

WELCOME

We are blessed by your presence.

The Great Vigil of Easter, the most significant liturgy of the Christian year, is the culmination of the Triduum—the Sacred Three Days. The service begins in darkness. The Cathedral is slowly illuminated by the candles of the faithful as we observe the Paschal Mystery—passing from darkness into light, from death into life—told through ancient texts, scripture readings, and sacred music, relating God’s saving actions through history. As participants in this story, we reaffirm our own baptismal vows and renew our commitment to Christ. The great moment of this night is the celebration of the First Eucharist of the Resurrection, gloriously announced with Alleluias and Easter bells. The Paschal Candle burns as a sign of the presence of the resurrected Christ and will burn through the Easter season, known as the Great Fifty Days.

Our Sunday worship time is 10 a.m., through May. June through August it is 9 a.m. Monthly on the third Sunday year-round is an 8:00 a.m. spoken Holy Eucharist. For more info, or to make a prayer request, please complete a “Welcome” card in the pew rack, and drop it in the offering plate.

***The People’s responses
are printed in boldface.***

Please silence electronic devices.

ST. PETER’S CATHEDRAL HELENA, MONTANA

The Rt. Rev. Marty Stebbins, Bishop
The Very Rev. Kendra Wilde, Dean



THE LITURGY FOR THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

April 4, 2026
8:00 pm and Livestreamed



Marc Chagall
Crossing the Red Sea, c. 1957

Chagall drew theological parallels between the Hebrews’ liberation from slavery and the Christian release from sin signified in Baptism

The Ministers of the Liturgy are the people assembled, including

Presider / Preacher

The Very Reverend Kendra Wilde

Acolyte and Oblation Bearer

Duke Demmons

Lectors

Ruth Ann Shuler and Jackie Brehe

Eucharistic Minister

Chris Boyce

Usher

Mark Kelley

Organ

John Goodwin

St. Peter’s Choir

Patty Dean, Interim Music Director

The Liturgy for The Great Vigil of Easter

The Service of Light

The Lighting of the Paschal Candle

In the darkness, fire is kindled

Afterward the Presider addresses the People

Dear friends in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Savior 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 God's word and celebrating Christ's Sacraments, we share in Christ's victory over death.

Let us pray.

O God, through Jesus 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.**

The Paschal Candle is lighted from the newly kindled fire, and the Deacon bearing the Candle, leads the procession into the worship space, pausing three times as he continues and singing

The light of Christ.

People **Thanks be to God.**


The People's candles are lighted from the Paschal Candle. Any other candles in the church, except for those at the Altar, are also lighted from the Paschal Candle, which is then placed in its stand.


The people may sit

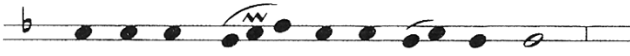
Deacon Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty God. Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor, for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal God. Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, and 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 God's Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever



Deacon 
The Lord be with you.

People 
And al - so with you.

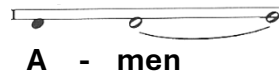
Deacon 
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People 
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people. This is the night, when you brought our forebears, 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 freedom. How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and we are 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.



The Service of Lessons

Throughout the Service of Lessons, the people sit for the readings. They stand, as able for the songs that come after the readings, and continue to stand for the Collects that follow.

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

† **A Reading, The Flood**

Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13

Song He’s got the whole world in his hands

Verse **He’s got the whole world in his hands**
He’s got the whole world in his hands
He’s got the whole world in his hands

Refrain **He’s got the whole world in his hands.**

Verse **He’s got birds and fish and mammals in his hands** (Repeat three times)

Verse **He’s got clouds and streams and rainbows in his hands** (Repeat 3 times)

Verse **He’s got big and little people in his hands** (Repeat three times)

Presider Let us pray.

All-loving and Ever-living God, you have placed in the skies the sign of your covenant with all living things: Grant that we, who are saved through water and the Spirit, may worthily offer to you our sacrifice of thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

† **A Reading, Israel’s deliverance at the Red Sea**

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

Song Let my people go

1 When Is - rael was in E - gypt’s land, let my peo - ple go;
2 The Lord told Mo - ses what to do, let my peo - ple go;
3 They jour - neyed on at his com - mand, let my peo - ple go;
4 Oh, let us all from bon - dage flee, let my peo - ple go;

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Let my people go'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, with four numbered lines of text corresponding to the four phrases of the song.

op - pressed so hard they__ could not stand, let my peo - ple go;
 to lead the chil-dren of Is - rael through, let my peo - ple go;
 and came at length to__ Ca-naan's land, let my peo - ple go;
 and let us all in__ Christ be free, let my peo - ple go;

Go down, _____ Mo - ses, way down in E - gypt's land; _____

tell old Pha - raoh to let my peo - ple go.

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.**

† **A Reading, A new heart and a new spirit**

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Song Behold, I make all things new (*Sung twice*)

Be - hold, be - hold, I make all things new be -
gin - ning with you and start - ing from to - day. Be -
hold, be - hold, I make all things new be -
gin - ning with you and start - ing from to - day.

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.**

† **A Reading, The Valley of Dry Bones**

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Song Dem Bones

Lord he thought he'd make a man, Dem bones gon-na rise a - gain,
Lord put breath into them ol' bones Dem bones gon-na rise a - gain,
Made him out-ta mud and a lit - tle bit of sand, Dem bones gon-na rise a - gain.
Breathed__ old__ bones a__ - live__ a__ - gain, Dem bones gon-na rise a - gain.

Refrain

I know it, yes I know it, Dem bones gon - na rise a - gain.

Presider Let us pray.

All-loving and Ever-living 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 Holy Eucharist

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

The organ resounds, the people ring bells, etc., and shout "alleluia" as we welcome Easter

† **Pascha nostrum**, God's Paschal lamb



God's Pas-chal Lamb is sac - ri - ficed for us; there - fore with joy
Now Christ is raised and will not die a - gain; death has no more
In Christ we see the first fruits of the dead; though Ad - am's sin



we keep the Eas-ter feast; for - sak - ing sin, we share the bread
do - min - ion o - ver him; Through him we die to sin and live
had doomed all flesh to die, in Christ's new life shall all be made



of truth. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!
to God. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!
a - live. Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!

† **The Collect of the Day**

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

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 people sit

† **The New Testament reading**

Romans 6:3-11

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will

certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s Church.

Thanks be to God.

The people stand, as able

† **Alleluia** (*Sung twice*)

The image shows a musical score for the Alleluia. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia!' are written below the notes in both systems. The first system ends with a double bar line and repeat dots, and the second system also ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

† **The Proclamation of The Holy Gospel: Matthew 24:1-10**

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

Glorify to you, Lord Christ.

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

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The people sit

† **Sermon**

The Very Reverend Kendra Wilde

The people stand, as able

† **The Renewal of Baptismal Vows**

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

I do.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

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

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

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

I will, with God's help.

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

I will, with God's help.

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

I will, with God's help.

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

I will, with God's help.

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

I will, with God's help.

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 Asperges

† The Prayers of the People

Deacon Let us pray.

For the church universal, that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may journey together in newness of life, boldly proclaiming the good news of deliverance.

Hear us, God of life.

For the well-being of all creation, that the power that brought forth all life may renew the earth.

Hear us, God of renewal.

For the nations and those in authority, that they may be transformed by the love of Christ and work together for the peace and freedom you have promised to all peoples.

Hear us, God of new birth.

For all who suffer in poverty, pain, or despair, that like your people in Egypt, they may be set free to live abundantly in the promised land of your love.

Hear us, God of liberation.

For this congregation, that we who have passed over from death to life through baptism may, like Mary Magdalene, share good news of Christ's resurrection in word and deed.

Hear us, God of our joy.

We give thanks for the faithful departed, trusting that all who died with Christ live with him forever, sharing fully in Christ's victory over sin, death, and the grave.

Hear us, God of our destination.

Presider God unlimited by mortal fear or tomb's cold grip: in the lingering dark give us grace to know your life triumphant your love undimmed in the face of Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead, who said "Do not fear." **Amen.**

† The Peace

The peace of Christ be always with you. **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People may share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

The Holy Communion

† The Offertory

The People stand, as able

† **Hymn at the Offertory** Jesus Christ is risen today



1 Je - sus Christ is risen to - day, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 2 Hymns of praise then let us sing, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 3 But the pains which he en - dured, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 4 Sing we to our God a - bove, Al - - e - lu - ia!



1 our tri - um - phant ho - ly day, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 2 un - to Christ, our heaven - ly King, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 3 our sal - va - tion have pro - cured, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 4 praise e - ter - nal as his love, Al - - le - lu - ia!



1 who did once up - on the cross, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 2 who en - dured the cross and grave Al - - le - lu - ia!
 3 now a - bove the sky he's King, Al - - le - lu - ia!
 4 praise him, all ye heaven - ly host Al - - le - lu - ia!

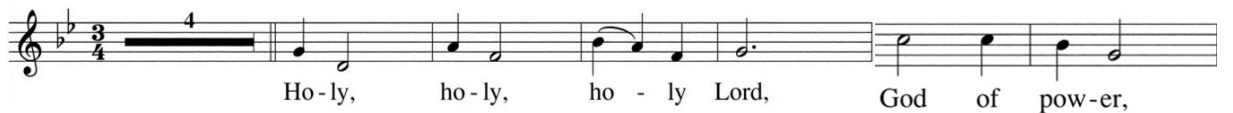


1 suf - fer to re - deem our loss. Al - - le - lu - ia!
 2 sin - ners to re - deem and save. Al - - le - lu - ia!
 3 where the an - gels ev - er sing. Al - - le - lu - ia!
 4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Al - - le - lu - ia!

† The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
 Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**
 Let us gift thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Thanks and praise fill our hearts, Almighty God, for you are the Lord of creation and new creation, of covenant and new covenant. You brought your people out of slavery to freedom in the Promised Land, and you brought your Son from depth of death to the glory of resurrection life. And so we gladly thank you, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending praise.



God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is
 he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na
 in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Joy and gladness are our song, redeeming God, for in your conquest of death we see the destiny of every hope in you. Come among us in the power of your Holy Spirit, that your children may be blessed with power and grace, and that this bread and cup may become for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

At supper with his disciples, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying, “Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” After supper he took the cup. Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Drink this all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Hope and glory are our breath, merciful God, for you have rolled away the stone of despair, the stone of oppression, the stone of lament, the stone of grief, the stone of death, the stone of sin, the stone of fear. Come and stand among us and breathe on us your peace, breathe on us your power, breathe on us your eternal life, that all who labor, all who stumble, all who hunger, and all who fall shall meet you in the breaking of the bread and be lifted up by your touch. Shape your church to be your risen body; make our scars beautiful like your scars, make our lives life-giving like your life, and make our communion holy with your saints, until you come again in glory and we eat with you in your kingdom, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ever one God. **AMEN.**

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

† **The Breaking of the Bread**

Silence

Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us feast on the true Bread of Heaven, the Cup of Life.
Our souls are fed by Christ alone. Alleluia. Alleluia.

The invitation to communion

The people may sit before and after receiving communion. ■ Christ welcomes all to the table for Communion or a Blessing. ■ If you prefer a blessing, cross your hands over your chest. ■ Tell the minister if you require gluten-free bread or alcohol-free wine. ■ Receive the bread in outstretched, open hands and sip the wine, helping the minister guide the chalice to your lips. ■ If you do not want to sip the wine, it is also perfectly appropriate to receive the bread only. ■ You may respond to communion by saying "Amen." ■ In the Episcopal Church Baptism generally precedes Communion and is offered several times a year; please speak to a member of the clergy to learn more. ■

Remaining seated, all may sing

Hymn at communion Jesus is Lord of all the earth

Refrain



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

stanzas 1-4 [Final ending]



Praise to his Name. Name.

1 Je - sus is Lord of all the earth.
2 Spread the good news o'er all the earth:
3 We have been cru - ci - fied with Christ.
4 Come, let us praise the liv - ing God,



Repeat Refrain



He is the King of cre - a - tion.
Je - sus has died and has ris - en. Al - le -
Now we shall live for ev - er.
joy - ful - ly sing to our Sa - vior.

Hymn How can I keep from singing



1 My life flows on in end-less song a -
2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I
3 What, though my joys and com-fort die, the
4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a



bove earth's lam - en - ta - tion. I hear the real though
hear that mu - sic ring - ing; It sounds and ech - oes
Lord, my sav - ior liv - eth. What though the dark - ness
foun - tain ev - er spring-ing. All things are mine since



far - off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.
in my soul; How can I keep from sing-ing?
gath-er 'round? Songs in the night it giv-eth.
I am his; How can I keep from sing-ing?



No storm can shake my in-most calm, while to that rock I'm



cling-ing. Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth,



How can I keep from sing-ing?

† Postcommunion prayer

The People stand, as able

Let us pray.

Risen Christ, whom we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands; the word of life in whom our joy is complete; send us out to declare your gift, your unshakable faith in the world you love. Amen.

Announcements

† Blessing

† Sending hymn Christ is alive!

1 Christ is a - live! Let Chris - tians sing. His cross stands
2 Christ is a - live! No long - er bound to dis - tant
3 Not throned a - bove, re - mote - ly high, un - touched, un -
4 In ev - ery in - sult, rift, and war where co - lor,
5 Christ is a - live! His Spi - rit burns through this and

1 emp - ty to the sky. Let streets and homes with
2 years in Pal - es - tine, he comes to claim the
3 moved by hu - man pains, but dai - ly, in the
4 scorn or wealth di - vide, he suf - fers still, yet
5 ev - ery fu - ture age, till all cre - a - tion

1 prais - es ring. His love in death shall nev - er die.
2 here and now and con - quer ev - ery place and time.
3 midst of life, our Sa - vior with the Fa - ther reigns.
4 loves the more, and lives, though ev - er cru - ci - fied.
5 lives and learns his joy, his jus - tice, love, and praise.

† Dismissal

Postlude Marche Religieuse, Opus 107

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

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The image features the word "Alleluia" written in a large, elegant, black calligraphic script. Below it, the phrase "Christ is risen!" is written in a smaller, similar calligraphic font. The text is surrounded by decorative flourishes, including a large, sweeping line that loops around the word "Alleluia" and several small, dark diamond-shaped accents scattered throughout the composition.