

Saturday, March 22, 2008  
Resurrection of Our Lord, Vigil of Easter

### **INTRODUCTION**

*This is the night! This is our Passover with Christ from darkness to light, from captivity to freedom, from death to life. Tonight is the heart of our celebration of the Three Days and the pinnacle of the church's year. The resurrection of Christ is proclaimed in word and sign, and we gather around a pillar of fire, hear ancient stories of our faith, welcome new sisters and brothers at the font, and share the food and drink of the promised land. Raised with Christ, we go forth into the world, aflame with the good news of the resurrection.*

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW)**

Eternal giver of life and light,  
this holy night shines with the radiance of the risen Christ.  
Renew your church with the Spirit given us in baptism,  
that we may worship you in sincerity and truth  
and may shine as a light in the world,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

### **READINGS**

Romans 6:3–11  
John 20:1–18

### **SECOND READING: Romans 6:3–11**

*We were incorporated into the death of Jesus Christ in baptism and so were liberated from the dominion of sin. We also anticipate that we will be incorporated into the resurrection of Christ and so will be liberated from the hold death has over our mortal bodies.*

<sup>3</sup>Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>For whoever has died is freed from sin. <sup>8</sup>But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup>We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup>The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup>So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

### **GOSPEL: John 20:1–18**

*John's Gospel describes the confusion and excitement of the first Easter: the stone is moved, disciples race back and forth, and angels speak to a weeping woman. Then, Jesus himself appears.*

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. <sup>2</sup>So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>3</sup>Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup>The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. <sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup>for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples returned to their homes.

<sup>11</sup>But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb;

<sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>14</sup>When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). <sup>17</sup>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.'" <sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Guided by your light, fed by your word, and washed into new life in Christ, we pray in confidence for the needs of the world

*A brief silence.*

Breathe your life-giving Spirit into the church, that dead to sin and alive in Christ, we may proclaim your saving acts. God of life,

**hear our prayer.**

Unite humankind with all creation, that created in your image we may reflect your promised covenant to all living things. God of life,

**hear our prayer.**

Shine your light upon the nations, that leaders may desire wisdom and peoples may be liberated from every oppression. God of life,

**hear our prayer.**

Walk with the newly baptized, that the joy of this night and the fellowship of this assembly may accompany them on their journey with the crucified and risen one. God of life,

**hear our prayer.**

Anoint the suffering with your oil of gladness, that all who weep from illness, isolation, poverty, or violence receive a sign of your overflowing mercy. God of life,

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Embolden all witnesses of the resurrection, that with the women at the tomb and all the saints, our whole beings may give you praise. God of life,

**hear our prayer.**

Accept these prayers and the prayers of our hearts, O God, for the sake of the crucified and risen one, Jesus Christ, our redeemer.

**Amen.**

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