

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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Easter Vigil

Saturday, April 8, 2023 • 6:30pm

Celebrating: The Rev. Noah H. Evans

Preaching: The Rev. Laura Di Panfilo

God loves you, no exceptions.

You are always welcome at God's table at St. Paul's.

St. Paul's is a spiritual home and welcoming community to people of all ages, generations, educational backgrounds, financial means, abilities and disabilities, races, ethnicities, and nationalities, without regard to sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity/expression, and with many different family and religious backgrounds. Some of us are lifelong Episcopalians; some were raised in other Protestant denominations or in the Roman Catholic Church; some are new to the Christian faith; some are not sure what they believe. There is a place here for you.

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Thank you!

Welcome and Greetings

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

Celebrant

Dear friends in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing his Word and celebrating his Sacraments, we share in his victory over death. Let us pray.

O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Celebrant The light of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

The Exsultet

The Exsultet is now sung by the Rev. Erin Morey

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels,
and let your trumpets shout Salvation
for the victory of our mighty King.

Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth,
bright with a glorious splendor,
for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.

Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church,
and let your holy courts, in radiant light, resound with the praises of your 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.*

The Lord be with you.

Answer

And also with you.

Cantor

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Answer

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people. This is the night, when you brought our 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 believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life. This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave. How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you gave a Son. How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord. How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and man is reconciled to God. Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning – he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Liturgy of the Word

Celebrant

Let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, how God saved God's people in ages past; and let us pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

The First Lesson

Selections from Genesis 1

The story of creation, as taken from the book of Genesis:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And God said, "Let there be light."

And there was light. And God saw that the light was good.

Then God said, "Let the waters be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." ... "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit.

And so it was. And God saw that it was good.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night." ... "Let the waters swarm with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth." ... "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind — livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth. And it was so. And God saw that it was good.

God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness. So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, every tree with seed in its fruit ... every beast of the earth, every bird of the heavens, everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given. You shall have them for food."

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Here ends the lesson.

The Second Lesson
Selections from Genesis 2-3

The story of The Fall, taken from the book of Genesis:

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ... And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths ... and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Here ends the lesson.

Music: Jesus Christ the Apple Tree
Steven Cosnek, Tenor

Derek Holman (1931-2019)

*The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green;
The trees of nature fruitless be, compared with Christ the Apple Tree.*

*His beauty doth all things excel, by faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see, in Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.*

*For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought;
I missed of all but now I see 'tis found in Christ the Apple Tree.*

*I'm weary with my former toil - here I will sit and rest awhile, under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.*

*This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the Apple Tree.*

The Third Lesson
Selections from Exodus

The story of God's deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea, from the Book of Exodus:

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, "What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? ... For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you, lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them."

When Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, the Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians.

Here ends the lesson.

Music: The First Song of Moses

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

Song 1 from *The Hymns and Songs of the Church* (1623)

*O, that the praises of the Lord be sung
For He a most renowned triumph has won:
Both horse and man into the sea he flung
And with them together there hath overthrown.
The Lord is He, whose strength has made me strong:
And He is my salvation and my song.*

*The Lord shall ever and forever reign,
His sovereignty shall never have an end.
For when a Pharaoh did unto the main,
With chariots and with horsemen, down descend,
But through the very inmost of the same
The seed of Israel safe and dry shod came.*

The Fourth Lesson

Isaiah 55:1-3a, 6-11

The story of God's gift of salvation offered freely to all, as proclaimed by the prophet Isaiah:

Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; et the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Here ends the lesson.

The Fifth Lesson

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The story of the valley of dry bones, as foretold by the prophet Ezekiel:

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know."

Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord." So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them.

Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act,'" says the Lord.

Here ends the lesson.

Hymn: Breathe on me, Breath of God

The Gospel

Matthew 28:1-10

The story of the Resurrection, as told by Matthew.

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The Sermon

The Rev. Laura Di Panfilo

Presentation and Examination of the Candidate

Celebrant The Candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

Parents and Godparents I present Noah Gabriel Ryan to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

Celebrant Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?

Parents and Godparents I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

Parents and Godparents I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Parents and Godparents I renounce them.

Celebrant Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Parents and Godparents I renounce them.

Celebrant Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Parents and Godparents I renounce them.

Celebrant Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

Parents and Godparents I do.

Celebrant Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Parents and Godparents I do.

Celebrant Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

Parents and Godparents I do.

Please stand as you are able.

Celebrant Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support this person in his life in Christ?

People We will.

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Celebrant Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his death and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you, therefore, now that our Lenten observance is ended, to join with this person who is committing himself to Christ to renew the solemn promises:

The Baptismal Covenant

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

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

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you cherish the wondrous works of God, and protect the beauty and integrity of all creation?

People I will, with God's help.

Prayers for the Candidate

Celebrant Let us now pray for this person who is to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

Leader Deliver him, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Open his heart to your grace and truth.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Fill him with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Keep him in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Teach him to love others in the power of the Spirit.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Send him into the world in witness to your love.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Bring him to the fullness of your peace and glory.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Celebrant Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and forever. *Amen.*

Thanksgiving over the Water

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Celebrant

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior.

To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. *Amen.*

The Baptism

Noah, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever. *Amen.*

Be with us as a light to the world. *Amen.*

Celebrant

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin and have raised him to the new life of grace. Sustain him, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give him an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. *Amen.*

Celebrant

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

Celebrant and People

We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

Announcements

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Thank you!

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Music: If ye then be risen with Christ

Orlando Gibbons

Verse anthem soloists: Regina Brinza and Annette Tierney, Sopranos; Emily Hastings-Keene, Mezzo Soprano

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,
where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

The Great Thanksgiving, Eucharistic Prayer A

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Celebrant

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People **Hymnal S 128**

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *Amen.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Agnus Dei

Hymnal S 165

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the people of God.

Everyone is welcome to receive communion. Please come forward to receive through the center aisle, returning through the side aisles. You are welcome to receive just the bread, or the bread and the wine. Gluten-free wafers are available. Please take the bread in your hand and sip the wine from the chalice. For sanitary reasons, we ask you not to dip the host in the wine. If you would like communion brought to you, please let a greeter know.

Communion Music: I know that my Redeemer liveth, from *Messiah*
Emily Hastings-Keene, Mezzo Soprano

G. F. Handel (1685-1759)

*I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day, upon the earth
And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.
For now is Christ risen from the dead
The first fruits of them that sleep, of them that sleep.*

Post Communion Prayer—said together

Almighty and ever living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

Closing Hymn: Jesus Christ is Risen today, Alleluia!

Hymnal 207

Dismissal

The worship is ended, the service begins.
Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

**Postlude: Toccata, from *Symphony for Organ No. 5*
Jonathan Wooding, Organ**

Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937)

Music Notes

The Easter proclamation: Alleluia! The Lord is Risen! The Lord is Risen, indeed! What do these words mean, and how does Easter music amplify this emphatic proclamation? It should awaken every fiber of our human existence to that Grace.

Our Easter hymns compel us to breathe deeply, for every note proclaims the triumph over death that Christ has won for us. Our hearts beat more quickly when we sing Easter hymns for the first time this year. At the Offertory anthem, the choir sings Orlando Gibbons's "If ye then be risen with Christ," a setting of Saint Paul's letter to the Colossians that articulates the basis of the meaning of life: We have died with Christ. We now live in and with Christ!

We go into the world rejoicing – "Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia." – to the Widor Toccata, played this Easter by Jonathan Wooding. To see an empty tomb, Nicodemus was speechless. When the risen Lord Christ revealed himself to Mary Magdalene, she immediately proclaimed his resurrection.

Alleluia! The Lord is Risen! The Lord is Risen, indeed!

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