

# in the big love living liturgies

## “With the Daughters of Jerusalem” Easter Vigil/Sunrise Service Worship Script prepared by Rev. Kathryn M. Schreiber

### PREPARATION

#### TIMING

- *If service begins 10 minutes before Civil Twilight timing will be perfect. See [http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS\\_OneDay.php](http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS_OneDay.php) for time of Easter sunrise.*

#### ROLES/OUTFITS

- *Worship Support: greeters, prop coordinators, other helpers*
- *Musician/s: outdoor—with portable instrument (guitar or flute); inside - meditative musical support (piano, guitar, flute). Also functions as Song Leader.*
- *Worship Leader/s and Reader/s: review script well in advance and assign various parts. Service will be richer with at least two voices.*
- *Honored Person: lights and holds the Christ Candle (may be an elder or special guest).*
- *Blessers: persons who offer Baptismal blessings.*
- *Outfits: casual, warm clothing; clergy may wear white stoles.*

#### CONSIDERATIONS, SET UP & PROPS

- *Who hosts the service? One congregation or a cluster of churches? Who will do what? Assign clear responsibilities.*
- *Where to hold the service? If at a public park, contact park service months in advance to reserve space and arrange for opening park before normal hours. Check on entrance fees. Some parks form warm relationships with local churches and will not collect early morning entrance fees. They may make special preparations for the use of a specific site. If so, be sure to thank your local park staff. If using outdoor church property, or multiple locations indoors, make sure staff and volunteers are clear about locations, setup needs, and responsibilities. Have a well-announced inclement weather plan in place.*
- *Consider the physical needs of your community. If the service begins in the dark, will people need guidance lighting? Portable seating? Help moving about? Make sure the service isn't too long if most people will be standing. Remind everyone to dress appropriately.*
- *Special location - may need prearranged travel map/carpool, onsite directional signs.*
- *Pascal Fire - portable hibachi or grill, or onsite grill. Fire should be started early enough, or begun offsite, that the fire will be flaming when folks arrive.*
- *Prayer Offerings - broken pieces of incense, dried flowers or herbs to throw into the Pascal Fire held in an access jar or basket with low walls and wide mouth.*
- *Vigil Candles - candles with drip-guards, enough for all present.*
- *Christ Candle - larger candle used to light vigil candles. May be specially decorated for Easter with greenery, flowers, ribbon.*
- *Easter Blooms -long-stemmed single flowers or cut flowers to be pinned on with florist pins, like a boutonniere.*
- *Baptismal Font - Portable large bowl set atop portable stand. (cont'd)*

- *Baptismal Water - Vessel/s of water (multiple vessels if a number of churches are celebrating together).*
- *Blessing Wands -- sprigs of local greenery and flowers tied together with ribbon for flinging Baptismal waters; one each for each Blessor.*

#### WORSHIP/BULLETIN CONTENT

- *Adapt! This is YOUR service. Please adjust anything which will support your community's practice of worship.*
- *Prepare handouts for the "Daughters of Jerusalem" liturgy. (see section below "Praying our Lamentations.")*
- *Prepare your community's liturgy of Baptism as no baptismal liturgy is provided. (see section below "Renewing Baptismal Vows")*
- *Order of Worship production: For Public Subscriptions, we will send a WORD document of this content for ease of graphics production, if requested.*

#### FINAL NOTES

- *This service was originally held outside at a public park. The worship service began in the dark around a Pascal Fire located in a parking lot. The group processed up a slight hill to a level, newly mowed clearing surrounded by open parklands. Please adapt to fit your site, and please consider an actual movement from one place to another. We have found it most meaningful to physically move from the "Fire of Lamentation" to the "Hilltop of Resurrection," no matter how subtle the shift.*

#### We Gather with the Daughters of Jerusalem

##### *Worship Support:*

*Welcome worshippers and guide them to gathering place.  
Pass out bulletins and unlit vigil candles.*

##### *Musician/s:*

*Music should begin as soon as possible to attract worshippers.  
Begin chanting when a cluster of people have assembled.  
Repeat the chant as often as needed.*

##### **Gathering Song "Were You There?"**

African-American Spiritual /WERE YOU THERE

- 1) Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? . . .
- 2) Were you there when they pierced Him in the side? . . .
- 3) Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? . . .

##### **Greeting**

##### *Worship Leader:*

*Welcome attendees.*

*Acknowledge worship service participants.*

##### Let us pray:

We gather beside this Pascal Fire, in the dark,  
and other women who accompanied Jesus in His Passion.  
On this edge of Easter morning, (*cont'd*)  
believing that darkness will turn to daylight,

may we also have deep faith  
 that a great transformation is dawning.  
 May hatred become compassion.  
 May fear become curiosity.  
 May depression become hope.  
 May resignation become creativity.

Holy One,  
 here in the darkness before Easter,  
 Come among us! Amen. ✠ (*kms*)

### **Gathering with Them**

*Worship Leader:*

There were an unspecified number of women  
 who followed Jesus to the place of crucifixion.  
 They were weeping and lamenting.  
 They have been called “The Daughters of Jerusalem.”  
 Some of them were disciples of Rabbi Jesus,  
 some of them were believers in Messiah Jesus,  
 some of them had been cured by the Healer Jesus,  
 some of them had only heard about His powers.

Among these women from Jerusalem  
 were also Galilean women.  
 They had come up to the City with Jesus  
 and had remained with Him  
 as He suffered, died, and was entombed.

These women came together  
 to be with Jesus as he died.  
 Together, they offered up a keening death-wail  
 publically lamenting the execution  
 of this beloved one,  
 and of the culture of cruelty  
 which dwelt in their land.

This dark morning,  
 we name their acts of uncommon courage  
 for they choose to stand with Jesus,  
 even when doing so meant personal danger.  
 Here, before day has broken,  
 we call their spirits to stand among us.  
 May we bravely stand tall like them  
 inspired by their faith, hope, and love. ✠ (*kms, inspired by mtw*)

*(cont'd)*

**"Jesus and Daughters of Jerusalem" Luke 23:26-31**

*Reader:*

As they led Jesus away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene,  
who was coming from the country,  
and they laid the cross on him,  
and made him carry it behind Jesus.

A great number of the people followed Jesus,  
and among them were women  
who were beating their breasts and wailing for Him.

But Jesus turned to the women and said,  
“Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me,  
but weep for yourselves and for your children.  
For the days are surely coming when they will say,  
‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore,  
and the breasts that never nursed.’  
Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us;’  
and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’  
For if they do this when the wood is green,  
what will happen when it is dry?” *(NRSV)*

### **Praying Our Lamentations**

*Worship Leader:*

Before Easter Day fully dawns  
it is Christian tradition to keep the Easter Vigil,  
to come together in faith  
to remember and to lament.  
Like the Daughters of Jerusalem,  
we weep together.

*Explain that all are invited to come up to the fire,  
offer a prayer of lament beginning with: “I weep for...”;  
Throw a “Prayer Offering” of incense or dried flowers or herbs onto the fire;  
The people reply in unison (copy in bulletin/below).*

*Worship Support:*

*Stand near the fire with container/s of “Prayer Offerings” .*

Lament: "I weep for....."

**People: We do not weep for Christ crucified.**

**We weep for ourselves and our children.**

*Worship Leader:*

*When the community is done offering lamentations  
offer up any additional sorrows and concerns of your people.  
Close with:*

O Lord, hear the prayers and lamentations,  
the cries and the weeping, of all Your children. Amen. ✠ *(kms)*

### **Affirming Our Faith**

*Worship Leader:*

*Onsight, select a number of people to be the “Daughters of Jerusalem.”*

*Hand out liturgy reading, only print the people’s reply in bulletin.*

*(Note: Spontaneous readers replicate the vulnerability of the women on the first Easter.)*

Let us affirm our faith with this responsive reading  
inspired by the “Chilean Confession of Faith”:

Daughters of Jerusalem:

We believe that behind the mist, the sun waits.

We believe that beyond the dark night, it is raining stars.

We believe in secret volcanoes and the world below.

We believe that a lost ship will reach port.

**People: We cannot be robbed of hope!**

**We cannot be broken!**

**We are people of faith!**

Daughters of Jerusalem:

We believe in reason, and not in the force of arms.

We believe that peace will be sown throughout the earth.

We believe in our nobility, we are created in the image of God.

**People: We cannot be robbed of hope!**

**We cannot be broken!**

**We are people of faith!**

Daughters of Jerusalem:

We believe in God, Creator of Heaven and Earth.

We believe in Christ, Prince of Peace and Friend to All.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, Boundless Force of Divine Inspiration.

**ALL (includes Daughters of Jerusalem):**

**We cannot be robbed of hope!**

**We cannot be broken!**

**We are people of faith!** *(ccf, adapted)*

### **The Light of Compassion**

*Worship Leader:*

There are times of great darkness  
when holy light shines most brightly  
through brave acts of compassion.

People grieving with each other...

People bearing witness for another...

People holding holy silence together...

Always, it is the courage to be present,  
to love into the a very real moment,  
no matter how difficult that reality is,  
which transforms tragedy into holy time. *(cont’d)*

As did the Daughters of Jerusalem,

we, too, display compassion  
 by being with each other  
 during trials and tribulations.  
 Our shared concern and support  
 is but one expressions of God's luminous love.

Together, before Easter fully dawns,  
 let us light the Christ Candle,  
 calling Christ Light to rise with the sun. ✠ *(kms)*

### **Sharing The Christ Light**

*Worship Leader:*

*Explain what will happen:*

- *Come to the person holding the Christ Candle*
- *Dip unlit candle into Christ Candle flame*
- *Follow [name] to next location*
- *Chant while sharing the light and walking*

Let us share the Light of Christ with each other.

*Honored Person:*

*Light the Christ Candle from the Pascal Fire.  
 Offer it to all who come forward.*

*Musician:*

*Please repeat chant as many times as needed.*

### **Chant "Come and Fill Our World"**

Jacques Berthier and Taize Community/ CONFITEMINI DOMINO

Come and fill our world with Your Peace.  
 You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly.  
 Come and fill our world with Your Peace,  
 A-le-lu-ia.

*Worship Support:*

*Offer assistance as needed.*

*Do not leave Pascal Fire unattended.*

### **The Magdalene and Jesus**

#### **"Good News at the Tomb" John 20:1-18**

*Readers: Two is best; may be male (1<sup>st</sup> Reader) and female (2<sup>nd</sup> Reader).*

*Worship Support: Please ready Tibetan singing bowls and bells for sounding.*

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader:*

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark,  
 Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and  
 saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. *(cont'd)*  
 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple,

the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them,

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reader:*

“They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,  
and we do not know where they have laid him.”

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader:*

Then Peter and the other disciple set out  
and went towards the tomb.  
The two were running together,  
but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.  
He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there,  
but he did not go in.  
Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb.  
He saw the linen wrappings lying there,  
and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head,  
not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself.  
Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first,  
also went in, and he saw and believed;  
for as yet they did not understand the scripture,  
that he must rise from the dead.  
Then the disciples returned to their homes.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reader:*

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.  
As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;  
and she saw two angels in white,  
sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying,  
one at the head and the other at the feet.  
They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?”  
Mary said to them, “They have taken away my Lord,  
and I do not know where they have laid him.”  
When Mary had said this, she turned round  
and saw Jesus standing there,  
but she did not know that it was Jesus.

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader:*

Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?  
For whom are you looking?”

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reader:*

Supposing him to be the gardener, Mary said to him,  
“Sir, if you have carried him away,  
tell me where you have laid him,  
and I will take him away.”

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader:*

Jesus said to her, “Mary!”

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reader:*

She turned and said to Jesus in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!”  
[which means Teacher].

*1<sup>st</sup> Reader:*

Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me,  
because I have not yet ascended to the Father.  
But go to my brothers and say to them:  
‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father,  
to my God and your God.’”

Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples,  
“I have seen the Lord!”

And Mary Magdalene told the disciples  
that Jesus had said these things to her. *(NRSV)*

*Worship Support:*

*One person gently sounds a bell or plays a Tibetan bowl.  
Others begin to join in with their bells and instruments making more sounds,  
making louder sounds, making JOYFUL loud sounds!*

**Worship Leader:** Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

**People:** Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

*Musician:*

*Only one verse at this time.*

**Sung Alleluia: "Glory Be to God on High"**

Theodore Williams/GWALCHMAI

Glory be to God on high, Alleluia!  
Let the whole Creation cry, Alleluia!  
Peace and blessing God has given, Alleluia!  
Earth repeats the songs of heaven, Alleluia!

**Passing of the Peace**

*Worship Support:*

*Ready containers of Easter Blooms.*

**Worship Leader:** The EASTER Peace of Christ be with you!

**People:** And also with you!

*Pass the Peace of Christ and share Easter Blooms with each other.*

**Renewing Our Baptismal Vows**

*Worship Leader:*

From the earliest of days,  
Christians have been baptized  
and have remembered their Baptismal Vows  
as Easter dawns. *(cont'd)*

*Worship Leader/s:*

*Pour water from each faith community present into a common bowl.*

Is anyone present who has not been baptized  
and would like to be baptized this Easter morning?  
If so, please come forward at this time.  
*(Use your tradition's liturgy if needed.)*

Let all of us reaffirm our Baptismal Vows  
by joining in this Statement of Faith  
from the United Church of Canada:

*Worship Leader:* We are not alone, we live in God's world.

**People: We believe in God:**  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others by the Spirit.

*Worship Leader:* We trust in God.

**People: We are called to be the church:**  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.

*Worship Leader:* In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.

**People: We are not alone.**  
Thanks be to God. Amen. *(uccan)*

*Worship Leader:*

*Explain that everyone will be sprinkled with Holy Water  
and asked to remember their baptisms.*

Even if our minds do not remember our infant baptisms,  
our bodies do remember the very day  
when we were joined to the Christian community,  
welcomed as family,  
forged in solidarity,  
with all who worship the Triune God -  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit -  
as consecrated water touched our bodies.

Let us remember our baptisms! ✠ *(kms)*

*Worship Support:*

*Present Blessing Wands to Blessers.*

*Blessers:*

*Dip Blessing Wands in Holy Water.*

*Go to each individual gently sprinkling them saying:*

*“[name], remember your baptism.”*

*If the group is large, may use a more general blessing upon all present.*

*Re-wet greenery as often as needed.*

### **Musician/s Solo/Duet**

*(Music should express gratitude and joy.)*

### **Sharing the Good News**

#### **Reflection "He Is Risen"**

*Worship Leader: Offer a brief reflection on Jesus' resurrection, mindful of the Daughters of Jerusalem and our laments offered at the Pascal Fire. We who weep also will be raised in Christ's glory.*

#### **Song "Glory Be to God on High"**

*Theodore Williams v3,4; Kathryn Schreiber v1-2/GWALCHMAI*

Mary found an empty tomb, Alleluia!  
 Angels sat within the room, Alleluia!  
 Gardener asked about her tears, Alleluia!  
 Christ spoke: "Mary!" freed her fears, Alleluia!

Sing we all this Easter morn, Alleluia!  
 Wounded hope has been reborn, Alleluia!  
 Christ has conquered fear and hate, Alleluia!  
 All God's creatures celebrate, Alleluia!

Creatures of the field and flood, Alleluia!  
 Earth and sea cry "God is good," Alleluia!  
 Sunbeams have no voice to raise, Alleluia!  
 Give to God their radiant praise, Alleluia!

Glory be to God on high, Alleluia!  
 Let the whole Creation cry, Alleluia!  
 Peace and blessing God has given, Alleluia!  
 Earth repeats the songs of heaven, Alleluia!

#### **Benediction**

*Worship Leader:*

*Go forth and proclaim The Good News!*

*Christ is Risen!*

*Alleluia, indeed!*

#### **Worship Resources:**

*(ccf) Chilean Confession of Faith from the World Council of Churches, adapted.*

*(kms) Rev Kathryn M. Schreiber, ©2018.*

*(mtw) Miriam Therese Winter's WomanWord, "Daughters of Jerusalem" (paperback pp 144-145). (cont'd)*

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(uccan) United Church of Canada, Statement of Faith, adapted.

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