



DO IT YOURSELF EASTER VIGIL

written & compiled by Pastor Melissa Bills



WHAT IS THE EASTER VIGIL?

The Easter Vigil is the way that the church waits and holds its breath for Easter morning to show up.

This is a time of faith and hope: God promises resurrection and we keep watch so that we don't miss it when it shows up!

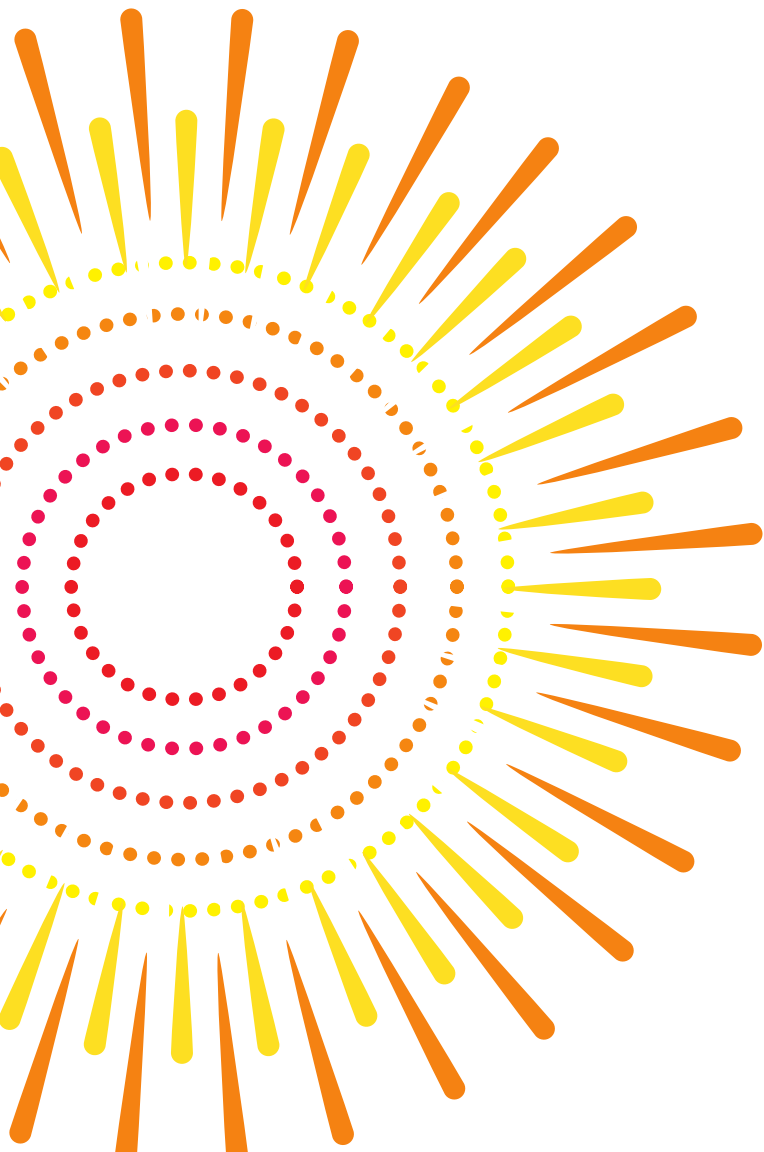
The church passes this waiting by telling stories of faith that remind us of God's saving promises. We light a new fire. We remember our baptisms. And we say the first "Alleluias!" of Easter.

This resource gives you what you need to hold vigil in your own home.

Find a cross, a candle (and something to light it with), a small bowl of water, and a Bible (children's Bibles are great!).

If you have a way to watch online videos, be ready for that, too.

Blessings as you watch and wait for the resurrection of Jesus!



EASTER PROCLAMATION



Set your cross, candle (unlit), and bowl of water in the center of your space.

Be joyful, all angels in heaven!
Be joyful, all creatures on earth!

Tonight, we celebrate that Jesus is alive.
**Jesus shines like the moon at night
and like the sun in the morning.**

Jesus is alive and the church is celebrating;
Jesus is alive and we sing songs of praise!

This is the night when we sing of God's faithfulness;
when we tell stories about God's love and saving power.

This is the night when we remember that Jesus died on the cross...
and that Jesus rose again!

This night is special.
It brings new peace and joy.
It brings new hope and forgiveness.
And so we praise God!

The candle we will light reminds us of Jesus, who John called "the light of the world."
God, we thank you for gifts of darkness and light.

We thank you for bees and for wax, for every part of this candle, and for the hands that made it.
**Let the light of this candle
remind us of the stars in the heavens,
and the love of God that shines over all people.**

God of love,
Keep us safe. Give us peace. Grant us joy.

In the name of Jesus,
Amen.

BLESSING OF THE NEW FIRE

Light your candle.

The light of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Let us pray.

God of hope, bless this flame. Bless the light and heat that it gives. Help us shine with joy as we celebrate the coming of Easter. Jesus rose again, and so will we. For this, we praise you and thank you!

Amen.

TELLING GOD'S STORY

Imagine that we are sitting around a campfire, trying to stay awake all night until the sun rises on Easter Sunday. Imagine that we are passing the time by telling favorite Bible stories that remind us of God's love. From the very beginning, God has been at work loving us, setting us free, and saving us from sin, death, and fear.

You are invited and encouraged to tell some of your favorite Bible stories around your candle, however you want. Read them out of a Bible or a children's Bible. Act them out. Sing songs.

Or watch some of the videos listed below. A playlist of most of these videos can be found at www.youtube.com/FLCDecorah

CREATION

https://youtu.be/Mz8li9Q0O_8

FLOOD

<https://youtu.be/yCLRcA9mlQE?t=45>

EXODUS

<https://youtu.be/nusOFSAzNYQ>

DRY BONES

<https://youtu.be/1NjE1Se9Y7s>

FIERY FURNACE

<https://youtu.be/rWNOMMvTF78>

GOSPEL

Read John 20:1-18 from a family Bible (or below), or read the resurrection story from a children's Bible

The Holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"



GOSPEL

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

SONG

Sing loud and sing proud - Jesus is risen and hope is alive!

5

10

Hal-le - lu, hal-le - lu, hal-le - lu, hal-le - lu - jah, Praise ye the Lord.

Praise ye the Lord. Hal-le - lu - jah, Praise ye the Lord. Hal-le - lu - jah,

Praise ye the Lord. Hal - le - lu - jah, Praise ye the Lord.

REMEMBERING OUR BAPTISMS



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

At Eastertime, we remember that baptism connects us to Jesus's death and resurrection. When we are baptized, the water reminds us that God loves us and that we are children of God forever. When we are baptized, we are called to worship and serve God with our lives. Baptism connects us to one another.

One of the ways we can remember and give thanks for God's gift of baptism is to promise out loud that we will keep showing God's love to the world in the way we live and act.

Do we promise to keep believing in God and living in God's ways?

We will, with God's help.

Will we keep trying to forgive others as God has forgiven us?

We will, with God's help.

Will we keep trying to love our neighbors as ourselves?

We will, with God's help.

Will we keep working to make this world a better place?

We will, with God's help.

Will we keep telling people about Jesus's love in our words and in our actions?

We will, with God's help.



REMEMBERING OUR BAPTISMS

May God, who blesses us in baptism with water and with the Holy Spirit, make us strong to do these things. May the Holy Spirit give us wise thoughts, open minds, trusted friends, and joy in our hearts, now and always.

Amen.

Dip your fingers into the water, draw a cross on your forehead, and say:

I am baptized and God loves me!

Or for those who are not yet baptized:

God is love and God loves me!

LORD'S PRAYER

We praise God for all the blessings of this night, and we pray for the needs of the world, using the words that Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

May God who has brought us from death to life fill us with great joy and bless us, now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia, alleluia!

Thanks be to God! Alleluia, alleluia!