

EASTERTIDE:

a festival of resurrection

the victory of God

fresh possibilities & a new start

climax of Holy Week

Ascending power of God as the exalted ruler

hope brought to life

growth into fullness

the unexpected happening

remembering old promises

never giving up

triumphant birth

death where is thy sting?

the beginning

promises to keep

simple gifts, pleasant surprises

life bursting forth in praise

THE EASTER GOOD NEWS,

(L: Leader C: Congregation)

L: Alleluiah!

C: (whispered) Alleluiah! Christ has become our paschal Sacrifice; let us feast with joy in the Lord. Alleluiah!

L: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John...

C: (whispered) Glory to you, Lord.

L: Early in the morning on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary magdalene came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away...

C: (spoken quietly) Alleluiah!

L: So she ran off to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and told them: "The Lord has been taken from the tomb! We don't know where they have put him!"

C: (spoken normally) Alleluiah! Alleluiah!

L: At that, Peter and the other disciple started out on their way toward the tomb. They were running side by side, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He did not enter but bent down to peer in, and saw the wrappings lying on the ground...

C: (louder) Alleluiah! Alleluiah!

L: Presently, Simon Peter came along behind him and entered the tomb. He observed the wrappings on the ground and saw the piece of cloth which had covered the head not lying with the wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the disciple who had arrived first at the tomb went in. He saw and believed.

C: (very loud) Alleluiah! Alleluiah! Alleluiah!

L: Remember, as yet they did not understand the Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead. This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: (whisper) Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

EASTER EUCHARIST: "I am the Resurrection and the Life!"

On that Easter morning,
when the women had come to finish
the preparation of Jesus' dead body,
imagine for a moment
the surprise of seeing Jesus' tomb empty...
millions of questions must have been on their minds:
Who rolled back the stone?
Did someone steal Jesus' body?
or...did they remember the words of Jesus:
"I am the resurrection and the life:
whoever believes in me,
though they should die, will come to life;
and whoever is alive and believes in me
will never die." (John 11:26)

After excitedly rushing back to the disciples
with the news of what they had seen
and what they believed did happen,
did they recall also the words of Jesus
as they celebrated the sacred meal
that he had left them?

"I myself am the bread of life.
No one who comes to me shall ever be hungry.
No one who believes in me shall ever thirst." (John 6:35)
I myself am the living bread
and the source of living water
if anyone eats this bread and drinks of me
they shall live forever." (John 6:51)

For on that night of Jesus' betrayal,
he took bread
and blessed it by returning thanks,
broke and gave it to them to share
saying:

"This is my body
which will be broken for you.
I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you
before I suffer.
I tell you,
I will not eat it again
until it is fulfilled
in the kingdom of God."

Likewise after the meal was near ended,
Jesus took the cup,
and after he had blessed it by returning thanks
he gave it to them saying:
"This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
which will be shed for you.
Take this and divide it among you;
I tell you,
from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine
until the coming of the reign of God."

"As often as you eat this bread
and drink this cup,
do it remembering me."

With Easter joy let us proclaim our faith:
THAT CHRIST HAS COME.
CHRIST HAS DIED.
CHRIST HAS RISEN.
AND CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN.

Let us as Jesus' disciples today,
also remember Jesus' words:
"Let me solemnly assure you,
if you do not eat the flesh
of the child of humanity,
and drink of their blood...

you have no life in you.
They who feed on my flesh
and drink my blood
have life eternal
and remain in me and
I in them."

Let us pray:
Provider and Sustainer of us all,
we ask that these gifts of bread
and the fruit of the vine
be truly nourishing and strengthening
for us as we seek to carry out
your will in our lives.
Send upon us your Spirit
to guide, sanctify and empower us
to be your presence in our world today.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

PENTECOST/SUMMER:

festival of the Holy Spirit

birthing of the Church, Christ's Body on the earth

a time of empowering as witnesses

I have come to light a fire!

ultimate climax of the Church

thanks-giving for the harvest

a time of community and communion with all saints

new life surrounds us

sunlight burns bright

a period of vacation/taking leave of normal activity

a parched thirsting for relaxation and resting

humid heat

children playing

a time of refreshment in nature's splendor

abundance of vegetation

seeds that were planted showing forth fruit

surrendering cares

the bliss of the present moment

ALL SAINTS CELEBRATION:

Call to Worship:

(L: Leader, P: People, W: Women, M: Men)

L: Come let us honor the one who is mother and father
of us all.

P: We praise God from whose spirit is born the faith
which gives life meaning.

L: We rejoice in the lives of those who teach us
the meaning of faith.

W: For Abraham, who obeyed when he was called to go out to
a place he did not know.

M: For Sarah, who received power to conceive in her old age
and was mother to many nations.

W: For Moses, who left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger
of the Pharaoh.

M: For Rahab, who gave friendly welcome to God's messengers
to Jericho.

W: For Isaiah, who responded to God's call with the strong:
"Here am I. Send me."

M: For Ruth, who said to Naomi: "Where you go I will go,
and where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be
my people, your God shall be my God."

W: For Jonathan, who made a covenant with David, because he
loved him as his own soul.

M: For Mary Magdalene, who was released from her demons.

W: For John, the disciple whom Jesus loved.

ALL: "Therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud
of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin
which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance
the race which is set before us." (Heb. 12:1)

Hymn: "For all the Saints" How/Vaughan Williams tune: Sine

Nomine

Invocation:

ALL: Be present, God, in this house of worship. Grant us by your spirit that power which our forebears stood strong in the face of many challenges. Be for us a strong reserve of faith so that we too can become your saints.

Litany of Contemporary Saints: (L: Leader, P: People)

- L: We are the inheritors of the legacy of faith exemplified through the lives of the saints of the recent past and present.
- P: We praise God for the spirits of faith we now name and those unnamed.
- L: For Alice Walker, who has freed us to see the value and beauty of our lives.
- P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.
- L: For Malcolm Boyd, who helps us "Take off the Masks".
- P: Praise God who gives life, strenght and faith.
- L: For Mohandas Gandhi, who has taught us the way of passive resistance.
- P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.
- L: For Rosemary Radford Ruether, who helps us find more in our understanding of God.
- P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.
- L: For Mary Daly, whose strength in character calls each of us to become what God has made us to be.
- P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.
- L: For Troy Perry, whose Shepherd knows and loves him and us as gay and lesbian.
- P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.
- L: For Mary Borhek and all parents with whom we struggle, grow and learn.
- P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.

L: For all victims of violence, oppression and sickness,
who through their suffering call us to be as strong in faith
as they have been.

P: Praise God who gives life, strength and faith.

ALL: We rejoice in the witness of all these who have gone
before, who lead in the present and who will guide us
in the future.

Hymn: "Come let us join with Faithful Souls" Tarrant/Glaser
tune: Azmon

Selected Readings

Offering/Meditation

Remembering Song: "Singing for our lives" Holly Near

Benediction:

ALL: May we run with perseverance
the race that is set before us,
being surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,
looking to Jesus,
the pioneer and perfecter of our faith,
and to Christ's coming in final victory.
Amen.

AN' AGAPE/LOVE FEAST: "Celebrating our Unity"

"We Worship" by Kenneth L. Patton
(read responsively)

We worship with our eyes and ears and fingertips;
we love the world through heart and mind and body.

The rushing of the wind and the purring of the sun
gather us in blessing and comfort.

Colors of flowing in field and sky,
over faces, windy colors and the colors of warm,
tideless gardens, heal our spirits and feed our hungers.

Lifting sounds of trees and grasses,
noises of men and women eddy into
songs of human togetherness.

The purity of birds singing, the music of throat,
brass and wood, are golden to ears avid for beauty.

We feed our eyes on mystery and revelation
in the faces of sisters and brothers.

We seek the wistfulness of the very young and the very old,
the wistfulness of men and women in all times of life.

We seek to understand shyness behind arrogance,
fear behind pride,
tenderness beneath clumsy strength,
anguish beneath cruelty.

We share a thousand lives
as we walk through the city.

All life flows into a great common life,
if we open ourselves to our companions.

We hear secret voices of poems,
and know all people share our yearning.

All are lonely as we are lonely;
all need the sure presence of those who love
and are loved.

We worship, not in bowing down,
not with closed eyes and stopped ears,
but with the opening of all the windows of our beings,
with the full out-stretching of our minds.

Life comes with singing, and laughter,
with tears and confiding,
with a rising wave too vast for mind, heart, and body,
to those who fall in love with life,
as we learn to love,
we worship.
Amen.

We sanctify the name of God (Kaddesh):

ALL: Blessed are You, O God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who has created all the peoples of the earth in your image,
who did exalt all humanity by breathing the life
of the mind and love of freedom into us,
who did sanctify us so that we might know
and say what was holy and profane,
what was freedom and what was slavery.
Blesses are you, O God,
who with love has allowed us to give ourselves and you
solemn days for joy, festivals and seasons for gladness.
O God, look with compassion on the whole human family;
take away the arrogance and hatred
which infect our hearts;

ALL: (cont.) break down the walls that separate us;
unite us in bonds of love;
and, through our struggle and confusion,
work to accomplish your purposes on earth;
that, in your good time, all nations and races
may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne
Amen.

Readings: Deuteronomy 7:7-11
Jeremiah 32:36-41

Affirmation of Interfaith(see first page in ADVENT section)

Prayers of the People: spoken or silent, *:people add own
intentions...

In peace, we pray to you and give you thanks, O God...

*

We pray for our leaders, that they may serve in honesty
and courage in seeking to do your will...

*

We pray for our lesbian sisters and gay brothers everywhere,
that we all may be strengthened to love and serve each other...

*

We pray for those who would harm us, that our love may transform
their hate...

*

We pray for our sisters and brothers who live in fear
and darkness, that their light may be kindled and shine forth...

*

We pray for guidance to know and love ourselves that we may
also know and love our neighbors...

*

We pray for our own special needs and those of this
gathering....

*

ALL: God of Ruth and Naomi, Jonathan and David, like a strong
mother you have protected us in your arms. Accept our
thanks and hear our petitions, spoken and silent.

ALL: (cont.) Strengthen us to be your presence in the world.
Amen.

Sharing the Meal: (L: Leader, P: People)

L: Blessed are you, our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
for giving us this bread which human hands have made.
May it be food and symbol for all of us who shall eat it.

P: As the grain of wheat surrenders it's life for us,
so may we follow that pattern of self-surrender for each
other. May we be life to one another.

(Each one passes the bread, taking a piece and eating it)

L: Blessed are you, O God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who from the vine has created the drink of friendship and
hospitality. May it be for a us a sign of our love and
unity.

P: May we refresh and renew each other, as this fruit of the
vine does for us. May the common cup we share join our
lives more closely together in the work ahead for all of us.
(grape juice can be used...pass the cup, each one drinking
from it)

(The Meal may also include a pot-luck that would begin at
this point and conclude with the following prayers:)

L: Our God and giver of all good gifts,
we are grateful for all the blessings of life
that you have given us.

Daily, we are fed by your bounty,
nourished by friendship and care,

feasted with forgiveness and understanding.

Let us always be mindful of your continuous love
for us and all people, that we too may reach out beyond
ourselves for the glory of your name.

P: Bless and preserve us as we go forth to be food for others
who seek real satisfaction and wholeness. Amen.