

*St. Thomas Memorial Church
The Great Vigil of Easter
The Holy Eucharist – Rite II
April 4, 2026*



Prelude

“Via Crucis”

Stanley Vann

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

Bidding (starting on page 285 of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP))

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

Blessing of the New Fire

Priest: Let us pray.

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

Procession of the Paschal Candle

Priest: The Light of Christ

People: *Thanks be to God.*

The Exsultet (page 286, BCP)

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

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

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

All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame, pray with me to God the Almighty for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light; through Jesus Christ his Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Priest: It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night, when you brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you gave a Son.

How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord.

How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and man is reconciled to God. Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning—he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Bidding (*page 288, BCP*)

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

The First Reading: Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac

Genesis 22:1-18

Hymn "I Surrender All" vv. 1,4

1 All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live.

Refrain:

I surrender all, I surrender all; All to Thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.

4 All to Jesus I surrender, Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with Thy love and power, let Thy blessings fall on me. [Refrain]
Lift Every Voice and Sing 1993

Collect (page 289, BCP)

Celebrant: Let us pray

God and Father of all believers, for the glory of your Name multiply, by the grace of the Paschal sacrament, the number of your children; that your Church may rejoice to see fulfilled your promise to our father Abraham; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Second Reading: Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea

Exodus 14:10-15:1

Hymn #648 "When Israel was in Egypt's land"

Collect (page 289, BCP)

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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

The Third Reading: A New Heart and A New Spirit

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Hymn #679 "Surely it is God who saves me"

Collect (page 290, BCP)

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who are reborn into the fellowship of Christ's Body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

The Bidding (page 292, BCP)

Celebrant: Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his death, and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you, therefore, now that our Lenten observance is ended, to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his holy Catholic Church.

The Renewal of the Baptismal Vows

Priest Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People *I do.*

Priest Do you believe in God the Father?

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

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

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

Priest Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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

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

People *I will, with God's help.*

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

People *I will, with God's help.*

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

People *I will, with God's help.*

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

People *I will, with God's help.*

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

People *I will, with God's help.*

The Asperges

Priest: I saw water proceeding out of the Temple, from the right side thereof;

People: *and all they to whom that water came shall be saved.*

Concluding Prayer (*page 294, BCP*)

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

THE HOLY EUCHARIST, Rite II

(*starting on page 355, BCP*)

Priest: Alleluia! Christ is Risen!
People: **THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED! ALLELUIA!**
The Ringing of the Bells (If you brought a bell — Ring it joyfully!)

Gloria—Hymn #S-236

Glory to you, Lord God of our fathers; you are worthy of praise; glory to you.
Glory to you, for the radiance of your holy Name; we will praise you and highly exalt you forever.
Glory to you, in the splendor of your temple; on the throne of your majesty, glory to you.
Glory to you, seated between the Cherubim; we will praise you and highly exalt you forever.
Glory to you, beholding the depths; in the high vault of heaven, glory to you.
Glory to you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; we will praise you and highly exalt you forever.

Priest The Lord be with you.
People *And also with you.*
Priest Let us pray.

Collect for Easter Eve

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

The Epistle

Romans 6:3-11

Hymn #187 “Through the Red Sea brought at last”

The Holy Gospel

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
People *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*
The Holy Gospel: Matthew 28:1-10

After the Gospel

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.
People *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

The Sermon.....The Rev. Guy W. Brown

The Prayers of the People, Form VI (pg. 392, BCP)

The Leader and the People pray responsively.

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

Leader: For all people in their daily life and work;
People: *For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.*

Leader: For this community, the nation, and the world;
People: *For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.*

Leader: For the just and proper use of your creation;
People: *For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice and oppression.*

Leader: For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
People: *For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.*

Leader: For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
People: *For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.*

Leader: For all bishops and other ministers;
People: *For all who serve God in his Church.*

Leader: For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence (The People may add their own petitions.)

Leader: Hear us, Lord;

People: *For your mercy is great.*

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.
Silence (The People may add their own thanksgivings.)

Leader: We will exalt you, O God our King;
People: *And praise your Name for ever and ever.*

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Silence (The People may add their own petitions.)

Leader: Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

People: *Who put their trust in you.*

Leader and People:

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

(Celebrant will add a concluding prayer.)

The Peace

Priest The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People *And also with you.*

The Holy Communion

Offering of Bread, Wine and Alms

Offertory Music

“As the Deer”

Offered by Soloist Doug Brannock

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below;

Praise him above ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Offering of Bread, Wine and Alms

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is right, and a good and joyful thing.....Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Hymnal S-130—Holy, holy, holy Lord

Schubert

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might; Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might; Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself;...the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world...”Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Priest and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Postlude

“They Saw the Stone Had Been Rolled Away”

Andrew Gant

**Please join us tomorrow morning at 8:00 or 10:30 for one of our
Easter Day services.**

We at St. Thomas, members of the Body of Christ, are called by God to Grow;
Spiritually, in Parish Life, in Community Life, and as a Congregation.

SAINT THOMAS MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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The Rev. Jeffrey D. Murph, Rector

The Rev. Daniel J. Isadore, Associate Rector

The Rev. Guy W. Brown, Assistant Priest

Mrs. Louise Lugar, Organist/Choir Director

St. Thomas' Vestry

Julie King
Sr. Warden

Paul Cammisa (NV)
Jr. Warden

Jonathan Dailey
Vestry Clerk

Betti Rottschaefer (NV)
Treasurer

Shahnaz Alam-Denlinger, Kristin Brown, Mitzi Fidler,
James Fischer, LuAnn Brink Hunter, Bill Lugar, Richard Williams

NV = Non-voting member

Participants for this service:

Acolytes: Mason Eber, Chase Eber

First Reading: Pam Derby

Second Reading: Darrell Powell

Third Reading: James Fischer

Epistle Reading: Laura Spisak

Leader of the Prayers: Bill Lugar

Ushers: James Fischer, Lawrence Miguez