

The Easter Liturgy

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Introduction

According to ancient custom there is no celebration of the Eucharist on Easter Eve. The orders of Morning and Evening Prayer offer adequate liturgical provision for the day. It is particularly important that Evening Prayer should be treated, by the style of its celebration, as belonging to the Eve, and not as the first service of Easter, anticipating the Easter Liturgy itself.

From earliest times Christians have gathered through the night of Easter to recall the story of God's saving work, from creation through to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, the Easter Liturgy is not merely a presentation of God's work. It is meant to be a real experience of new life for the worshipper, a passing from darkness to light which offers hope to all the faithful. It is therefore important that the preparation is prayerful and thorough.

The Easter Vigil marks the end of the emptiness of Holy Saturday, and leads into the celebration of Christ's resurrection. The singing of the Exsultet, the ancient hymn of triumph and rejoicing, links this night of our Christian redemption to the Passover night of Israel's redemption out of Egypt. Christian baptism is a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, a dying to sin in order to be reborn in him, and the Easter Vigil was from early Christian times a preferred occasion for baptism. It is fittingly a time when those who are already Christians may repeat with renewed commitment the promises of their own baptism, and strengthen their sense of incorporation into the royal and priestly ministry of the whole people of God. The Easter Gospel is proclaimed with all the joy and splendour that the church can find.

The Easter Eucharist may follow immediately on the Vigil, or be deferred until Easter Day. All the resources of the church – music, flowers, bells, colours – are used to celebrate Christ's resurrection. The 'Alleluia', which has been silent throughout Lent, returns.

Now the queen of seasons, bright
with the day of splendour,
with the royal feast of feasts,
comes its joy to render.

(John of Damascus)

Three Patterns

Pattern A

The earliest Christian observance of Easter consisted of a vigil of watching and waiting, fasting and prayer, that lasted through the hours of darkness. Because the vigil began after evening prayer when, as every night, the evening candle was lit, in the Western Church on this particular night this light ceremony was eventually understood as symbolizing the return of the light of Christ and the beginning of the Easter celebration. This tradition lies behind the development of Pattern A.

Pattern A begins with the lighting of a new fire from which the Easter Candle is then lit. Here, the resurrection is proclaimed from the outset in the Service of Light. The Easter Candle, together with the candles held by the individual worshippers, should, if possible, illuminate the church. This illustrates the way that Christians understand the Old Testament and interpret life itself in the light of the resurrection of Jesus. The history of our salvation in the Scriptures is heard in the light of the Easter mystery. The Service of Light reaches its climax with the Easter Proclamation.

The Old Testament readings from the Vigil then follow. We hear the story of our salvation and are invited to reflect our own personal journey in the light of the Easter revelation. The inner dynamics of this service could be drawn out by, for example, lighting a small candle from the Easter Candle after each reading, symbolizing the truth that we understand that reading in the light of Easter.

Pattern A essentially uses the Vigil as an extended Liturgy of the Word.

Pattern B

In the earliest forms of Easter Vigil the Old Testament Scriptures were read and reflected upon, until the resurrection was proclaimed in the Eucharist at cockcrow. This tradition forms the basis of Pattern B, which follows a storytelling approach.

Pattern B begins with the lighting of a small fire or light by which the story of salvation is read. However, this light is *not* the Easter light and all effort should be made to avoid any confusion with it.

The story of salvation is told through Old Testament readings selected from the vigil readings. Each reading adds to the story and a sense of expectation gradually increases until the service reaches its climax in the revelation of the resurrection.

Pattern B is more effective with a lengthy Vigil rather than simply an extended Liturgy of the Word. The structure is designed to be flexible and is particularly appropriate if the Easter Liturgy is an all-night service, when a more informal approach could be adopted. The Vigil may be held in a different location from the rest of the service, for example a church hall, or even in the open air by the light of a bonfire.

Pattern B lends itself to an adventurous and creative approach. For example, the Bible readings could be dramatized or enacted, and each reading could be followed by silence, interactive Bible study, artistic activity (including the marking of the Easter Candle), discussion, testimony, drama, intercession, singing or whatever is appropriate for the context. Choruses, spiritual songs or appropriate hymnody could replace the Psalm. If the Vigil is to last all night there could be specific points for eating and drinking that are related to the readings, until the climax is reached in the Service of Light and the Easter Eucharist.

Patterns A and B reflect two different developments of the vigil tradition and each has its own particular dynamic and rationale which needs to be understood. Here we provide fully worked-out services for both which can be adapted to local circumstances and custom.

If either of these vigil patterns is used, it is important to make a conscious decision which one is to be followed. Each of these structures has its own inner logic. Careful thought should be given as to which is chosen and why.

The Dawn Service

In addition to Patterns A and B we also offer a third option. In recent years a practice has developed where Christians gather outside at dawn to celebrate the resurrection. These celebrations are usually held at a special place such as a hilltop or a riverside, and consequently demand a more informal treatment than is possible in or immediately outside a church building. This is the rationale behind the Dawn Service (pages 398–400). This is not a fully worked-out service but a flexible, outline structure with some resources and suggested ways of celebrating Easter morning.

The Four Main Elements of the Easter Liturgy

The Easter Liturgy contains four main elements which are intended to form a single whole but may also be celebrated separately, as is shown in the different ways that churches over the years have used and adapted the material.

These elements of lighting the Easter Candle and hearing the Scriptures developed into two of the four key constituent parts of the Easter Liturgy, namely the Service of Light and the Vigil. The other two are the Liturgy of Initiation and the Eucharist or Holy Communion.

The Vigil

This is probably the oldest feature of the Easter celebrations. From its earliest times the Church would keep watch through the night and meditate on the mighty works of God. Christians would pray until the earliest hours of the morning, when Christ's resurrection was acclaimed. The Vigil is properly a service for the night and should never begin before sunset on Holy Saturday. The heart of the Vigil is the reading of key passages from Scripture telling of God's saving love. See the Notes to the Easter Vigil (pages 372–374) for further guidance.

The Service of Light

The Service of Light proclaims the resurrection of Christ from the dead in word and action, in silence and sound. The Easter Candle, symbolizing Christ, the light of the world, is lit and the light is carried through the church and progressively passed to the whole congregation. The Exsultet, an ancient Easter song of praise, is sung as the climax of this part of the liturgy.

The Liturgy of Initiation

The Easter Liturgy is not just one of the Easter services but a major baptismal event, because baptism and Easter have been closely linked from at least the end of the second century. Lent became the period of preparation for entering into the Church's fellowship through baptism at Easter. Candidates entered into the life of Christ's death and resurrection in the midst of the Church's celebration of them. It is therefore appropriate that there should be a celebration of Baptism (of those able to answer for themselves) and/or Confirmation during the Easter Liturgy, or at the very least, there should be a Re-affirmation of Baptismal Vows by the Christian community as a public declaration of their union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

The Eucharist

The celebration of the Eucharist is the proper climax to the Easter Liturgy when we are sacramentally reunited with our risen Lord. The most appropriate time for a celebration of Holy Communion is in the early hours of Easter morning, but if it is celebrated during the night it should be as late as possible, preferably after midnight.

It is important to note that even if there is a non-eucharistic Vigil, there must be at least one celebration of the Holy Communion in every parish church on Easter Day.

Preparing for the Easter Liturgy

Before focusing on the detail, it is necessary to consider how the elements of the Easter celebration are to be presented.

Through the centuries different ways of celebrating these events have developed.

- ¶ Some celebrate the Easter Liturgy as one service throughout the night, beginning on the evening of Holy Saturday and reaching its climax at dawn.
- ¶ Alternatively, some churches have the Vigil and the Service of Light on the Saturday night, leaving the baptismal and eucharistic liturgies to the Sunday morning.
- ¶ Others gather on the Saturday evening or before dawn for a short Vigil, leaving the rest of the Easter Liturgy to be celebrated later in the day.
- ¶ Yet others keep the Easter ceremonies for the main service on Easter Sunday morning, omitting the Vigil altogether.
- ¶ Some relocate the worship to another significant place in or around the community.

However the Easter celebrations are structured and conducted, all possible variations derive from the one Easter Liturgy, which needs to be seen as a whole even if it is celebrated in distinct stages.

Recently many churches have recognized that the main service on Easter morning sees the largest all-age congregation of the year and want to take account of this in their planning. For those who conclude that the mid-morning service should be non-eucharistic a worked-out plan for a Service of the Word for Easter using some elements from the Easter ceremonies is offered. However, it must be reiterated that there must be at least one celebration of the Holy Communion in each parish church on Easter Day.

The Easter Liturgy: Pattern A

(The Service of Light followed by The Vigil)

Structure

¶ The Service of Light

[Marking of the Easter Candle]
The Lighting of the Easter Candle
The Exsultet

¶ The Vigil

Introduction to the Readings
Old Testament Readings
The Easter Acclamation
Gloria in Excelsis
The Collect
New Testament Reading
[Psalm]
Gospel Reading
Sermon

¶ The Liturgy of Initiation

Presentation of the Candidates *
The Decision / Renewal of Baptismal Vows *†
Signing with the Cross *
Prayer over the Water *†
Profession of Faith *†
Baptism *
 [Declarations]
Confirmation *
 [Affirmation of Baptismal Faith]
 [Reception into the Communion of the Church of England]
[Commission]
Welcome *

† The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Peace
 Preparation of the Table
 Taking of the Bread and Wine
 The Eucharistic Prayer
 The Lord's Prayer
 Breaking of the Bread
 Giving of Communion
 Prayer after Communion

† The Dismissal

The Blessing
 [Giving of a Lighted Candle]
 The Dismissal

* indicates elements of the service of Holy Baptism and/or Confirmation
 (*Common Worship: Christian Initiation*, pages 106–125) required if baptism and
 confirmation are to be administered during this service.

† indicates elements of the Liturgy of Initiation required whether or not baptism
 and/or confirmation are to be administered.

The Easter Liturgy: Pattern A

Notes

1 The Place

According to local circumstances, the Vigil may be kept in a different place from the rest of the Easter Liturgy. If there is a crypt that might be particularly appropriate.

2 Silence

Silence is an important aspect of the waiting and should form a key element of the Vigil, even if it is to be informal in nature. Silence should also be observed at the points prescribed in the rubrics of the Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion in *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, pages 155–183.

3 Lighting of the Building

During the Vigil the building should be lit by the Easter Candle and the candles held by the individual participants. If possible, no other lights should be used. It is desirable for the building to be as dark as possible during the Vigil. If the Easter Candle cannot illuminate the place from which the Bible is read during the Vigil, the lights surrounding that place should be lit directly from it.

4 Marking the Easter Candle

The Marking of the Easter Candle may take place at the beginning of the Service of Light during the acclamation ‘Christ yesterday and today ...’. For instructions about marking the Easter Candle, see pages 408–409.

5 The Lighting of the Taper for the Easter Candle

According to ancient tradition, the light for the Easter Candle was taken from newly kindled fire and not from an already existing source of light. It may also be brought in from a vestry or another adjoining room. Whatever fire or taper is used it should not be possible to confuse it with the Easter Candle.

If the Easter Candle is to be lit from a newly kindled fire the Easter Liturgy may begin outside the church building.

6 Lighting the Easter Candle

Where possible, the ministers should go to the entrance of the church without passing through the building itself. If a fire is lit outside the building, it is desirable for the people not to remain inside the building but to gather around the fire and to follow the ministers in the procession into the church.

7 The Easter Candle

The Easter Candle should be placed in a prominent position from Easter Day until Pentecost, and it is traditional for it to be lit at all principal services during this period. It should also be used at baptism and may be used at funerals throughout the year. Where a number of different congregations come together to celebrate the Easter Liturgy, only one Easter Candle should be used. If it is desired to take Easter Candles back to other churches, they may be lit from the first candle at the end of the service and carried in procession out of the building. For a rite for Welcoming the Easter Candle into the Church, see pages 418–420.

8 Candles

Small, unlit candles should be distributed to members of the congregation before the service begins. These will be lit from the Easter Candle during the Service of Light. They should be extinguished during the singing of the Gloria in excelsis when the church lights are illuminated. They may be lit again for the Re-affirmation of Baptismal Vows and the Dismissal.

9 When to use the Easter Acclamation

The Easter Acclamation is first used immediately before the Gloria in excelsis. It may be said or sung, and may be repeated as many times as desired, with gradually increasing volume. It may be used again at any appropriate point later in the service.

10 Noise, Music and Light

After the Easter Acclamation the joy of the resurrection is properly demonstrated by noise, bells, music etc. This may continue into and through the singing of the Gloria in excelsis.

It is not appropriate for bells to be rung before the Easter Liturgy or for organ music to be used until after the Easter Acclamation. If possible, bells should be rung at the end of the service.

11 The Readings

A wide variety of possible readings has been provided. Unless it is intended that the Vigil should last right through the night, it is suggested that an appropriate selection is made according to the length of time available. See the Notes to the Vigil (pages 372–374).

It is desirable that the reading from Genesis 1 be used. The Exodus 14 reading should always be used.

12 The Vigil Responses and Collects

If Pattern A is followed, the christological responses before the collects should be used during the sequence of readings, as each Scripture passage, read by the light of the Easter Candle, is understood in the light of who Christ truly is.

13 The Liturgy of Initiation

If there are candidates for baptism and/or confirmation, the Liturgy of Baptism and/or Confirmation should be woven into the fabric of the whole Easter Liturgy, in the way indicated on page 328.

For clarity, the whole text of the baptismal liturgy for candidates who are able to answer for themselves has been included in the rite. Rubrics indicate the alterations which should be made when there are no candidates for baptism.

If possible, the candidates for baptism should not enter the church beyond the font until after they are baptized.

14 Intercessions

Intercessions, especially for the newly baptized and confirmed, may be said; or the names of the newly baptized and confirmed might be mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer G, as follows:

Strengthen those who have now become your people
through the waters of rebirth and the gift of the Holy Spirit: *N, N and N.*
Help them to walk in newness of life.

The Prayer of Humble Access (*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, page 181) may be used immediately prior to the Giving of Communion.

15 Liturgical Colour

The liturgical colour is white or gold.

The Easter Liturgy: Pattern A

The Service of Light

The building being in darkness, the ministers go in silence to the main entrance, one of them carrying the unlit Easter Candle.

All stand and face the ministers.

The president says

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
on this most holy night,
when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life,
the Church invites her children throughout the world
to come together in vigil and prayer.
This is the Passover of the Lord.
We remember his death and resurrection
by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries,
confident that we shall share his victory over death
and live with him for ever in God.

The new fire may be kindled. One of these prayers may be used

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
set us aflame with the fire of your love,
and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

(or)

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
Your steadfast love extends to the heavens
and your faithfulness never ceases.
Illuminate our hearts with your wisdom
and strengthen our lives with your word,
for you are the fountain of life;
in your light we see true light.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

The Easter Candle may be marked here. (See pages 408–409 for guidance on how this is done.)

Christ yesterday and today,
the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
to him be glory and power,
through every age and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Nails or incense studs may be inserted into the Easter Candle.

By his holy and glorious wounds
may Christ our Lord guard and keep us.

All **Amen.**

The president lights the Easter Candle, saying

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

The minister bearing the Candle enters the building, followed by the other ministers, and they pause just inside the entrance.

The minister bearing the Candle raises it and says or sings

The light of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The procession of the Easter Candle moves further into the building and then stops. The versicle and response are repeated, and the candles of those around are lit from the Easter Candle.

The procession continues to the centre of the building and stops once more. The versicle and response are again repeated, and the candles of those around are lit.

The Easter Candle is placed on a stand in the midst of the building.

The Exsultet

The Exsultet (the Easter Song of Praise) may be sung or said by a minister standing near the Candle. For notes and other forms of the Exsultet, see pages 410–417.

Either *The minister sings the Introduction*

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
O Universe, dance around God's throne!
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
Sound the victorious trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in glory, revealing the splendour of your creation,
radiant in the brightness of your triumphant King!
Christ has conquered! Now his life and glory fill you!
Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Saviour, our Lord of life, shines upon you!
Let all God's people sing and shout for joy.

Or *Alternatively, the Introduction could be sung by the whole congregation to a tune of the metre 10.10.10.10 using the following form. Note: not all tunes of 10.10.10.10 metre are suitable.*

All **Sing, choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!**
Around God's throne exult in harmony!
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!
Salute your King in glorious symphony!

Sing, choirs of earth! Behold, your light has come!
The glory of the Lord shines radiantly!
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!
The night is past, the day of life is here!

Sing, Church of God! Exult with joy outpoured!
The gospel trumpets tell of victory won!
Your Saviour lives; he's with you evermore!
Let all God's people sound the long Amen!

The minister continues

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is right and good that with hearts and minds and voices
we should praise you, Father almighty, the unseen God,
through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who has saved us by his death,
paid the price of Adam's sin,
and reconciled us once again to you.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

For this is the Passover feast,
when Christ, the true Lamb of God, is slain
whose blood consecrates the homes of all the faithful.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night when you first saved our ancestors,
freeing Israel from her slavery
and leading her safely through the sea.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night when Jesus Christ vanquished hell,
broke the chains of death
and rose triumphant from the grave.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night when all who believe in him are freed from sin,
restored to grace and holiness,
and share the victory of Christ.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night that gave us back what we had lost;
beyond our deepest dreams
you made even our sin a happy fault.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

Most blessed of all nights!
Evil and hatred are put to flight and sin is washed away,
lost innocence regained, and mourning turned to joy.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

Night truly blessed, when hatred is cast out,
peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth
and all creation reconciled to you.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering.
Grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.

For Christ the morning star has risen in glory;
Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us!
Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!
Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever!

All **Amen.**

The Vigil

A hymn may be sung, during which lights are taken from the Easter Candle to illuminate the Bible from which the Vigil readings will be read.

The president may introduce the Vigil using these or other appropriate words

As we await the risen Christ, let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, recalling how he saved his people in ages past and in the fullness of time sent his Son to be our Redeemer; and let us pray that through this Easter celebration God may bring to perfection in each of us the saving work he has begun.

Any of the readings suggested on pages 375–397 (with or without the accompanying psalms and prayers) or other suitable passages of Scripture may be used.

The Easter Acclamation

The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

A joyful fanfare may be played, bells rung, cymbals clashed, noise made.

Gloria in Excelsis

The Gloria in excelsis is used, during which all the candles in the church are lit from the Easter Candle, the lights are switched on and the people's candles extinguished.

**All Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

The Collect

President Let us pray that we may reign with the risen Christ in glory.

Silence is kept.

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.

All **Amen.**

(or)

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

New Testament Reading

Romans 6.3-11

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 114 may be said or sung.

Psalm response:

All **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel Reading

Either of these acclamations may herald the Gospel reading

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

All **Alleluia.**

He has defeated the powers of death.

All **Alleluia.**

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing.

All **Alleluia.**

He has the words of eternal life.

All **Alleluia.**

(or)

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;

I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

All **Alleluia.**

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to N.

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Year A: Matthew 28.1-10

Year B: Mark 16.1-8

Year C: Luke 24.1-12

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

The Liturgy of Initiation

If there are candidates for baptism and/or confirmation, they gather with the president at the baptismal font. The congregation gathers at or faces the baptismal font. A canticle, psalm, hymn or litany may be used (see pages 421–424).

The president says

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery we have died and been buried with him in baptism.

Presentation of the Candidates

If there are no candidates for baptism and/or confirmation, this section is omitted.

The candidates may be presented to the congregation. Where appropriate, they may be presented by their sponsors.

The president asks the candidates for baptism

Do you wish to be baptized?

I do.

(If there are candidates for confirmation, see Common Worship: Christian Initiation, page 111.)

Testimony by the candidates may follow.

The president addresses the whole congregation

Faith is the gift of God to his people.

In baptism the Lord is adding to our number
those whom he is calling.

People of God, will you welcome these candidates
and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

All **With the help of God, we will.**

The Decision / Renewal of Baptismal Vows

The president addresses the congregation and candidates for baptism and/or confirmation

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

All I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

All I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

All I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

All I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

All I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

All I come to Christ.

Where there are strong pastoral reasons, the alternative form of the Decision (Common Worship: Christian Initiation, page 168) may be used.

Signing with the Cross

If there are no candidates for baptism, this section is omitted.

The president or another minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate for baptism, saying

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

The president may invite their sponsors to sign the candidates with the sign of the cross. When all the candidates for baptism have been signed, the president says to them

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

**All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ
against sin, the world and the devil,
and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
restore in you the image of his glory,
and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All Amen.

Prayer over the Water

The president stands before the water of baptism and says

Praise God who made heaven and earth,
All **who keeps his promise for ever.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ
 was baptized in the river Jordan,
 we thank you for the gift of water
 to cleanse us and revive us.

All **[Saving God,
 give us life.†]**

We thank you that through the waters of the Red Sea
 you led your people out of slavery
 to freedom in the Promised Land.

All **[Saving God,
 give us life.]**

We thank you that through the deep waters of death
 you brought your Son,
 and raised him to life in triumph.

All **[Saving God,
 give us life.]**

Bless this water, that your servants who are washed in it
 may be made one with Christ in his death and in his resurrection,
 to be cleansed and delivered from all sin.

All **[Saving God,
 give us life.]**

Send your Holy Spirit upon them,
 bring them to new birth in the household of faith
 and raise them with Christ to full and eternal life;
 for all might, majesty, authority and power are yours,
 now and for ever. Amen.

All **[Saving God,
 give us life.]**

† *The bracketed refrain **Saving God, give us life** is optional. If it is used, it may be said or sung by all.*

*The first phrase **Saving God** (italicized) may be said or sung by a deacon or other minister.*

Profession of Faith

The people reaffirm their faith. If there are candidates for baptism, they join in making the Profession of Faith.

The president addresses the congregation

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

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

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

All **I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

All **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.
Amen.**

Where there are strong pastoral reasons, the alternative Profession of Faith (Common Worship: Christian Initiation, page 178) may be used.

Baptism

If there are candidates for baptism, the president may say to each one

N, is this your faith?

Each candidate answers in their own words, or

This is my faith.

The president or another minister dips each candidate in water, or pours water on them, saying

N, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

If the newly baptized are clothed with a white robe, a hymn or song may be used, and then a minister may say

You have been clothed with Christ.
As many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

If those who have been baptized were not signed with the cross immediately after the Decision, the president signs each one now.

The president says

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

All **Amen.**

Whether or not there have been baptisms, hymns or songs may be sung as the waters of baptism are sprinkled over the people. Alternatively, each member of the congregation may be invited to renew their commitment to Christ by going to the water and making the sign of the cross with it on their forehead.

The president says

Almighty God,
we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith
with all who have been baptized in your name.
Keep us faithful to our baptism,
and so make us ready for that day
when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Confirmation

If there are candidates for confirmation, see Common Worship: Christian Initiation, pages 118–119.

Commission

If candidates have been baptized or confirmed, the president may use this Commission here or at the beginning of the Sending Out

Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God.

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

With the help of God, I will.

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

With the help of God, I will.

Will you proclaim by word and example
the good news of God in Christ?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people,
loving your neighbour as yourself?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society,
by prayer for the world and its leaders,
by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

With the help of God, I will.

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

Amen.

Welcome

If baptism has not been administered, this section is omitted.

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:
N and N, by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

All **We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

The congregation may greet the newly baptized.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows (page 367).

The Easter Liturgy: Pattern B

(The Vigil followed by The Service of Light)

Structure

¶ The Vigil

Lighting the Fire (or the lights by which the readings are read)
Introduction to the Readings
Readings, Psalms and Prayers

¶ The Service of Light

[Marking of the Easter Candle]
Presentation of the Candidates *
The Decision / Renewal of Baptismal Vows *†
The Lighting of the Easter Candle
Signing with the Cross *
The Exsultet
The Easter Acclamation
Gloria in Excelsis
The Collect
New Testament Reading
[Psalm]
Gospel Reading
Sermon

¶ The Liturgy of Initiation

Prayer over the Water *†
Profession of Faith *†
Baptism *
 [Declarations]
Confirmation *
 [Affirmation of Baptismal Faith]
 [Reception into the Communion of the Church of England]
[Commission]
Welcome *

† The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Peace
 Preparation of the Table
 Taking of the Bread and Wine
 The Eucharistic Prayer
 The Lord's Prayer
 Breaking of the Bread
 Giving of Communion
 Prayer after Communion

† The Dismissal

The Blessing
 [Giving of a Lighted Candle]
 The Dismissal

* indicates elements of the service of Holy Baptism and/or Confirmation
 (*Common Worship: Christian Initiation*, pages 106–125) required if baptism and
 confirmation are to be administered during this service.

† indicates elements of the Liturgy of Initiation required whether or not baptism
 and/or confirmation are to be administered.

The Easter Liturgy: Pattern B

Notes

1 The Place

The Vigil should, where possible, be kept in a place other than the church. This may be a hall, a crypt or outside gathered around a bonfire. The congregation could then move outside for the lighting of the new fire and the Easter Candle, and process into a dark church behind the Easter Candle.

2 Lighting for the Vigil

It must be possible within the overall darkness of the building or gathering place where this part of the liturgy is celebrated to read the Scriptures which are at its core. This section should begin with the lighting of a small fire or an oil lamp or a small electric light, possibly coloured, solely to enable this to happen.

If a fire is lit for the purpose of providing light for the Old Testament Scriptures to be read, this should be the fire which is later blessed in the Service of Light and from which the Easter Candle is lit. If possible, the lighting of two fires should be avoided.

If the Vigil is to stand alone, all lights should be extinguished at the end. Alternatively, they may be put out gradually during the reading of the Passion Narrative, where this is included.

3 The Readings

A wide variety of possible readings has been provided. Unless it is intended that the Vigil should last through the night, it is suggested that an appropriate selection is made according to the length of time available. See the Notes to the Vigil (pages 372–374).

It is desirable that the reading from Genesis 1 be used. Exodus 14 should always be used. If the Vigil stands alone as a service, it may end with the reading of part or all of one of the narratives of the Passion, during or after which all the lights may be extinguished.

4 The Vigil Prayers

If Pattern B is followed the ‘Blessed are you ...’ prayers, introduced by the biddings, should be used during the sequence of readings.

5 Silence

Silence is an important aspect of the waiting and should form a key element of the Vigil, even if the service is to be informal in nature. Silence should also be observed at the points prescribed in the rubrics of the Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion (*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, pages 155–183).

6 Marking the Easter Candle

The Marking of the Easter Candle may be done as an activity at some point during the Vigil. Alternatively it may take place at the beginning of the Service of Light during the acclamation ‘Christ yesterday and today...’. For instructions about marking the Easter Candle, see pages 408–409.

7 The Lighting of the Taper for the Easter Candle

According to ancient tradition, the light for the Easter Candle was taken from newly kindled fire and not from an already existing source of light. Therefore, if possible, the taper used to light the Easter Candle should be lit from whatever light has been used to illuminate the Bible for the Vigil readings. It may also be brought in from a vestry or another adjoining room. Whatever fire or taper is used it should not be possible to confuse it with the Easter Candle.

8 The Easter Candle

The Easter Candle should be placed in a prominent position from Easter Day until Pentecost, and it is traditional for it to be lit at all principal services during this period. It should also be used at baptism and may be used at funerals throughout the year. Where a number of different congregations come together to celebrate the Easter Liturgy, only one Easter Candle should be used. If it is desired to take Easter Candles back to other churches, they may be lit from the first candle at the end of the service and carried in procession out of the building. For a rite for Welcoming the Easter Candle into the church, see pages 418–420.

9 Candles

Small, unlit candles should be distributed to members of the congregation either before the Vigil or before the Service of Light. These will be lit from the Easter Candle in the course of the service, and should be extinguished during the singing of the Gloria in excelsis when the church lights are illuminated. They may be lit again for the Re-affirmation of Baptismal Vows and at the Dismissal.

10 When to use the Easter Acclamation

The Easter Acclamation is first used immediately before the Gloria in excelsis. It may be said or sung, and may be repeated as many times as desired, with gradually increasing volume. It may be used again at any appropriate point later in the service.

11 Noise, Music and Light

After the Easter Acclamation the joy of the resurrection is properly demonstrated by noise, bells, music, waving etc. This may continue into and through the singing of the Gloria in excelsis. It may also be suitable for such noise to accompany the acclamations after the Gospel reading.

It is not appropriate for bells to be rung before the Easter Liturgy or for organ music to be used until after the Easter Acclamation. If possible, bells should be rung at the end of the service.

12 The Liturgy of Initiation

If there are candidates for baptism and/or confirmation, the Liturgy of Baptism and/or Confirmation should be woven into the fabric of the whole Easter Liturgy. This may be done in the way indicated on page 348.

For clarity, the whole text of the baptismal liturgy for candidates who are able to answer for themselves has been included in the rite. Rubrics indicate the alterations which should be made when there are no candidates for baptism.

Alternatively, the following may be omitted from the Service of Light:

- ¶ The Presentation of the Candidates
- ¶ The Decision / Renewal of Baptismal Vows (except for the Lighting of the Easter Candle)
- ¶ The Signing with the Cross

In this case, the Liturgy of Initiation from Pattern A (pages 341–347) should be used.

If possible, the candidates for baptism should not enter the church beyond the font until after they are baptized.

13 Intercessions

Intercessions, especially for the newly baptized and confirmed, may be said; or the names of the newly baptized and confirmed might be mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer G, as follows:

Strengthen those who have now become your people
through the waters of rebirth and the gift of the Holy Spirit: *N, N and N*.
Help them to walk in newness of life.

The Prayer of Humble Access (*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, page 181) may be used immediately prior to the Giving of Communion.

14 Liturgical Colour

The liturgical colour is white or gold.

The Easter Liturgy: Pattern B

The Vigil

The ministers enter in silence.

If the reading of the creation story is not used in the Vigil a minister reads these verses

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.

Genesis 1.1

The light by which the readings are to be read is lit.

The minister says one of these prayers

Lighten our darkness,
Lord, we pray,
and in your great mercy
defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of your only Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

(or)

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
Your steadfast love extends to the heavens
and your faithfulness never ceases.
Illuminate our hearts with your wisdom
and strengthen our lives with your word,
for you are the fountain of life;
in your light we see true light.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All **Blessed be God for ever.**

The president may introduce the Vigil using these or other appropriate words

This is the night in which our Lord Jesus Christ 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 through word and sacrament we share in his victory over death.

As we await the risen Christ, let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, recalling how he saved his people in ages past and in the fullness of time sent his Son to be our Redeemer. Let us pray that through this Easter celebration God may bring to perfection in each of us the saving work he has begun.

Any of the readings suggested on pages 375–397 (with or without the accompanying psalms and prayers) or other suitable passages of Scripture may be used.

The Service of Light

The building being in darkness, the ministers go in silence to the main entrance, one of them carrying the unlit Easter Candle.

If a fire has not already been lit, the new fire is lit at this point. If a fire has already been lit around which the congregation has gathered for the Vigil, that fire may then be blessed as the new fire from which the Easter Candle is lit.

All stand and face the ministers.

The president says

Eternal God,
 who made this most holy night
 to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
 set us aflame with the fire of your love,
 and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

*If the Easter Candle has not been marked during the Vigil, it may be marked here.
 (See pages 408–409 for guidance on how this is done.)*

Christ yesterday and today,
 the beginning and the end,
 Alpha and Omega,
 all time belongs to him,
 and all ages;
 to him be glory and power,
 through every age and for ever.

All **Amen.**

*If there are candidates for baptism, they are presented at this point.
 (See page 341.)*

Nails or incense studs may be inserted into the Easter Candle.

By his holy and glorious wounds
 may Christ our Lord guard and keep us.

All **Amen.**

The Decision / Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Standing before the Candle, the president says

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery we have died and been buried with him in baptism. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

All I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

All I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

All I repent of them.

The president lights the Easter Candle, saying

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

The president says

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Therefore I ask:

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

All I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

All I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

All I come to Christ.

Signing with the Cross

If there are no candidates for baptism, this section is omitted.

The president or another minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate for baptism, saying

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of the cross.

The president may invite their sponsors to sign the candidates with the sign of the cross.

When all the candidates for baptism have been signed, the president says to them

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

**All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ
against sin, the world and the devil,
and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
restore in you the image of his glory,
and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All Amen.

The minister bearing the Candle enters the building, followed by the other ministers, and they pause just inside the entrance.

The minister bearing the Candle raises it and says or sings

The light of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The procession of the Easter Candle moves further into the building and then stops.

The versicle and response are repeated, and the candles of those around are lit from the Easter Candle.

The procession continues to the centre of the building and stops once more.

The versicle and response are again repeated, and the candles of those around are lit.

The Easter Candle is placed on a stand in the midst of the building.

The Exsultet

The Exsultet (the Easter Song of Praise) may be sung or said by a minister standing near the Candle. For notes and other forms of the Exsultet, see pages 410–417.

Either *The minister sings the Introduction*

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
O Universe, dance around God's throne!
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
Sound the victorious trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in glory, revealing the splendour of your creation,
radiant in the brightness of your triumphant King!
Christ has conquered! Now his life and glory fill you!
Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Saviour, our Lord of life, shines upon you!
Let all God's people sing and shout for joy.

Or *Alternatively, the Introduction could be sung by the whole congregation to a tune of the metre 10.10.10.10 using the following form. Note: not all tunes of 10.10.10.10 metre are suitable.*

All **Sing, choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!**
Around God's throne exult in harmony!
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!
Salute your King in glorious symphony!

Sing, choirs of earth! Behold, your light has come!
The glory of the Lord shines radiantly!
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!
The night is past, the day of life is here!

Sing, Church of God! Exult with joy outpoured!
The gospel trumpets tell of victory won!
Your Saviour lives; he's with you evermore!
Let all God's people sound the long Amen!

The minister continues

All The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
All **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is right and good that with hearts and minds and voices
we should praise you, Father almighty, the unseen God,
through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who has saved us by his death,
paid the price of Adam's sin,
and reconciled us once again to you.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

For this is the Passover feast,
when Christ, the true Lamb of God, is slain
whose blood consecrates the homes of all the faithful.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night when you first saved our ancestors,
freeing Israel from her slavery
and leading her safely through the sea.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night when Jesus Christ vanquished hell,
broke the chains of death
and rose triumphant from the grave.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night when all who believe in him are freed from sin,
restored to grace and holiness,
and share the victory of Christ.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

This is the night that gave us back what we had lost;
beyond our deepest dreams
you made even our sin a happy fault.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

Most blessed of all nights!
Evil and hatred are put to flight and sin is washed away,
lost innocence regained, and mourning turned to joy.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

Night truly blessed, when hatred is cast out,
peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth
and all creation reconciled to you.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering.
Grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.

For Christ the morning star has risen in glory;
Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us!
Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!
Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever!

All **Amen.**

The Easter Acclamation

The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

A joyful fanfare may be played, bells rung, cymbals clashed, noise made.

Gloria in Excelsis

The Gloria in excelsis (page 338) is used, during which all the candles in the church are lit from the Easter Candle, the lights are switched on and the people's candles extinguished.

The Collect

President Let us pray that we may reign with the risen Christ in glory.

A period of silent prayer is kept.

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.

All **Amen.**

(or)

God of glory,
by the raising of your Son
you have broken the chains of death and hell:
fill your Church with faith and hope;
for a new day has dawned
and the way to life stands open
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

New Testament Reading

Romans 6.3-11

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 114 may be said or sung.

Psalm response:

All Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel Reading

Either of these acclamations may herald the Gospel reading

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

All Alleluia.

He has defeated the powers of death.

All Alleluia.

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing.

All Alleluia.

He has the words of eternal life.

All Alleluia.

(or)

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;

I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

All Alleluia.

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to N.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

Year A: Matthew 28.1-10

Year B: Mark 16.1-8

Year C: Luke 24.1-12

At the end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Liturgy of Initiation

If there are candidates for baptism and/or confirmation, they gather with the president at the baptismal font. The congregation gathers at or faces the baptismal font. A canticle, psalm, hymn or litany may be used (see pages 421–424).

Prayer over the Water

The president stands before the water of baptism and says

Praise God who made heaven and earth,
who keeps his promise for ever.

All

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ
was baptized in the river Jordan,
we thank you for the gift of water
to cleanse us and revive us.

**[Saving God,
give us life.†]**

All

We thank you that through the waters of the Red Sea
you led your people out of slavery
to freedom in the Promised Land.

**[Saving God,
give us life.]**

All

We thank you that through the deep waters of death
you brought your Son,
and raised him to life in triumph.

**[Saving God,
give us life.]**

All

Bless this water, that your servants who are washed in it
may be made one with Christ in his death and in his resurrection,
to be cleansed and delivered from all sin.

**[Saving God,
give us life.]**

All

Send your Holy Spirit upon them,
bring them to new birth in the household of faith
and raise them with Christ to full and eternal life;
for all might, majesty, authority and power are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

**[Saving God,
give us life.]**

All

† *The bracketed refrain **Saving God, give us life** is optional. If it is used, it may be said or sung by all.*

*The first phrase **Saving God** (italicized) may be said or sung by a deacon or other minister.*

Profession of Faith

The people reaffirm their faith. If there are candidates for baptism, they join in making the Profession of Faith.

The president addresses the congregation

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

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

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

All **I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

All **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.
Amen.**

Where there are strong pastoral reasons, the alternative Profession of Faith (Common Worship: Christian Initiation, page 178) may be used.

Baptism

If there are candidates for baptism, the president may say to each one

N, is this your faith?

Each candidate answers in their own words, or

This is my faith.

The president or another minister dips each candidate in water, or pours water on them, saying

N, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

If the newly baptized are clothed with a white robe, a hymn or song may be used, and then a minister may say

You have been clothed with Christ.
As many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

If those who have been baptized were not signed with the cross immediately after the Decision, the president signs each one now.

The president says

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

All **Amen.**

Whether or not there have been baptisms, hymns or songs may be sung as the waters of baptism are sprinkled over the people. Alternatively, each member of the congregation may be invited to renew their commitment to Christ by going to the water and making the sign of the cross with it on their forehead.

The president says

Almighty God,
we thank you for our fellowship in the household of faith
with all who have been baptized in your name.
Keep us faithful to our baptism,
and so make us ready for that day
when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Confirmation

If there are candidates for confirmation, see Common Worship: Christian Initiation, pages 118–119.

Commission

If candidates have been baptized or confirmed, the president may use this Commission here or at the beginning of the Sending Out

Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve God.

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

With the help of God, I will.

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

With the help of God, I will.

Will you proclaim by word and example
the good news of God in Christ?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people,
loving your neighbour as yourself?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society,
by prayer for the world and its leaders,
by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

With the help of God, I will.

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

Amen.

Welcome

If baptism has not been administered, this section is omitted.

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:
N and N, by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

All **We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

The congregation may greet the newly baptized.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Peace

The president says

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said,
‘Peace be with you.’
Then were they glad when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

Alleluia.

All The peace of the risen Christ be always with you
and also with you. Alleluia.

These words may be added

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace, greeting one another with these words

Christ is risen.

Preparation of the Table Taking of the Bread and Wine

A hymn may be sung. If the people have gathered at the place of baptism they should now move to gather around the holy table.

The gifts of the people may be gathered and presented.

The table is prepared and bread and wine are placed upon it.

One of these prayers at the preparation of the table may be said

Lord of life,
with unbounded joy we offer you our sacrifice of praise.
As we are fed with the bread of heaven
may we know your resurrection power;
through Christ our risen Lord.

All **Amen.**

(or)

Be present, be present,
Lord Jesus Christ,
our risen high priest;
make yourself known in the breaking of bread.

All **Amen.**

The president takes the bread and wine.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The president uses one of the authorized Eucharistic Prayers.

One of the following Proper Prefaces may be used where appropriate

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
almighty and eternal Father,
and on this night of our redemption
to celebrate with joyful hearts
the memory of your wonderful works.
For by the mystery of his passion
Jesus Christ, your risen Son,
has conquered the powers of death and hell
and restored in men and women the image of your glory.
He has placed them once more in paradise
and opened to them the gate of life eternal.
And so, in the joy of this Passover,
earth and heaven resound with gladness,
while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation
sing for ever the hymn of your glory:

(or)

But chiefly are we bound to praise you
because you raised him gloriously from the dead.
For he is the true paschal lamb who was offered 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 restored to us everlasting life.

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All **Our Father in heaven ...**

(or)

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All **Our Father, who art in heaven ...**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Jesus says, I am the bread of life,
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

All **Lord, our hearts hunger for you;
give us this bread always.**

The Agnus Dei may be used as the bread is broken.

Giving of Communion

The president says

Alleluia. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

All **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

The president and people receive communion. The following or other authorized words of distribution are used

The body of Christ, broken for you.

Amen.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

During the distribution hymns and anthems may be sung.

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

This Post Communion or another suitable prayer is said

God of Life,
who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
have delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin,
that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Blessing

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

The president says either

God the Father,
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

All **Amen.**

God the Son,
who in bursting from the grave has won a glorious victory,
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

All **Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit,
who filled the disciples with the life of the risen Lord,
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

All **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

(or)

The God of peace,
who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,
that great shepherd of the sheep,
through the blood of the eternal covenant,
make you perfect in every good work to do his will,
working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

A hymn may be sung.

The candles of the congregation are re-lit.

Giving of a Lighted Candle

If baptism has not been administered, this section is omitted.

The president or another person may give each of the newly baptized a lighted candle, lit from the Easter Candle.

When all the newly baptized have received a candle, the president says

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and has given us a place with the saints in light.

You have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

All **Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

The Dismissal

A minister says

With the risen life of Christ within you,
go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

All **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

The Vigil

Notes

1 The Setting

Most congregations will keep the Easter Vigil in the church but, according to local circumstances, in Pattern B it may be kept in a different place from the rest of the Easter Liturgy, especially if the church has already been decorated for the Easter celebration. This may be a crypt, a church hall, a smaller chapel within the church or a baptistery. It may be kept outside around a bonfire or any other suitable place.

2 A Variety of Styles

The Vigil may be handled in a number of different ways, ranging from the purely formal to the totally informal. The formal approach may use the reading, the silence, the psalm and the collect as set. A sermon may be preached after some or all of the readings. On the other hand there may be children present, which necessitates a more informal approach. The Bible readings could be read dramatically using different voices, or enacted. Each reading could be followed by silence, interactive Bible study, artistic activity, discussion, testimony, drama, intercession, singing or whatever is appropriate for the context. Choruses, spiritual songs or appropriate hymnody could replace the psalm. If Pattern B is followed, the Marking of the Easter Candle could be an activity in response to one of the readings, as could other preparatory actions for the Baptismal Liturgy such as filling a baptismal ewer. If the Vigil is to last all night there could be specific points for eating and drinking that are related to the readings.

Even if an informal style is to be adopted for the Vigil, opportunities for silence should be available, either as part of the structure of the worship or as a physical place where silence can be encountered by the participants.

3 Lighting

If Pattern B is followed, it is desirable for the building to be as dark as possible during the Vigil, except for essential lighting. However, it is important that some light is provided by which the Bible can be seen for the readings. This could be a small bonfire, or an oil lamp, or a small electric light, possibly coloured. It is important that this form of light should not be confused with the Easter Candle which will be used later. For some elements of the liturgy more light may be needed. The provision of extra lighting at key moments in the narrative may enhance the dramatic effect of the readings.

4 The Prayers and Responses

A choice of two very different styles of prayer has been offered to accompany each of the readings.

¶ The first style follows a traditional collect structure and may be introduced by a christological response. The prayer then relates the reading to the work of Christ. It is suggested that these responses and collects should be used with Pattern A, where the Vigil readings are read by the light of the Easter Candle and therefore a christological emphasis is appropriate.

¶ The second style, beginning ‘Blessed are you ...’, reflects the theme of the reading without referring directly to the work of Christ. It is therefore more appropriately used in the story-telling approach of Pattern B.

5 The Choice of Readings

A wide variety of readings has been provided, from which an appropriate selection may be made according to the length of time available. The selection could follow different routes through the reading, each following a particular theme or motif. Some examples are offered below, though others may be devised. However, a minimum of three Old Testament readings should be chosen. It is desirable that the reading from Genesis 1 be used. The reading from Exodus 14 should always be used.

Baptismal Theme

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 7 etc	<i>Noah and the flood</i>
Jonah 1.1 – 2.10	<i>Jonah and the fish</i>
Exodus 14 etc	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Ezekiel 36.24-28	<i>Sprinkled with the water of life</i>
Ezekiel 47.1-12	<i>The river of life</i>

Women in Salvation

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 3	<i>The Fall</i>
Exodus 12.1-24	<i>The Passover</i>
Exodus 14 etc	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Ruth 1.1 etc	<i>The faithfulness of Ruth</i>
1 Samuel 1.1-end	<i>Hannah and the birth of Samuel</i>
Proverbs 8 etc	<i>In praise of wisdom</i>
Isaiah 66.1 etc	<i>The Lord is like a mother</i>

Salvation Theme

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 3	<i>The Fall</i>
Genesis 7 etc	<i>Noah and the flood</i>
Exodus 3.1-6	<i>Moses and the burning bush</i>
Exodus 14 etc	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Jonah 1.1 – 2.10	<i>Jonah and the fish</i>
Daniel 3.1-28	<i>The three young men in the furnace</i>
Daniel 6.1-24	<i>Daniel in the lions’ den</i>

Renewal Theme

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 22.1-18	<i>Abraham and Isaac</i>
Exodus 12.1-24	<i>The Passover</i>
Exodus 14 etc	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Jeremiah 31.31-34	<i>God promises a new heart</i>
Ezekiel 36.24-28	<i>Sprinkled with the water of life</i>
Ezekiel 37.1-14	<i>The valley of dry bones</i>
Ezekiel 47.1-12	<i>The river of life</i>

Freedom Theme

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 3	<i>The Fall</i>
Exodus 3.1-6	<i>Moses and the burning bush</i>
Exodus 12.1-24	<i>The Passover</i>
Exodus 14 etc	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Isaiah 54.5-15	<i>I will save you from all your afflictions</i>
Ezekiel 47.1-12	<i>The river of life</i>
Zephaniah 3.14-end	<i>Jerusalem praises God</i>

The Vigil Readings

A minimum of three Old Testament readings should be chosen. It is desirable that the reading from Genesis 1 be used. The reading from Exodus 14 should always be used.

Genesis 1.1 – 2.4a	<i>The Creation</i>
Genesis 3	<i>The Fall</i>
Genesis 7.1-5, 11-18; 8.6-19; 9.8-13	<i>Noah and the flood</i>
Genesis 22.1-18	<i>Abraham and Isaac</i>
Exodus 3.1-6	<i>Moses and the burning bush</i>
Exodus 12.1-24	<i>The Passover</i>
Exodus 14.10-end; 15.1a	<i>Crossing the Red Sea</i>
Ruth 1.15-18; 2.1-13; 4.13-17	<i>The faithfulness of Ruth</i>
1 Samuel 1.1-end	<i>Hannah and the birth of Samuel</i>
Proverbs 8.1-8, 19-21; 9.4b-6	<i>In praise of wisdom</i>
Isaiah 54.5-15	<i>I will save you from all your afflictions</i>
Isaiah 55.1-11	<i>Let us return to the Lord who saves us</i>
Isaiah 66.6-16	<i>The Lord is like a mother</i>
Jeremiah 31.31-34	<i>God promises a new heart</i>
Ezekiel 36.24-28	<i>Sprinkled with the water of life</i>
Ezekiel 37.1-14	<i>The valley of dry bones</i>
Ezekiel 47.1-12	<i>The river of life</i>
Daniel 3.1-28	<i>The three young men in the furnace</i>
Daniel 6.1-24	<i>Daniel in the lions' den</i>
Jonah 1.1 – 2.10	<i>Jonah and the fish</i>
Zephaniah 3.14-end	<i>Jerusalem praises God</i>
Baruch 3.9-15, 32 – 4.4	<i>The commandments of life</i>

The Vigil Readings, Psalms and Prayers

¶ *Genesis 1–2: The Creation*

Genesis 1.1–2.4a

Psalm 104.1-7

Psalm response:

All **Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [Christ is the image of the unseen God;
through him all things were made.]

Almighty God,
you have created the heavens and the earth
and made us in your own image:
teach us to discern your hand in all your works
and your likeness in all your children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that we may see God's image restored.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
Your love cannot be contained
and overflows in the wonder of creation.
You formed the universe out of nothing
and moulded us from the clay of the earth.
All you have made sings of your marvellous deeds,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ Genesis 3: The Fall

Genesis 3

Psalm 51.1-7

Psalm response:

All **Have mercy on me, O God.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [As in Adam all die,
so in Christ shall all be made alive.]

Heavenly Father,
whose blessed Son was revealed
to destroy the works of the devil
and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life:
grant that we, having this hope,
may purify ourselves even as he is pure;
that when he shall appear in power and great glory
we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom;
where he is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that our merciful God will show compassion
on all who fall victim to the power of sin.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
The sin which we dare not confront breaks your heart
and nothing can be concealed from your sight,
yet you showed mercy to our ancestors.
Show mercy today to all who fall prey to sin's lure,
and shatter the power of evil,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ Genesis 7, 8, 9: *Noah and the flood*

Genesis 7.1-5, 11-18; 8.6-19; 9.8-13

Psalm 36

Psalm response:

All **The Lord makes my darkness to be bright.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[In baptism we died to sin.

All **In Christ we are raised to life.]**

Grant, Lord,
that we who are baptized into the death
of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
may continually put to death our evil desires
and be buried with him;
and that through the grave and gate of death
we may pass to our joyful resurrection;
through his merits,
who died and was buried and rose again for us,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will wash away all that corrupts his work
and restore in us the beauty for which we were made.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
In your perfect justice you hate the world's sin.
Noah and his family risked ridicule for your sake
yet their obedience brought them blessing.
Flood our world with the tide of your love
and rid us of all that disfigures your glorious creation,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ **Genesis 22:**
Abraham and Isaac

Genesis 22.1-18

Psalm 16.6-end

Psalm response:

All **In your presence is the fullness of joy.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [God so loved the world
that he gave his only Son.]

Almighty God,
whose chosen servant Abraham
faithfully obeyed your call
and rejoiced in your promise
that, in him, all the families of the earth should be blessed:
give us a faith like his,
that, in us, your promises may be fulfilled;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that we may have the courage and strength
to make the sacrifices our faith demands.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
Through the faithfulness of Abraham
all the children of earth are blessed.
Give us the courage to give up to you
those things that are most precious to us,
that in turn we may receive
the honour and the joy of your blessing,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

Exodus 3: Moses and the burning bush

Exodus 3.1-6

Psalm 27

Psalm response:

All **Wait patiently for the Lord.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [Your faith is tested by fire
to the praise and glory of Christ.]

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit
upon your Church in the burning fire of your love:
grant that your people may be fervent
in the fellowship of the gospel
that, always abiding in you,
they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray for a renewed vision for the people of God
and a new commitment to break the chains of oppression.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
You revealed yourself to your servant Moses
in the awesome wonder of the burning bush
and appointed him to lead your people
to freedom in the promised land.
By the fire of your Spirit today reveal yourself afresh
and strengthen us to free the enslaved
and break the bonds of the captive,
that they may openly sing your praise,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Exodus 12:
The Passover*

Exodus 12.1-24

Psalm 77.11-end

Psalm response:

All **With a mighty arm you redeem your people.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All **Therefore let us keep the feast.]**

God our Father,
you have invited us to share in the supper
which your Son gave to his Church
to proclaim his death until he comes:
may he nourish us by his presence,
and unite us in his love;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will feed and sustain his people
through the hard journeys of this life.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
With the dawning of their deliverance
your people ate the feast of freedom.
As Christ our Passover Lamb
gives hope to the hopeless and frees the ensnared,
establish the justice for which your heart yearns,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ Exodus 14: Crossing the Red Sea

(This reading must be used.)

Exodus 14.10-end; 15.1a

Canticle: The Song of Moses and Miriam (*Common Worship: Daily Prayer*, page 569)

Canticle response:

All **I will sing to the Lord,
who has triumphed gloriously.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

(or)

The Lord is my strength and my might.

All **He has become my salvation.]**

Lord God our redeemer,
who heard the cry of your people
and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery:
free us from the tyranny of sin and death
and, by the leading of your Spirit,
bring us to our promised land;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will give freedom to his enslaved people.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.

You heard the agony of your people
as they cried out from their slavery,
and you gave them Moses
to lead them to a land flowing with milk and honey.
Hear the cry of the enslaved and the homeless today
and lead us through the turbulent sea of life
to our true home with you,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Ruth 1, 2, 4:*
The faithfulness of Ruth

Ruth 1.15-18; 2.1-13; 4.13-17

Psalm 61

Psalm response:

All **O God, listen to my prayer.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [Christ remained faithful to death,
even death on a cross.]

Almighty God,
by whose grace alone we are accepted
and called to your service:
strengthen us by your Holy Spirit
and make us worthy of our calling;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray for perseverance and constancy in our walk of faith.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
In leaving mother, father and her native land
to follow her mother-in-law,
Ruth foreshadows the faithfulness of Jesus.
As she worked tirelessly to sustain an earthly life,
give us perseverance as we walk with Jesus
on the way that leads to eternal life with you,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

I Samuel I: *Hannah and the birth of Samuel*

I Samuel I. I-end

Canticle: A Song of Hannah (*Common Worship: Daily Prayer*, page 572)

Canticle response:

All **My heart exults in the Lord.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [Christ has come that we might have life,
life in all its fullness.]

Lord God of salvation,
you brought joy to Hannah through the gift of a child;
fulfil in us the promise of your creation,
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that we may see the fulfilment of our heart's desire
in this world and the next.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
After torment and tears
you brought life from the womb of Hannah.
Look upon your suffering people with the same compassion
and do not forget us,
that through the fulfilment of your promise
the barren may burst into life,
the mournful may be overwhelmed with joy,
and the mocked may find a voice to praise you,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ **Proverbs 8, 9:**
In praise of wisdom

Proverbs 8.1-8, 19-21; 9.4b-6

Canticle: A Song of Wisdom (*Common Worship: Daily Prayer*, page 599)

Canticle response:

All **Let us drink of the water of wisdom.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ is the bread of life.

All **Whoever comes to him will never hunger.]**

O God, forasmuch as without you
we are not able to please you;
mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray for the gift of wisdom for the leaders of our world.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
You call us to live by your wisdom,
which is more precious even than gold or silver.
As you beckon us to eat the bread of life
and drink the cup of suffering,
may we gather for ever at your table
and walk always in your way of love,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Isaiah 54:*
I will save you from all your afflictions

Isaiah 54.5-15

Psalm 30

Psalm response:

All **I will exalt you, O Lord.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ is the bridegroom.

All **The Church is his bride.]**

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will give hope to the grieving, the agonized and the dying.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
In your overwhelming compassion
you gather the poor and brokenhearted.
As we journey through this storm-tossed life,
comfort your people, wipe away our tears
and establish us in the security of your love,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ **Isaiah 55:**
Let us return to the Lord who saves us

Isaiah 55.1-11

Canticle: A Song of Deliverance (Common Worship: Daily Prayer, page 578)

Canticle response:

All **With joy you will draw water
 from the wells of salvation.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [Whoever comes to Christ will never be hungry.
All who believe in Christ will never thirst.]

Most merciful God,
 who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
 delivered and saved the world:
 grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
 we may triumph in the power of his victory;
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray for peace and justice throughout our world.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
 You quench the thirst of those who yearn for righteousness
 and satisfy the hunger of those who crave for justice.
 Lead your longing people back to peace,
 that with the mountains and hills
 we may burst into songs of joy,
 O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Isaiah 66:*
The Lord is like a mother

Isaiah 66.6-16

Psalm 113

Psalm response:

All **O praise the name of the Lord.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[We share Christ's sufferings
All **that we might know the power of his resurrection.]**

Almighty God,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:
pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,
and so bring us at last to your heavenly city
where we shall see you face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will hold and protect all who face abuse and rejection.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
As a mother comforts her child, so you comfort us.
When we face the dank darkness of death,
nurse us at your bosom
and enfold us in your arms of love
until we can sing the songs of justice and peace,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Jeremiah 31:*
God promises a new heart

Jeremiah 31.31-34

Psalm 51.8-18

Psalm response:

All **Make me a clean heart, O God.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[God will write his law on our hearts.

All **He will be our God and we will be his people.]**

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will rekindle in us a renewed love for him.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
Even when your people broke your covenant,
your heart cried out for them
and you remained steadfast as a faithful husband.
Renew in us our love for you
and write your law on our hearts,
that we may truly be your people, and you our God,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ **Ezekiel 36:**
Sprinkled with the water of life

Ezekiel 36.24-28

Psalm 42.1-7

Psalm response:

All **My soul longs for you, O God.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ gives the living water.

All **Christ is the fountain of eternal life.]**

Heavenly Father,
by the power of your Holy Spirit
you give to your faithful people new life
in the water of baptism.
Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit,
that we who are born again
may serve you in faith and love,
and grow into the full stature of your Son,
Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will give to the thirsting
a new outpouring of his refreshing spirit.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
When we are overwhelmed by the wasting world,
gather us again and renew us.
Create in us a new heart and a renewed spirit,
that we may be a people prepared
to live in your land and walk in your ways,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Ezekiel 37:*
The valley of dry bones

Ezekiel 37.1-14

Psalm 126

Psalm response:

All **The Lord has done great things for us.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ is the resurrection and the life.

All **Those who believe in Christ will never die.]**

Lord God of our salvation,
you speak the word to your scattered people,
and bring up our life from the valley of death:
breathe your Spirit upon your Church,
that we may live and stand before you
confident in your risen Son,
Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will breathe new life into his weary creation.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
You bring life from the darkest valley of death.
When hope is lost
and our dry bones are scattered in shame,
speak your word to your broken people,
that we may stand confidently before you,
and breathe your Spirit into us that we might live,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

Ezekiel 47: *The river of life*

Ezekiel 47.1-12

Psalm 46.1-5

Psalm response:

All **God is our refuge and strength.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

All [If we drink of the water that Christ gives
we will never thirst again.]

God, the giver of life,
whose Holy Spirit wells up within your Church:
by the Spirit's gifts equip us to live the gospel of Christ and make us eager
to do your will,
that we may share with the whole creation the joys of eternal life;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
[who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever].

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God's justice will flow like rivers in the deserts of this world.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
The river of life flows from your heart
and where that stream goes everything bursts into flower.
May your refreshing water
be a torrent of life in the deserts of this world,
bringing food to eat and healing to the nations,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ **Daniel 3:**
The three young men in the furnace

Daniel 3.1-28

Canticle: Bless the Lord and Benedicite (A Song of Creation)
(Common Worship: Daily Prayer, pages 602–603)

Canticle response:

All **Blessed is the Lord who does mighty wonders.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[When you walk through the waters Christ is with you.

All **We will never be consumed by the flames.]**

O God,
 you know us to be set
 in the midst of so many and great dangers,
 that by reason of the frailty of our nature
 we cannot always stand upright:
 grant to us such strength and protection
 as may support us in all dangers
 and carry us through all temptations;
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray for courage to remain faithful to Christ even through the fires of this life.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
 You rewarded the faithfulness of the three young men
 with your protection against the blazing fire.
 When the burning flames of life threaten to consume us,
 be faithful to us and transform our fear into your praise,
 O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

Daniel 6: *Daniel in the lions' den*

Daniel 6.1-24

Psalm 34.1-end

Psalm response:

All **I will bless the Lord at all times.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[The angels closed the lions' mouths.

All **Christ has saved us from the jaws of death.]**

Almighty Father,
whose Son was revealed in majesty
before he suffered death upon the cross:
give us grace to perceive his glory,
that we may be strengthened to suffer with him
and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will sustain us when evil threatens to overcome us.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
Your servant Daniel was devoted to you,
even in the face of the death threats of his enemies.
As your angels kept shut the jaws of death,
protect your people as they try to be faithful today
and stir in us a trust in your unfailing love,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ *Jonah 1:*
Jonah and the fish

Jonah 1.1 – 2.10

Psalm 130

Psalm response:

All **With the Lord there is mercy.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ has saved us from the pit of death.

All **He brought new life to the world.]**

Lord of all time and eternity,
you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father
in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son:
by the power of your Spirit
complete the heavenly work of our rebirth
through the waters of the new creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that we may share God's heart of compassion for the lost.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
In the face of wickedness and disobedience
you still looked lovingly
on the people of Nineveh and your prophet Jonah.
As we see your mighty salvation,
turn the hearts of the wicked to the ways of your love,
that the whole world might return to you,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ Zephaniah 3: Jerusalem praises God

Zephaniah 3.14-end

Psalm 98

Psalm response:

All **Sing to the Lord a new song.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Where, O death, is your victory?

All **Where, O death, is your sting?]**

Almighty God,
who called your Church to bear witness
that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:
help us to proclaim the good news of your love,
that all who hear it may be drawn to you;
through him who was lifted up on the cross,
and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will fill sad hearts with songs of joy.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.
You are the King who dwells in the midst of the people
as one who brings victory from the jaws of defeat.
Heal the sick and gather the outcast
and turn our shame into praise,
that we may sing aloud and exalt your name,
O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

¶ **Baruch 3, 4:**
The commandments of life

Baruch 3.9-15,32–4.4

Psalm 19.7-end

Psalm response:

All **You are my strength and my redeemer.**

Silence is kept.

With Pattern A

[Christ is the wisdom of God.

All **Christ has the words of eternal life.]**

Eternal God,
 whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life:
 grant us to walk in his way,
 to rejoice in his truth,
 and to share his risen life;
 who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

With Pattern B

Let us pray that God will reveal his ways of wisdom to the proud and powerful.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of our salvation.

You share your wisdom with the forsaken
 and open to us the way of life.

Give us wisdom, strength and understanding,
 that we may shine with the light of your glory
 and glow with gladness for you,

O Lord, our maker and redeemer.

All **Amen.**

The Dawn Service

Notes

1 Preceding Services

If there has been an all-night Vigil as part of Pattern B the Dawn Service might follow. Alternatively, some other all-night event might precede the Dawn Service. The congregation would move to the outside venue at the appropriate time. At that point others who have not participated in the all-night event could join those who have.

2 Timing

The service should begin before dawn, so that the sunrise can be part of the worship. The timing might so be arranged that the sounds of the awakening day become the backdrop to the people's song of Easter praise. The Easter Light should be lit at the first signs of dawn to emphasize the power of the light of Christ.

3 Place

Careful thought needs to be given to the venue of such a service. Many churches select places that are of significance to the community, or places where the Easter Liturgy can be seen, such as a hilltop. Places of local religious significance are especially suitable.

Let the venue influence the emphases within the service. If the service is on a hilltop, let the sunrise emphasize the coming of light into the world. If it is by a river, let elements of the baptismal liturgy come to the fore. If it is near a cave, focus on the empty tomb. If it is in a graveyard, let victory over death predominate; there could be reflection on the impact of the death of Jesus on his family and friends. If it is in a garden, use it as an Easter Garden. Look for connections between the venue and aspects of the Easter story and use the surroundings to bring out different elements within the Easter mystery. If more than one feature of the venue relates to the resurrection story, process from one area to another.

4 Vesture

Simple robes perhaps reflect the spirit of this outdoor service, but the liturgical colour of white or gold should not be forgotten.

5 Content

Even a service conducted out of doors should, if possible, contain aspects of all four elements of the Easter Liturgy (pages 328–347 or pages 348–371): the Service of Light, the Vigil, the Liturgy of Initiation and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, though these should be treated informally and with a light touch. If the service includes the Liturgy of the Eucharist, it does not replace a celebration of Holy Communion in the parish church on Easter Day.

6 Order

This shape is based on Pattern B for the Easter Liturgy. If Pattern A is followed, the lighting of the fire is followed immediately by the blessing of the fire and the lighting of the Easter Light.

7 Candles

Candles are unlikely to stay lit for long, if at all, so other alternatives should be explored. These could include light sticks, oil burners, hurricane lamps, mosquito flames and battery torches.

8 The Easter Light

Whatever form of light is used, care should be taken to ensure that the Easter Light does not go out during the service. If at all possible, the Easter Light should be an actual flame from which an Easter Candle might be lit in church at a later point.

There should only be one lighting of an Easter Candle for each church. If the lighting takes place in this service a light from it should be taken to the church to light the church's Easter Candle. For a rite for Welcoming the Easter Candle into the Church, see pages 418–420.

The Dawn Service: an Outline Shape

A fire may be lit, around which the stories may be shared. This prayer may be used as the fire is lit

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
Your steadfast love extends to the heavens
and your faithfulness never ceases.
Illuminate our hearts with your wisdom
and strengthen our lives with your word,
for you are the fountain of life;
in your light we see true light.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be God for ever.

There should be some element of waiting. Personal, historical and biblical stories of escape might be shared. If there is to be only one reading from the Old Testament this should be the crossing of the Red Sea from Exodus 14 (page 382). If the service is held at a riverside or on a beach, the congregation might gather at the water's edge for this reading.

At dawn an Easter Light is lit and an Easter Song of Praise may be sung.

As the Easter Light is lit, this prayer may be said

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light,
set us aflame with the fire of your love,
and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Easter Acclamation 'Alleluia. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia' is used. This might be followed by shouting, fireworks, party poppers, balloons, confetti and the use of other items of celebration.

The resurrection Gospel for the day is read.

A re-affirmation of baptismal vows which includes the Prayer over the Water may be used (see pages 342–344, 346). This might be done with whatever water is naturally available.

If Holy Communion is celebrated, an authorized Eucharistic Prayer is used.

Breakfast may be shared, possibly using John 21.3-11 as a Dismissal Gospel.

A Mid-morning Eucharist on Easter Day using Elements from the Easter Liturgy

Notes

- 1** This service is intended for use where there has been no Easter Liturgy which included the Service of Light. If the Easter Candle has already been lit at a previous service, the rite for Welcoming the Easter Candle into the Church (pages 418–420) should be used instead.
- 2** The Easter Liturgy is intended as a service for the night. It is important to present a mid-morning service in such a way that it does not seem to be a night service that is accidentally being celebrated during the morning.
- 3** The Easter Candle may be marked either before the service or during the Service of Light at the point indicated (see pages 408–409).

A Mid-morning Eucharist on Easter Day using Elements from the Easter Liturgy: an Outline Order

The Service of Light

The ministers go in silence to the main entrance, one of them carrying the unlit Easter Candle. All the lights in the building are switched off.

This acclamation may be used

- All* Christ yesterday and today,
the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
- All* **to him be glory and power,**
through every age and for ever. Amen.

The Easter Candle may be marked at this point if this has not already been done (see pages 408–409).

This is the day when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life. Throughout the world Christians celebrate the awesome power of God. As we hear his word and proclaim all that God has done, we can be confident that we shall share his victory over death and live with him for ever.

A minister lights the Easter Candle, saying

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

The minister carrying the Candle raises it and says or sings

- The light of Christ.
All **Thanks be to God.**

People may light their candles from the Easter Candle. Children may be encouraged to carry the light to people throughout the church.

The procession moves further into the building and then stops. The versicle and response are repeated.

When the minister carrying the Candle arrives at the front of the church it is placed on a stand in the midst of the building, and all other candles in the church are now lit.

The Exsultet (the Easter Song of Praise) may be said or sung by a minister standing near the candle (see pages 410–417).

The Liturgy of the Word

The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

A joyful fanfare may be played, bells rung, cymbals clashed, noise made, lights switched on and the people's candles extinguished.

The service continues with the Gloria in excelsis, the Collect of Easter Day and the Liturgy of the Word.

After the Sermon it is particularly appropriate for the congregation to re-affirm their baptismal vows using a form which includes the Prayer over the Water (pages 342–344, 346). Alternatively, the Thanksgiving for the Resurrection (pages 421–423) may be used.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows (page 367).

An Outline Service of the Word for Easter Day

Note

If the Easter Candle has already been lit at a previous service, the Service of Light, the Exsultet and the Easter Acclamation are replaced by the rite for Welcoming the Easter Candle into the Church (pages 418–420).

The Service of Light

The ministers go in silence to the main entrance, one of them carrying the unlit Easter Candle. All the lights in the building are switched off.

Christ yesterday and today,
All the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
All to him be glory and power,
through every age and for ever. Amen.

The Easter Candle may be marked at this point if this has not already been done (see pages 408–409).

This is the day when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life. Throughout the world Christians celebrate the awesome power of God. As we hear his word and proclaim all that God has done, we can be confident that we shall share his victory over death and live with him for ever.

The president lights the Easter Candle, saying

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
banish all darkness from our hearts and minds.

The minister carrying the Candle raises it and says or sings

The light of Christ.
All Thanks be to God.

People may light their candles from the Easter Candle. Children may be encouraged to carry the light to people throughout the church.

The procession moves further into the building and then stops. The versicle and response are repeated.

When the minister carrying the Candle arrives at the front of the church it is placed on a stand in the midst of the building, and all other candles in the church are now lit.

The Exsultet

A form of the Exsultet may be used (see pages 410–417).

The Easter Acclamation

A minister says

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Gloria in Excelsis

The Gloria in excelsis or an appropriate Easter hymn is used, during which all other candles in the church are lit from the Easter Candle, the lights switched on and the people's candles extinguished.

The Collect

Let us pray that we may walk the risen life of Christ in glory.

Silence is kept.

Lord of all life and power,
 who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
 overcame the old order of sin and death
 to make all things new in him:
 grant that we, being dead to sin
 and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
 may reign with him in glory;
 to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
 be praise and honour, glory and might,
 now and in all eternity.

All **Amen.**

(or)

God of glory,
 by the raising of your Son
 you have broken the chains of death and hell:
 fill your Church with faith and hope;
 for a new day has dawned
 and the way to life stands open
 in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All **Amen.**

The Liturgy of the Word

Reading(s)

After each reading

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Re-affirmation of Baptismal Vows

The ministers and people gather at the font. A canticle, psalm, hymn or litany may be used (see pages 421–424).

The congregation re-affirm their baptismal vows, using a form which includes the Prayer over the Water (pages 342–344, 346).

The Peace

Prayers

The Prayers should include the Lord's Prayer.

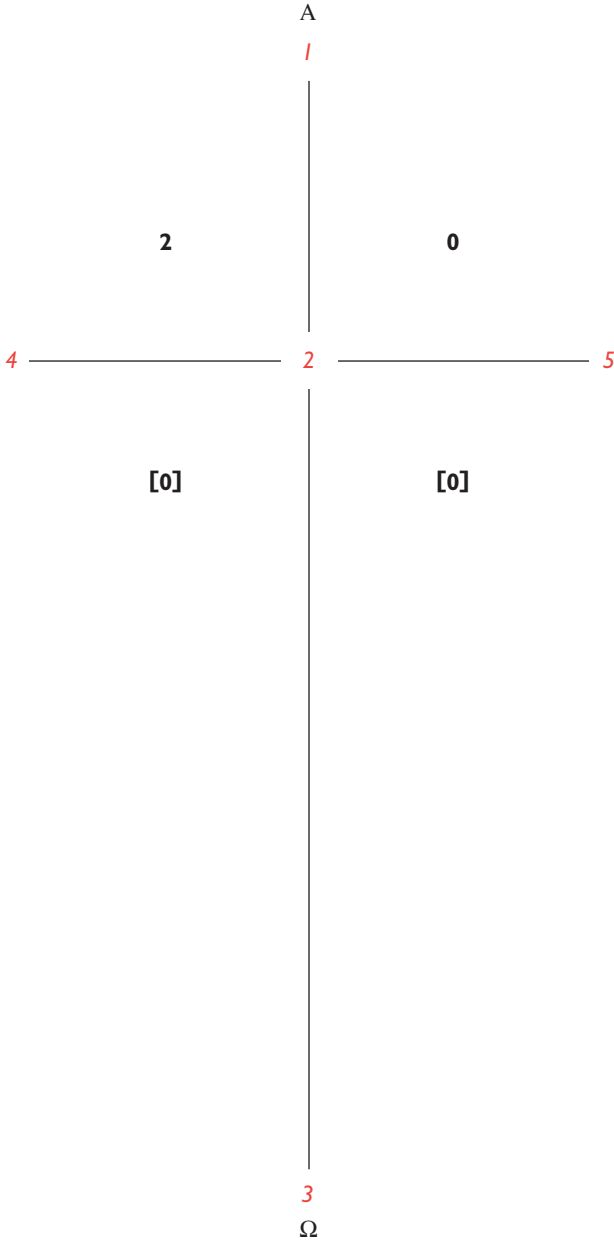
Conclusion

The congregation accompanies the first three responses with a sweep of the arm towards a cross, as if throwing the objects of the prayer; the final response is a sweep of the arm towards heaven.

- All our problems
All we send to the cross of Christ.
 All our difficulties
All we send to the cross of Christ.
 All the devil's works
All we send to the cross of Christ.
 All our hopes
All we set on the risen Christ;
 and the blessing of God almighty,
 the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
 be among you and remain with you always.
All Amen.
- (or)*
- Alleluia. Christ is risen.
All He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
- Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
**All He has given us new life and hope
 by raising Jesus from the dead.**
- God has claimed us as his own.
**All He has brought us out of darkness.
 He has made us light to the world.**
- Alleluia. Christ is risen.
All He is risen indeed. Alleluia.
- Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
All Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Instructions for Marking the Easter Candle

A minister brings the Easter Candle to the president, who traces the cross and then the Greek letter *Alpha* (Α) above and the Greek letter *Omega* (Ω) below it. The numbers of the current year are marked in the space between the arms of the cross, as in the diagram below.



As the vertical of the cross is traced the president says

Christ, yesterday and today,

As the horizontal is traced the president says

the beginning and the end,

As the Alpha is traced

Alpha

As the Omega is traced

and Omega,

As the first number of the year is traced the president says

all time belongs to him,

As the second number is traced

and all ages;

As the third number is traced

to him be glory and power,

As the fourth number is traced

through every age and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Five nails or incense studs may then be inserted into the Candle, reminding us of the five wounds of Christ. Each stud is placed in the Candle at the points marked, in the order indicated by the numbers. As each is inserted the president says

1

By his holy

4

guard us

2

and glorious
wounds

5

and keep us.

3

may Christ
our Lord

The Exsultet

 *Form 1: a traditional version with optional responses*

Notes

- 1** If possible, the main text should be sung by a deacon.
2 Other responses may be used instead of ‘Glory to you for ever’, such as

All **Glory to you, O Lord.**

(or)

All **The Lord reigns.**

Either *The minister sings the Introduction*

Rejoice, heavenly powers! Sing, choirs of angels!
O Universe, dance around God’s throne!
Jesus Christ, our King, is risen!
Sound the victorious trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in glory, revealing the splendour of your creation,
radiant in the brightness of your triumphant King!
Christ has conquered! Now his life and glory fill you!
Darkness vanishes for ever!

Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Saviour, our Lord of life, shines upon you!
Let all God’s people sing and shout for joy.

Or *Alternatively, the Introduction could be sung by the whole congregation to a tune of the metre 10.10.10.10 using the following form. (Not all tunes of 10.10.10.10 metre are suitable.)*

All **Sing, choirs of heaven! Let saints and angels sing!**
Around God’s throne exult in harmony!
Now Jesus Christ is risen from the grave!
Salute your King in glorious symphony!

Sing, choirs of earth! Behold, your light has come!
The glory of the Lord shines radiantly!
Lift up your hearts, for Christ has conquered death!
The night is past, the day of life is here!

Sing, Church of God! Exult with joy outpoured!
The gospel trumpets tell of victory won!
Your Saviour lives; he’s with you evermore!
Let all God’s people sound the long Amen!

The Lord be with you
All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right and good that with hearts and minds and voices
 we should praise you, Father almighty, the unseen God,
 through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
 who has saved us by his death,
 paid the price of Adam's sin,
 and reconciled us once again to you.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

For this is the Passover feast,
 when Christ, the true Lamb of God, is slain,
 whose blood consecrates the homes of all the faithful.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

This is the night [*day*†] when you first saved our ancestors,
 freeing Israel from her slavery
 and leading her safely through the sea.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

This is the night [*day*] when Jesus Christ vanquished hell,
 broke the chains of death
 and rose triumphant from the grave.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

This is the night [*day*] when all who believe in him are freed from sin,
 restored to grace and holiness,
 and share the victory of Christ.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

This is the night [*day*] that gave us back what we had lost;
 beyond our deepest dreams
 you made even our sin a happy fault.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

Most blessed of all nights [*Crowning glory of all feasts*†]!
 Evil and hatred are put to flight and sin is washed away,
 lost innocence regained, and mourning turned to joy.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

Night [*Feast*†] truly blessed, when hatred is cast out,
 peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth
 and all creation reconciled to you.

All [Glory to you for ever.]

† [*said/sung during the day*]

Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering.
Grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.

For Christ the morning star has risen in glory;
Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us!
Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!
Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever!

All **Amen.**

An alternative ending

Note

In recent years some have shown an interest in reviving the references to bees in the Exsultet. They played a prominent role in the text of the so-called 'Franco-Roman' Exsultet, but the English translation currently approved for use by the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales does not include the reference to the bees. For those who wish to restore these references we offer this version for optional insertion into the main text of the Exsultet.

The Exsultet is sung as written up to this verse

Night [*Feast*] truly blessed, when hatred is cast out,
peace and justice find a home, and heaven is joined to earth
and all creation reconciled to you.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

After which it concludes

Therefore, heavenly Father, in this our Easter joy
accept our sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering,
this wax, the work of bees and the hands of your ministers.

All **[Glory to you for ever.]**

As we gaze upon the splendour of this flame
fed by melting wax conceived by mother bee,
grant that this Easter Candle may make our darkness light.

For Christ the morning star has risen in glory;
Christ is risen from the dead and his flame of love still burns within us!
Christ sheds his peaceful light on all the world!
Christ lives and reigns for ever and ever!

All **Amen.**

¶ Form 2: a short responsive Exsultet

Notes

- 1 If possible, the main text should be sung by a deacon.
- 2 Other locally composed verses may also be added, provided that the thematic structure of the Exsultet is not obscured.

Choirs of angels, stars and planets:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

All creation, Church of God:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

We praise you Lord of life and death:
we glorify your name:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

This is the night you set us free,
bringing us home in love;
holy night, when you led your people
through the fearsome sea:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

This is the night you brought your Son
through the doors of death;
O holy night, when death takes flight
and hope is born again:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

This is the night our tears of sadness
turn to shouts of joy;
holy night, when the choirs of earth
sing the songs of heaven:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

This is the night when Christ our Light
makes the darkness bright:

All **all God's people sing and dance.**

Christ is the life that knows no end.
Christ is the love that burns within.
Christ is the peace that floods the world.
Christ is the Lord who reigns on high.

All **All God's people sing and dance.**

Amen.

Form 3: a metrical version

Notes

- 1 If this form of Exsultet is used during the day, 'This is the night' may be replaced by 'This is the day' and 'O night' by 'O day'.
- 2 The verses may be sung by the congregation or alternately by deacon and congregation, or any other suitable variation. The last verse should always be sung by everyone.
- 3 This fits to a tune with a 10.10.10.10 metre, but not all tunes of that metre are suitable.

Exult and sing! O shining angel choirs!
Exult and dance, bright stars and blazing suns!
The first born of creation, Jesus Christ,
is ris'n in radiant splendour from the dead.

Rejoice, O awesome night of our rebirth!
Rejoice, O mother moon, that marks the months!
For from your fullness comes, at last, the day
when sin and death are robbed of all their power.

Arise then, sleepers, Christ enlightens you!
Arise from doubt and sadness, sin and death!
With joyful hearts and spirits set aflame,
draw near to sing this Easter Candle's praise!

We lift our hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
We praise you, God, for all your works of light!
We bless you for that burst of fire and flame
through which you first created all that is.

We bless you for the light invisible:
the fire of faith, the Spirit's grace and truth,
that light, the source of life, that stirs the heart,
and shines for ever on the face of Christ.

This is the night, most blessed of all nights.
You led your people through the foaming sea,
in love you led them with a cloud by day
and as a flaming shaft of fire by night.

O night that gave us back what we had lost!
O night that made our sin a happy fault!
Beyond our deepest dreams this night, O God
your hand reached out to raise us up in Christ!

Now is Christ risen, we are raised with him,
our Morning Star who dawns and never sets.
May Jesus Christ our Saviour find us all
united in one faith, one hope, one Lord.

Creator, in the joy of Easter night [*tide*]
accept our sacrifice of thanks and praise.
May all who see this candle's radiant light
be led to know your nature and your name.

All **For you alone are God, living and true:
all glory, praise and pow'r belong to you
with Jesus Christ, the One who conquered death
and with the Spirit blest for evermore.
Amen.**

Form 4: a modern variant

Note

If possible, the Exsultet should be sung by a deacon.

Rejoice, heavenly powers!
Sing, choirs of angels!
Exult all life forms throughout creation!
Jesus Christ from death is risen!
Sound the trumpet of salvation!

It is truly right
that with full hearts, clear minds, and strong voices
we should praise the unseen God
from whom we all draw life,
and Jesus our anointed one,
the human face of God's own goodness.

In Christ the gap
between us and God's own deep mystery
has been bridged.

The ancient fears,
the tribal taboos,
our sense of shame
have been swept away in the light of Christ.

Our first mothers and fathers
sang of God's salvation
around fires in the desert.
Their sons and daughters, we sing the same song.

This is the night when Christians everywhere
celebrate redemption,
claim forgiveness,
take hold of new life.

This is the night when God says 'No' to death,
that final boundary to human life,
that door we once feared to approach.

This is the night God swallows death,
absorbs its sting into God's own life,
strips death of all power,
renews our fainting hearts.

Night truly blessed,
when heaven and earth are divided no more,
women and men are reconciled with God,
death gives way to life.

And so, our God, in the joy of this night,
receive our offering of praise.
Accept this Easter Candle,
a flame divided but undimmed.

May it mingle with the lights of heaven
and continue bravely burning
to dispel the darkness of night.

May Christ, the Morning Star that never sets,
draw us all closer to God,
and may the peace and justice of God
be our shared human experience.

Accept our praise and our prayers,
that we offer through Jesus, the risen one,
who shares the life of God
with Father and Spirit for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

Welcoming the Easter Candle into the Church, with Prayers at the Easter Garden

Notes

- 1 This rite may be used where the Easter Candle has been lit at the Easter Liturgy or another service, either in the church concerned or elsewhere.
- 2 The Prayers at the Easter Garden may be used separately.

Welcoming the Easter Candle

The ministers gather at the back of the church.

The president says

- Christ yesterday and today,
All the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
All to him be glory and power,
through every age and for ever. Amen.

A minister brings in the lit Easter Candle and proclaims

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

- All He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

The minister may repeat the acclamation, getting louder each time.

The president says

This is the day when our Lord Jesus Christ was raised gloriously from the dead, crushing the power of sin and destroying the sting of death. Throughout the world Christians celebrate the mighty power of God as Christ calls us out of darkness to share in his marvellous light. May we, and all Christ's people, shine as lights in the world to the glory of God the Father.

The minister holding the Candle says or sings

The light of Christ.

- All Thanks be to God.**

An Easter hymn of praise may be sung as the Easter Candle leads a procession to the Easter Garden.

At the Easter Garden, the minister holding the Candle says or sings

The light of Christ.

- All Thanks be to God.**

Prayers at the Easter Garden

The president says

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

A reader says

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.'

Matthew 28.5,6

The president says

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To you be glory now and for ever.

In your great mercy you have given us a new birth
into a living hope

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

By your blessing, may we who have prepared this garden in celebration of his victory

be strengthened in faith,

know the power of his presence,

and rejoice in the hope of eternal glory.

Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be God for ever.

Various actions may be performed: for example, a stone may be rolled away from the entrance to the tomb; a light in the tomb may be lit; or figures may be placed inside the empty tomb.

The president says this prayer

Risen Lord Jesus,
as Mary Magdalene met you in the garden
on the morning of your resurrection,
so may we meet you today and every day:
speak to us as you spoke to her;
reveal yourself as the living Lord;
renew our hope and kindle our joy;
and send us to share the good news with others.

All Amen.

If there are to be Prayers of Penitence they take place here. Kyrie Confession B2 (page 429) should be used.

After the absolution the Easter Acclamation is used

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

The Lighting of Candles

The minister holding the Candle says or sings

The light of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Hymns and songs are sung as the congregation comes to the minister holding the Easter Candle and each light their own candle.

Acclamation

Once the congregation's candles have been lit a minister leads the following Acclamation

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:

All **he has given us new life and hope
by raising Jesus from the dead.**

[God has claimed us as his own:

All **he has made us light to the world.]**

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Gloria in Excelsis

The Gloria in excelsis may be used (page 338). Alternatively, an Easter hymn of praise may be sung or the Easter Anthems (page 424) or the Thanksgiving for the Resurrection (pages 421–423) may be used. The Easter Candle leads the procession to the front of the church and is placed in a prominent position.

The service continues with the Collect of Easter Day, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, following the pattern of the Easter Liturgy (pages 360–361 and 367–371).

The congregation's candles remain lit until after the Gospel reading.

Thanksgiving for the Resurrection

Notes

- 1 The Thanksgiving for the Resurrection can be used in a number of different ways through the Easter season.
 - ¶ The whole text may be used at the beginning of the Eucharist throughout the Easter season following on from the opening greeting. It may be followed by the Gloria. If it is used in this way Section 3 may be omitted.
 - ¶ It may also be used as a Processional at Evening Prayer.
 - ¶ Section 2 may be used alone in procession to or from the baptismal font.
- 2 The Thanksgiving for the Holy Ones of God (pages 558–560) may also be used, with the response ‘Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.’

Section 1

Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Let us praise and exalt him for ever.

All **Blessing and honour and glory and power
be to him who sits upon the throne
and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.
Great and marvellous are your works,
Lord God the almighty;
just and true are your ways,
King of saints;
all glorious your gifts, Spirit of life.
Blessing and honour
and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving
and honour and power and might
be to our God for ever and ever. Amen.**

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is gracious:
All and his mercy endures for ever.

He has loved us from all eternity:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

And remembered us when we were in trouble:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

He became incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

By his cross and passion he has redeemed the world:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

And has washed us from our sins in his own blood:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

On the third day he rose again:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

And has given us the victory:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

He ascended into heaven:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

And opened wide for us the everlasting doors:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

He is seated at the right hand of the Father:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

And ever lives to make intercession for us:
All for his mercy endures for ever.

Section 2 may end either with the Gloria or with the Conclusion (Section 4).

**All Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever.
Amen.**

Section 3

For the gift of his Spirit:

All **blessed be Christ.**

For the catholic Church:

All **blessed be Christ.**

For the means of grace:

All **blessed be Christ.**

For the hope of glory:

All **blessed be Christ.**

For the triumphs of his gospel:

All **blessed be Christ.**

For the lives of his saints:

All **blessed be Christ.**

In joy and in sorrow:

All **blessed be Christ.**

In life and in death:

All **blessed be Christ.**

Now and to the end of the ages:

All **blessed be Christ.**

Section 4: Conclusion

Blessing and honour and thanksgiving and praise
 more than we can utter,
 more than we can conceive,
 be to you, O most adorable Trinity,
 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
 by all angels, all peoples, all creation,
 for ever and ever.

Lancelot Andrewes (1626)

All **Amen. Alleluia.**

The Easter Anthems

- 1 Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us: ♦
so let us celebrate the feast,
- 2 not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness: ♦
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. *1 Corinthians 5.7b,8*
- 3 Christ once raised from the dead dies no more: ♦
death has no more dominion over him.
- 4 In dying he died to sin once for all: ♦
in living he lives to God.
- 5 See yourselves therefore as dead to sin: ♦
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Romans 6.9-11*
- 6 Christ has been raised from the dead: ♦
the first fruits of those who sleep.
- 7 For as by man came death: ♦
by man has come also the resurrection of the dead;
- 8 for as in Adam all die: ♦
even so in Christ shall all be made alive. *1 Corinthians 15.20-22*

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*For the text of the Easter Anthems from The Book of Common Prayer,
see Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, page 805.*