

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The Easter Vigil is a specially designed service which grants us time to wait for the moment of the Resurrection and the time when Christ conquered death. We begin with readings from the Hebrew Scriptures which unfold the redeeming works of God through time. This act of worship has many similarities to the Service of Nine Lessons that also refers to the Hebrew Scriptures to mark the fulfilling of prophecy in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ.

This service starts in near-complete darkness and the readings are read as we are surrounded with the dark pallor of death. As the Vigil continues the moment of the Resurrection is marked with the lighting of the new Paschal Candle, which enters the church in a flood of the new light of life.

It is traditional for this service to take place either on the Saturday night as darkness falls, or on Easter morning as the new day dawns. In either case, light becomes an important symbol to us.

The Service of Light

The minister stands in silence holding the unlit Easter Candle.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, on this most holy night, when 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.

The new fire is lit at this point and blessed.

Let us pray.

Father, we share in the light of your glory through your Son, the light of your glory through your Son, the light of the world. Make this new 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. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The president lights the Easter Candle, saying:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness from our hearts and minds.

Procession

The minister bearing the Candle raises it three times:

Christ our light.

All Thanks be to God.

The Easter Candle is placed on a stand. Candles are lit from the Easter Candle.

The Exsultet

The Exsultet (the Easter Song of Praise) is sung.

The Lord be with you,

All And also with you.

Lift up your hearts

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Liturgy of the Word

Dear friends in Christ, 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 in us.

First reading – Genesis 1: 1 – 2: 4a

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. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Second Reading – Exodus 14:10-end; 15:20-21

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 the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them:

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Almighty and ever-living God, only hope of the world, by the preaching of the prophets you proclaimed the mysteries we are celebrating tonight. Help us to be your faithful people, for it is by your inspiration alone that we can grow in goodness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Third Reading – Isaiah 55:1-11

The Lord says everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them

return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Father, you teach us in both the Old and the New Testament to celebrate this passover mystery. Help us to understand your great love for us. May the goodness you now show us confirm our hope in your future mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Easter Acclamation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gloria in Excelsis

The lights are switched on and candles extinguished. Bells are rung.

**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.**

Epistle - 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Grant, Lord, that we who are baptised 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.**

Gospel Acclamation

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

All Alleluia.

He has defeated the powers of death.

All Alleluia.

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing.

All Alleluia.

He has the words of eternal life.

All Alleluia.

Gospel Reading – Mark 16: 1 - 8

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

All Glory to you, O Lord.

When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us

from the entrance to the tomb?” When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you.” So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Renewal of Baptismal Vows

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery we have died and been buried with him in baptism. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

All I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

All I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

All I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

All I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

All I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

All I come to Christ.

The Blessing of the Baptismal Waters

The President collects the Easter candle and stands before a bowl of water.

Dear friends in Christ,
let us ask God, the almighty Father, to bless this font,
that those reborn in it may be made one
with his adopted children in Christ.

The Paschal Candle is lowered into the water three times:

We ask you Father, with your Son, to send the Holy Spirit upon
the waters of this font.

The Paschal Candle is held in the water:
May all who are buried with Christ
in the death of baptism
rise also with him to newness of life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Profession of Faith

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess the faith of the
Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being
and life, the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,

who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
Who gives life to the people of God
And makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**All We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

The Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said
'Peace be with you'.

Then were they glad when they saw the Lord.

The peace of the risen Christ be always with you. Alleluia.

All and also with you. Alleluia.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere
to give you thanks, almighty and eternal Father,
and on this night of our redemption to celebrate with joyful
hearts the memory of your wonderful works.

For by the mystery of his passion Jesus Christ, your risen Son,

has conquered the powers of death and hell and restored in men and women the image of your glory.
He has placed them once more in paradise and opened to them the gate of life eternal.
And so, in the joy of this Passover, earth and heaven resound with gladness, while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation sing for ever the hymn of your glory:

**All 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.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit
that broken bread and wine out-poured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends,
and taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, shared it with them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took a cup of wine.
Again he praised you, 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.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did.

In him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died:
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to be with you for ever at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All 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, the power and the glory,**

for ever and ever.

Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Jesus says, I am the bread of life,
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

**All Lord, our hearts hunger for you;
give us this bread always.**

The president says the invitation to communion

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The people and president receive communion.

Prayer after Communion

**All Lord, you have nourished us with your Easter sacraments.
Fill us with your Spirit, and make us one in peace and love.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Solemn Blessing

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

God the Father,
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

All Amen.

God the Son,
who in bursting the grave has won a glorious victory,
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

All Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
whom the risen Lord breathed into his disciples,
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

Dismissal

With the risen life of Christ within you,
go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!

All Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

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Church Hall Bookings

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