

. in the big love living liturgies
 “With Christ: Darkness to Daylight” Easter Vigil/Sunrise Service
 by Rev. Kathryn Schreiber ©2015

PREPARATION

TIMING

- If service begins 10 minutes before Civil Twilight timing is perfect. See http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/RS_OneDay.php for Easter info.

ROLES/OUTFITS -- *Reformat as needed*

- *Musicians: Drummer (bongos) and Guitarist for outdoor service*
- *Original service was for three churches. Clergy took turns as Worship Leaders and Readers -- roles others could fill.*
- *Honored Person to hold the Christ Candle (may be an elder or special guest)*
- *Blessers: persons who offer Baptismal blessings*
- *Casual, warm outfits; Clergy wear white stoles.*

SET UP & PROPS -- *Outdoor service*

- *Pascal Fire -- portable hibachi or grill, or onsite grill. Fire should be started a while before the service so that it is flaming when folks arrive.*
- *Prayer Offerings – broken pieces of incense, dried flowers or herbs in container which can be easily held.*
- *Vigil Candles – candles with drip-guards, enough for all present.*
- *Christ Candle – Larger candle used to light vigil candles. May be decorated with greenery and flowers with ribbon.*
- *Baptismal Font – Large bowl set atop portable stand.*
- *Baptismal Water – vessels of water from each church (if joint service) or single vessel if one congregation leading service.*
- *Blessing Wands -- sprigs of greenery and flowers tied together with ribbon for flinging Baptismal waters (one each for each Blesser).*

CONTENT -- *Adjust to fit your situation and needs*

- *This service is an adaptation of the classical Easter Vigil and was originally held outdoors at a regional park as the sun rose.*
- *An edited Order of Worship is available as a separate WORD document.*

In Darkness

*Greet folks and give them orders of worship as they arrive.
 Gather around the flaming Pascal Fire.*

Welcome and Greeting

Worship Leader:

- *Greet folks.*
- *Name and thank service participants.*

READING from Job 14:7-14 NRSV*Reader A:*

For there is hope for a tree—
 if it is cut down, it will sprout again;
 its shoots will not cease.
 Though its root grows old in the earth
 and its stump dies in the ground,
 yet at the scent of water it will bud
 and put forth branches like a young plant.
 But mortals die, and are laid low;
 humans expire, and where are they?

As waters evaporate from a lake,
 and a river wastes away and dries up,
 so mortals lie down and do not rise again;
 until the heavens are no more,
 they will not awake or be roused out of their sleep.
 If mortals die, will they live again?

*Drummer: Begin drumming through end of Community Lament prayers.
 Lighten volume when others are speaking.*

Community Lament*Worship Leader:*

We gather here in the dark as a people who need God.
 We gather here as Christians who have left the Beloved in the tomb.
 We gather here around this Pascal Fire waiting for Christ's resurrection.
 We gather here with our concerns, our lamentations...
 prayers for each other, for our world, for our communities,
 for our families, and, yes, for our own precious selves, too.
 This morning we will pray with incense – an ancient form of prayer.

** Show the container of incense and other flammable items (dried flowers or herbs)
 and now to use as prayer offerings -- take a pinch and throw on the fire.*

** Explain the process: come up one by one, pinch incense, speak lament, throw
 offering onto the fire. All reply, "O Lord, hear our prayer"*

Let us pray....

Prayers are offered.

Worship Leader concludes prayer time.

Drummer: When prayers end drumming ends.

READING from Psalm 46 NRSV*Reader B:*

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
 Therefore we will not fear, (*cont'd*)

though the earth should change,
 though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
 though its waters roar and foam,
 though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

Reader C:

There is a river whose streams make glad the City of God,
 the holy habitation of the Most High.
 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;
 God will help it when the morning dawns.

Reader B:

The nations are in an uproar, the empires totter;
 God's voice resounds and the earth melts.
 The God of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.
 Come, behold the works of God;
 see what actions God has brought on the earth.
 God makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
 God breaks the bow, and shatters the spear;
 God burns the shields with fire.

Reader C:

God speaks, saying,
 "Be still, and know that I am God!
 I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth."
 The God of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Seeking Light

Pass out individual vigil candles in holders.

Reading from Genesis 1:1-19 NRSV

Reader A:

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.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Honored Person lights the Christ Candle from Pascal fire, holds it.

Reader B:

And God saw that the light was good;
 and God separated the light from the darkness.
 God called the light Day, and the darkness God called Night. *(cont'd)*

And there was evening and there was morning,
the first day.

Reader C:

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.

Reader A:

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 God 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.

Reader B:

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. (*cont'd*)

And there was evening and there was morning,
the fourth day.

Invitation to Light our Candles

Worship Leader:

As we receive the gift of God's Light this Easter morning
we will light candles and sing.

Please come forward to light your candles from the Christ Candle.

Tip UNLIT candle into the FLAME.

Once your candle is lit, please continue singing and walk up the hill.

Song "Come and Fill Our World" CONFITEMINI DOMINO/Taize adapted K. Schreiber
Guitarist/Singers: Taize chant tune: "Come and Fill Our Hearts"

Come and fill our world with Your light.

You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly.

Come and fill our world with Your light.

Al-le-lu----ia!

Continue singing until everyone is gathered together at the top of the hill.

At The Waters

Worship Leader: Set up portable Baptismal Font and props.

Reader A:

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters!

Representatives of the faith communities pour water into the common font.

READING from Ezekiel 36:25-28; Psalm 42:1-2 NRSV

Reader B:

God speaks to us, saying:

I will sprinkle clean water upon you,

and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses,

and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

A new heart I will give you,

and a new spirit I will put within you;

and I will remove from your body the heart of stone

and give you a heart of flesh.

I will put my spirit within you,

and make you follow my statutes

and be careful to observe my ordinances.

Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors;

and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

People: (in bulletin)

**As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God. (cont'd)**

**My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and behold the face of God?**

Invitation to Renew Baptismal Vows

READING from Romans 6:3-11 NRSV

Reader C:

We who have been baptized into Christ Jesus
are baptized into his death, too.

We who have been buried with Christ Jesus,
will be raised with Christ from the dead
by the glory of God.

We will walk in newness of life.

United with Christ in a death like his,
we will certainly be united with Christ
in a resurrection like his.

Reader A:

Our old self was crucified with Christ,
destroying the body of sin
that we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

Whoever has died is freed from sin.

If we have died with Christ,
we believe that we will also live with Christ.

Reader C:

Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again;
death no longer has dominion.

The death Christ died,
Christ died to sin, once for all;
but the life Christ lives,
Christ lives to God.

We are dead to sin
and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Worship Leader:

- *You may pray over the assembled water in the font.*
- *Invite folks to remember their Baptisms, renew their covenant with God.*
- *Prepare congregation to receive a “wet blessing.”*
- *Hand out Blessing Wands to all Blessers.*

Guitarist: Please play a solo as blessings are offered.

Blessers: Sprinkle folks with font water saying: “Remember Your Baptism”

In the Dawn

Song “Morning Has Broken” BUNESSAN/Eleanor Farjeon

- 1) Morning has broken like the first morning...
- 2) Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven...
- 3) Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning...

READING from Mark 16:1-8

Reader A:

When the Sabbath was over,
Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome
bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Jesus.
And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen,
they went to the tomb.

Reader B:

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.

Reader A:

But the young man 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.”

Reader B:

So the women went out and fled from the tomb,
for terror and amazement had seized them;
and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Blow Conch – or make another significant sound

Reader C: Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

People: Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

Community Pastoral Prayer

Worship Leader:

In the radiant splendor of this most holy morn,
let us pray for the well-being of all God has created. (*cont'd*)

Will you join me in prayer? (see *worship bulletins*)

Worship Leader: In this place of great natural beauty, O Living God, we give thanks for this new day.

People: We ask Your blessing upon all creatures, all that You made in goodness and affection.

Worship Leader: As we gather here, Christians gather around the globe, to welcome the Risen Christ.

People: We ask Your blessing upon all peoples, and especially on this holy morning, all our sisters and brothers in Christ.

Worship Leader: Grateful that night has brightened into morning, we are thankful for Your eternal spiritual care of us.

People: We ask Your blessing upon each person for whom this Easter morning marks a new beginning.

Worship Leader: Blessed and restored, invited again to the miracle, we gather as Your Beloved Community.

People: We ask Your blessing upon all beings, that we all might rise with Christ today. Amen!

Song “Amazing Grace” NEW BRITAIN/John Newton

Guitarist leads

- 1) Amazing grace! How sweet the sound...
- 2) 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear...
- 3) Through many dangers, toils and snares...
- 4) The Lord has promised good to me...
- 5) When we've been there ten thousand years,

Blessing (by *Erasmus*)

Reader C:

Receive this blessing written by Erasmus, a Christian scholar, who lived during the 16th century:

Lord Jesus Christ,
 You are the sun that always rises,
 but never sets.
 You are the source of all life,
 creating and sustaining every living thing.
 You are the source of all food, material and spiritual,
 nourishing us in both body and soul.
 You are the light that dispels the clouds of error and doubt,
 and goes before us every hour of the day,
 guiding our thoughts and our actions.
 May we walk in Your Light,
 be nourished by Your Food, (*cont'd*)

be sustained by Your Mercy,
and be warmed by Your Love. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Everyone greets one another.

Benediction

Worship Leader:

In the peace and grace of this Easter morning
remember the words of the Luminous One in the tomb:
“He has been raised; he is not here.”

Christ has concurred death!
Go forth in peace with great hope!
Amen!

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