

**Kindling the Ancient Fire
Sharing Stories of Life-
Death-Rebirth
Receiving the Sacred
Fruits of Earth**



Elizabeth Yelland

Gather for the Great Vigil of Easter

~Saint Paul's Episcopal Church~

8:30 P.M.

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Kindling the Ancient Fire

We stand as able.

Presider: Dear friends 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 Jesus death and resurrection
by hearing the word and celebrating the mysteries;
we are confident
that we share in Christ's passage thru death
and live together for ever in God.

The Ancient Fire is Lit.

Presider: Let us pray.
O God,
we share in the light of your glory through your Beloved,
the light of the world.
Sanctify this new fire,
and inflame us with new hope.
Purify our minds by this Easter celebration
and open the eyes of our souls to the feast of eternal light.
We ask this through Christ the Beloved.

Assembly: Amen.

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle of Birth-Death-Rebirth. As the Candle is brought forward the response is sung:

Deacon/Youth: The light of Christ.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

Candles are lit.

Cantor: Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
Exult, all creation around God's throne! Jesus
Christ, our King, is risen! Sound the trumpet of
salvation!

Rejoice, O earth in shining splendor, radiant in
the brightness of your King! Christ lives!
Glory fills you! Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory! The risen Savior shines upon you! Let this place resound with joy, echoing the might song of all God's people!

All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame, pray with me to God the Almighty for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light; through Jesus Christ his Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Cantor: The Lord is with you.

Assembly: **And also with you.**

Cantor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Assembly: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Cantor: It is truly right that with full hearts and minds and voices we should praise the unseen God, the all-powerful Creator, and his Beloved, Jesus Christ.

This is the night, when you brought our mothers and 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 live the way of Christ are delivered from the blindness of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and rose triumphant from the grave.

How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us.

The power of this holy night dispels all evil, heals our blindness, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy.

Night truly blessed when we are awakened to the eternal truth that heaven and earth are wedded and all is eternally reconciled in God.

Therefore, heavenly Creator, in the joy of this night, you receive our evening sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering. You accept this Easter candle. May it always dispel the darkness of this night!

May the Morning Star which never sets find this flame still burning: Christ, that Morning Star, whom death could not contain, who sheds peaceful light on all creation – your Beloved who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Assembly: **Amen.**

Sharing Stories of Life- Death-Rebirth

Presider: Let us now hear the stories of God's saving presence in history,
how people in ages past learned to see God's eternal compassion;
and let us pray our hearts come to know
that God forever holds all creation in love
and that all will be well.

We sit.

STORY OF CREATION

*by James Weldon Johnson as adapted by Rise Thew Forrester
~ told by Michelle Randall & Youth*

We stand as able.

Psalm 136: Love is Never Ending (*Gather* 131, vs. 1-4)

Presider: Let us pray. (*Silence*)
O God,
who wonderfully creates,
and yet more wonderfully restores,
the dignity of human nature:
Grant that we may share the divine life
of the one who humbly shared our full humanity,
Jesus Christ the Beloved.

Assembly: **Amen.**

We sit.

STORY OF THE FLOOD

~ told by Coralie Hambleton

We stand as able.

Psalm 46 (*recited*)

Women/girls The Beloved is our refuge and our strength
A loving Presence in times of trouble.

Men/boys Therefore we will not fear
Though the earth should change,
Though the mountains shake
In the heart of the sea;

Women/girls Though its waters roar and foam,
Though the mountains tremble with tumult.

Men/boys There is a river whose streams
Make glad the Holy City,
The holy habitation of the Most High.

Women/girls The Beloved is in the midst of it,
It shall not be moved;
Our loving Creator is an
Ever-present help.

Men/boys The nations may be at war,
Countries left in ruins,
Yet is the Voice of the Almighty heard,
Melting hearts of stone.

Women/girls The Beloved is with us,
The infinite Heart of Love.

Men/boys Come, behold the works of the Beloved,

How love does reign
Even in humanity's desolation.

Women/girls For the Beloved makes wars to cease,
Breaking through the barriers of fear,
Shattering the greedy and oppressors,
Refining hearts of iron!

Men/boys "Be still and know that I am Love.
I am exalted among the nations
I am exalted in the earth!"

All **The One who knows all hearts is with us;
The Beloved is our refuge and our strength.**

Presider: Let us pray. (*Silence*)
Almighty God,
you have placed in the skies
the sign of your covenant with all living things:
Grant that we,
who are saved through water and the Spirit,
may humbly offer to you our sacrifice of thanksgiving;
through Jesus Christ the Beloved.

Assembly: **Amen.**

We sit.

STORY OF ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE THROUGH THE RED SEA

~ told by Larry Shell & Youth Chorus

We stand as able.

The Horse & Rider (*see next page*)



Presider: Let us pray. (*Silence*)
O God,
whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day,
you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm
your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh,
to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations
by the water of Baptism:
May we know that all the peoples of the earth are yours;
through Jesus Christ the Beloved.

Assembly: **Amen.**

We sit.

STORY OF THE PROPHET JONAH

~ told by the Edward's Family

We stand as able.

Psalm 90: Fill Us with Your Love, O Lord

Presider: Let us pray. (Silence)

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 the One through whom all things were made,
Jesus Christ the Beloved.

Assembly: Amen.

The Gloria

S 280

Canticle 20

Glory to God *Gloria in excelsis*

1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and
peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly
King, al - mighty God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we
give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy
on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -
ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,
you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most
High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the
glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Presider: The Lord is with you.

Assembly: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Presider: 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 the Beloved,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God,
now and for ever.

Assembly: **Amen.**

We sit.

The Epistle

Romans 6:3-11

Reader: A reading from Paul's letter to the community at Rome.

Don't you know that when we were baptized into Christ Jesus, we were baptized into Christ's death? We've been buried with Jesus through baptism, and we joined with Jesus in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by God's glory, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with Christ in the likeness of Christ's death, we will also be united with Christ in the likeness of Christ's resurrection. We must realize that our former selves have been crucified with Christ to make the body of sin and failure completely powerless, to free us from slavery to sin: for when people die, they have finished with sin. But we believe that, having died with Christ, we will also live with Christ – knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again: death is now powerless over our Savior. When Christ died, Christ died to sin, once for all, so that the life Christ lives is now life in God. In this way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin-but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

We stand as able.

Gospel Hymn – Wade in the Water

We sit.

The Gospel of Matthew's Story of the Empty Tomb

Matthew 28:1-10

~ told by Jim Edwards & Mary Sullivan

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary of Magdala came with Mary to inspect the tomb. Suddenly, there was a severe earthquake, and an angel of God descended from heaven, rolled back the stone, and sat on it. The angel's appearance was like lightning, with garments white as snow. The guards shook with fear and fell down as though they were dead. Then the angel spoke, addressing the women: "Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus the crucified, who is no longer here. Jesus has been raised, exactly as it was foretold. Come and see the burial place. Then go quickly and tell the disciples that Jesus has risen from the dead and now goes ahead of you to Galilee. You will see Jesus there. That is the message I have for you." The women hurried away from the tomb with awe and great joy and ran to carry the good news to the disciples. Suddenly Jesus stood before them and said, "Shalom!" The women came up, embraced Jesus' feet and worshiped. At this, Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell the disciples to go to Galilee, where they will see me."

Homily – Rise Thew Forrester

We stand as able.

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Presider: Do you place the trust of your heart in God, the Creator?

Assembly: **I place the trust of my heart in God, creator of heaven and earth.**

Presider: Do you place the trust of your heart in God, the Redeemer?

Assembly: **I place the trust of my heart in Jesus Christ, God's beloved, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried,
and descended to the dead;
who on the third day rose again,
ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Presider: Do you place the trust of your heart in God, the Sanctifier?

Assembly: **I place the trust of my heart in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sin,
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?

Assembly: **I will, with God's help.**

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

Assembly: **I will, with God's help.**

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

Assembly: **I will, with God's help.**

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

Assembly: **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?

Assembly: **I will, with God's help.**

Presider: May we always know that all creation rests eternally in the compassionate arms of almighty God, the Mother and Father of all, who ceaselessly gives new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, who forever bestows upon us the forgiveness of sin, and who graciously keeps all creation forever in eternal life, living in the heart of Christ.

Assembly: **Amen.**

Presider: With the great cloud of witnesses who have placed the trust of their hearts in the living God, we proclaim to the heavens:
Alleluia. Christ is risen.

Assembly: **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Presider: Alleluia. Christ is risen.

Assembly: **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Presider: Alleluia. Christ is risen.

Assembly: **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Prayers of the People

As we celebrate our life, death and rebirth, let us offer thanksgiving:

In gratitude for showing the path of deliverance from deadly anger, fear and deceit.

God of life, we are yours.

In gratitude for teaching us how to open hearts to you.

God of life, we are yours.

In gratitude for filling all creation with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

God of life, we are yours.

In gratitude for your undying trust, love and hope.

God of life, we are yours.

In gratitude for enflaming all your children with a heart of love.

God of life, we are yours.

In gratitude for sending us into the world in witness to your unbounded compassion.

God of life, we are yours.

In gratitude for bringing all creation to the fullness of your peace and glory in you.

God of life, we are yours.

Presider: Grant, O God of life,
that all who know the drowning of death
may experience the Resurrecting power of rebirth,
and live with you in Christ,
now and for ever.

Assembly: **Amen.**

Presider: The peace of God be always with you.

Assembly: **And also with you.**



Receiving the Sacred Fruits of Earth

Presentation Anthem – *Festival Canticle*

Presentation of the Gifts

Presider: God is with you.

Assembly: **And also with you.**

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

Assembly: **We lift them to the heavens.**

Presider: Let us give thanks to Ancient of Days.

Assembly: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

All: **God of life, death and rebirth,
we give you thanks!**

**Your eternal fire ceaselessly
creates light from darkness.**

**Your primordial word unfailingly
calls forth life from death.**

**God of life, death and rebirth,
we give you thanks!**

You continually cradle creation in compassion.

**You spread out the heavens like a tent and
enclose the seas.**

**You fill the world with wondrous creatures and
know all things as truly good.**

You reside in all as

“the Center of the center of the center”;

You create us in your image

**and call us forth to grow into your very likeness;
and so our hearts spill forth in grateful and holy song:**

Santo, Santo, Santo (next page)





Presider: In the ancient days, at the dawn of time,
You leaned over creation
scooped it to your breast and
breathed the moist breath of life.

Your children were born and began the journey:
To receive you. To know you. To love you.

The fire of your Spirit kindled in Noah
the wisdom to build an ark of safety.

The fire of your Spirit kindled in Miriam and Moses
the prophetic courage to lead a people out of slavery.

The fire of your Spirit kindled in Jonah
the humility to embrace those whom he had condemned.

The fire of your Spirit kindled a love between Mary and Joseph;
a fire that became the
roaring flame of eternal compassion – the heart of Jesus.

Assembly: **Here was a child,
like all your children,
woven into life by the Spirit.**

Presider: Jesus,
the Wisdom of God,
became empty of might upon the cross.
As the Risen Anointed One,
Jesus is forever embraced by you as Christ,
embodying your eternal mercy and
revealing the way of compassionate justice
as the path of rebirth.

Assembly: **Kindle a fire in us
that burns away the veil of blindness,
so that we behold your presence
as the Center of all life.
In these sacred fruits of earth
– bread and wine –
may we receive the banquet of heaven.**

Presider:

We remember how Jesus took bread,
blessed, broke it and gave it to his friends saying,
take, eat, this is my body given for you,
do this for the remembrance of me.
Likewise, the Wisdom of God held the cup of wine,
blessed it and gave it to them saying,
drink this, all of you.
This cup is the covenant in my blood,
poured out for you and for many,
that you may know God always holds you in tender forgiveness.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

All:

**God of life, death and rebirth,
You lean toward us again this night
and gather us close to your breast;
You breathe into our lungs
and fill our bodies with hope;
You enflame our hearts
anointing us as bearers of eternal Wisdom;
once more
we are born again
and we are no-thing
but yours. Amen!!**

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

Vicker's Lord's Prayer (next page)



The Breaking of the Bread

Presider: We break this bread
to share in the Body of Christ.

Assembly: **We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.**

Presider: The Gifts of God for the People of God.
All are invited to God's table.

The Communion

Please receive the bread in your open and outstretched hands. Take hold of the cup firmly and guide it to your lips or hold the bread and dip it into the wine. The response to receiving of the bread and wine is "Amen".

Hymn 213

Middlebury

Sending Forth

Presider: Let us pray

All: **God of abundance,
you have fed us
with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
you have united us
with Christ and one another;
and you have made us one
with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth
in the power of your Spirit,
that we may receive with honor all we meet,
that we may share your love with all we receive,
and continue for ever
in the risen life of Christ. Amen.**

Presider: God's blessing be with you,
Christ's peace be with you,
the Spirit's outpouring be with you,
now and always. **Amen.**

(source: Celtic)

Hymn 199

St. Kevin

Presider: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**