

The Great Vigil of Easter



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

P.O. Box 2255

Batesville, Arkansas, 72503

Main Street at Fifth

870-793-2203

April 4, 2026

9:00 pm



Easter Gifts 2026



In Memory Of:

The Rev. Robert F. Bartusch, Nancy Bartusch, Y. M. Massey, Betty Hail Massey, Conway Hail, Jr., and Attie Lee Turner *by Steve & Ellen Massey*

Betty Gillmore & Joseph G. Pilot, Jr., Dwight Nelson Ford *by Dwight Ford and Karis Bufford Ford*

Wayne & Anna Mae McSpadden, Jim & Bobbie Wilson, MaDonna Smith, Elley Lindsey, Jeanne Roepcke and Our Grandparents *by Jacqui & Scott McSpadden*

Mike & Patty Healey, Clyde & Marian McGinnis, Martha Sue Smith, and Susie Farris *by Jon & Martha Healey*

Carter Jeffery, Jr., Coleen Shane Waldrip, Joe H. Waldrip, Sr., Joe H. Waldrip, Jr., Elfrieda Guenzel Shane, Buddy Shane, Fitzhugh Spragins and J. Higginbottom *by Susan Waldrip Jeffery*

Nick Avants *by Shelba Avants*

In Thanksgiving For:

Karis Bufford Ford *by Dwight Ford and Alan Bufford*

Our children & grandchildren *by Jacqui & Scott McSpadden*

Jeremy, Kristen, Caleb, Jordan, and Myka Jeffery and Larry Jack Guenzel *by Susan Waldrip Jeffery*

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

Priest The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Priest Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

The Priest continues

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.

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.**

Liturgy of the Word

The congregation extinguishes their candles at this time.

The Celebrant introduces the Scripture readings, saying

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

All sit.

Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21

Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea.

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, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? 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; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

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; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the

Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then 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 in the pillar of fire and cloud 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, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." 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 chariots and the chariot drivers, 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; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

Reader The Word of the Lord
People **Thanks be to God**

Canticle 8 (Said together)

The Song of Moses

I will sing to the Lord, for he is lofty and uplifted; *
the horse and its rider has he hurled into the sea.
The Lord is my strength and my refuge; *
the Lord has become my Savior.
This is my God and I will praise him, *
the God of my people and I will exalt him.
The Lord is a mighty warrior; *
Yahweh is his Name.
The chariots of Pharaoh and his army has he hurled into the sea; *
the finest of those who bear armor have been
drowned in the Red Sea.
The fathomless deep has overwhelmed them; *

they sank into the depths like a stone.
 Your right hand, O Lord, is glorious in might; *
 your right hand, O Lord, has overthrown the enemy.
 Who can be compared with you, O Lord, among the gods? *
 who is like you, glorious in holiness,
 awesome in renown, and worker of wonders?
 You stretched forth your right hand; *
 the earth swallowed them up.
 With your constant love you led the people you redeemed; *
 with your might you brought them in safety to your holy dwelling.
 You will bring them in and plant them *
 on the mount of your possession,
 The resting-place you have made for yourself, O Lord, *
 the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hand has established.
 The Lord shall reign *
 for ever and for ever.

Brenda Bittle, LEM, says

Let us pray.

(Silence)

O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Isaiah 55:1-11

Salvation offered freely to all.

So, 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. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord
People **Thanks be to God**

Brenda Bittle, LEM, says

Let us pray.

(Silence)

O God, you have created all things by the power of your Word, and you renew the earth by your Spirit: Give now the water of life to those who thirst for you, that they may bring forth abundant fruit in your glorious kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Celebrant addresses the people, all standing.

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 renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his holy catholic Church.

The Celebrant then says

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

The candles at the Altar may now be lighted from the Paschal Candle.

After the Altar Candles are lit, the Celebrant says to the people

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

The Great Noise

The lights in the nave and chancel are also turned on. Bells will be rung in great celebration. Our Lord is risen!

1. Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and
 peace to his peo-ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven-ly King, al-
 might-y God and Fa-ther, we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we
 praise you for your glo-ry. 3. Lord Je-sus Christ,
 on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you
 take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;
 5. you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-
 ceive our prayer. 6. For
 you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,
 7. you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the
 Ho-ly Spi-rit, in the glo-ry of
 God the Fa-ther. A - men.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrant then says

O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection: Stir up in your Church that Spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Epistle

Romans 6:3-11

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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. 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. 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. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

All stand.

At the Cross

1. A - las! and did my Sav - ior bleed, and
 2. Was it for crimes that I have done, He
 3. Well might the sun in dark - ness hide, and
 4. Thus might I hide my blush - ing face while
 5. But drops of tears can ne'er re - pay the

1. did my Sov' - reign die? Would He de - vote that
 2. groaned up - on the tree? A - maz - ing pit - y!
 3. shut its glo - ries in; when God, the might - y
 4. His dear cross ap - pears; dis - solve my heart in
 5. debt of love I owe; Here, Lord, I give my -

1. sa - cred head for sin - ners such as I?
 2. Grace un - known! And love be - yond de - gree!
 3. mak - er, died for His own crea - ture's sin.
 4. thank - ful - ness, and melt mine eyes to tears.
 5. self a - way; 'tis all that I can do.

At the cross, at the cross, where I first — saw the light, and the
 bur - den of my heart rolled a - way; it was there by faith I re -

Words: Isaac Watts, 1707; refrain Ralph E. Hudson, 1885
 Music: Ralph E. Hudson, 1885

ceived my sight, and now I am hap - py all the day.

Holy Gospel

Luke 24:1-12

All stand.

Deacon or Priest

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

On the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women who had come with Jesus from Galilee came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Deacon or Priest

The Gospel of the Lord.

People

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Vs 4 & 5 of At the Cross sung

Homily

Rev.Carolyn Adhola

Silence

Prayers of the People, Form VI

All stand.

The Leader and People pray responsively

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;

For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For all bishops and other ministers;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. You may add your prayers of intercession silently or aloud.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence

The People may add their own thanksgivings

We will exalt you, O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.
We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom;

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

Silence may be kept.

Leader and People

**Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;
in your compassion forgive us our sins,
known and unknown,
things done and left undone;
and so uphold us by your Spirit
that we may live and serve you in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of your Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The Celebrant says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. ***Amen.***

The Peace

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord

Holy Communion

The Celebrant says

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:2

The people stand or kneel.

The Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night before he died for us, 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, according to his command, O Father,

Celebrant and People

We remember his death, we proclaim his resurrection, we await his coming in glory.

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with blessed Paul and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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.***

The Celebrant then continues

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

People and Celebrant

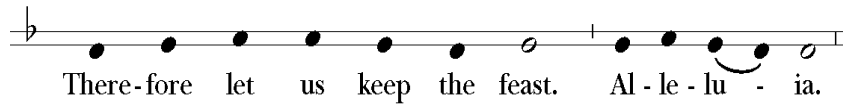
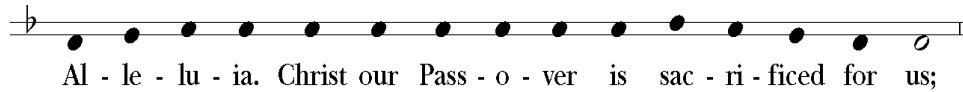
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**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.***

Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.



The Celebrant says

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All are invited to participate fully in our service and receive communion—all are welcome at Christ's Holy Table.

Communion Hymn 178 Alleluia

Descant

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

Refrain

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Give thanks to the

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

ris - en Lord. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Give

1-4 *Final Ending*

Praise to his Name. Name.

Praise to his Name. Name.

1 Je - sus is Lord of all the earth.

2 Spread the good news o'er all the earth:

3 We have been cru - ci - fied with Christ.

4 Come, let us praise the liv - ing God,

Repeat Refrain

He is the King of cre - a - tion.

Je - sus has died and has ris - en. Al - le -

Now we shall live for ev - er.

joy - ful - ly sing to our Sa - vior.

The descant may be sung after stanzas 3 and 4.

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

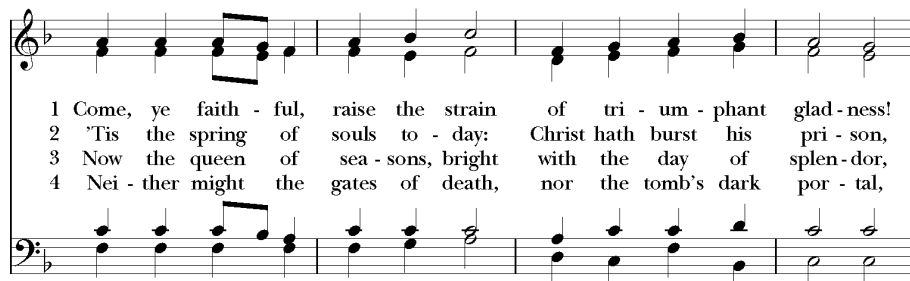
**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. *Amen.***

Blessing

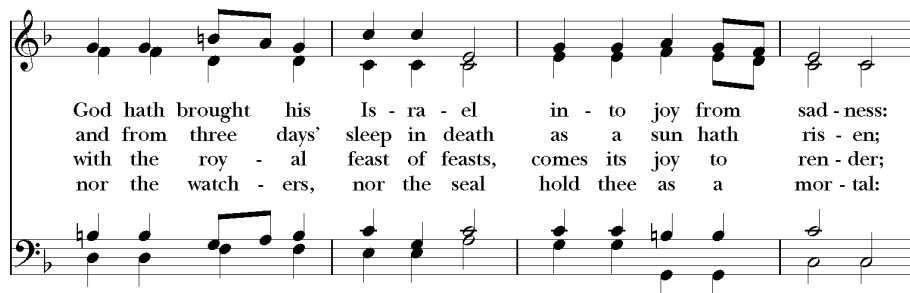
The priest blesses the people, saying

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. ***Amen.***

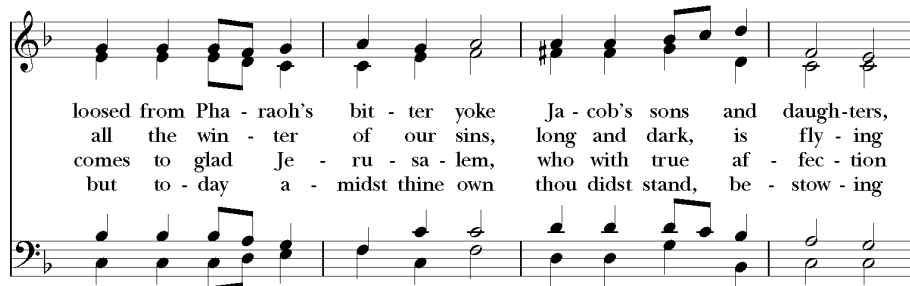
Post Communion Hymn 199 *Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain*



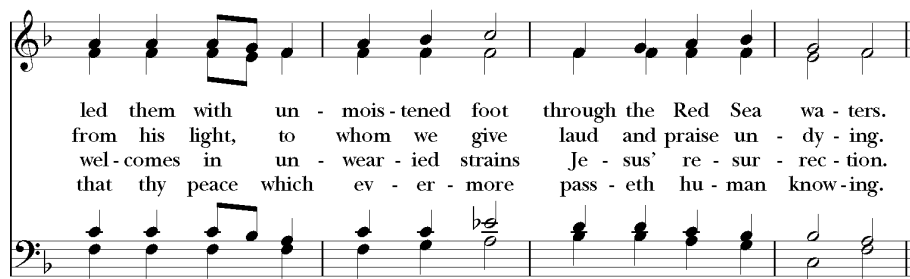
1 Come, ye faith - ful, raise the strain of tri - um - phant glad - ness!
 2 'Tis the spring of souls to - day: Christ hath burst his pri - son,
 3 Now the queen of sea - sons, bright with the day of splen - dor,
 4 Nei - ther might the gates of death, nor the tomb's dark por - tal,



God hath brought his Is - ra - el in - to joy from sad - ness:
 and from three days' sleep in death as a sun hath ris - en;
 with the roy - al feast of feasts, comes its joy to ren - der;
 nor the watch - ers, nor the seal hold thee as a mor - tal:



loosed from Pha - raoh's bit - ter yoke Ja - cob's sons and daugh - ters,
 all the win - ter of our sins, long and dark, is fly - ing
 comes to glad Je - ru - sa - lem, who with true af - fec - tion
 but to - day a - midst thine own thou didst stand, be - stow - ing



led them with un - mois - tened foot through the Red Sea wa - ters.
 from his light, to whom we give laud and praise un - dy - ing.
 wel - comes in un - wear - ied strains Je - sus' re - sur - rec - tion.
 that thy peace which ev - er - more pass - eth hu - man know - ing.

Dismissal

Celebrant
People

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
 Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Today's Ministers

Celebrant: Rev.Carolyn Adhola
Choir Director & Organist: Kristian Ameigh
Eucharist Ministers: Brenda & Nikki Bittle
Lector: Virginia Wray
Ushers: Carol Crosby & Mike Mundy
Altar Guild: Jo Cargill-Krug & Nelda Mitchell