Gathering Music

#228 Were You There

Opening Words
One: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: May the light of Christ, who rises this very night in glory, scatter the darkness of our hearts and minds. The Light of Christ!

The Paschal Candle is lighted

One: Let the people say:
All: Thanks be to God!

One: May this Easter Candle dispel the darkness, always.
May the Morning Star, which never sets, find its flame burning in hearts everywhere.
Let it be known that Christ—who came back from the dead, and who shed his peaceful light on all creation—lives and reigns forever and ever!
All: Amen.

A brief period of calm and silence

Psalm of the Day (from Psalm 43)
One: O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.
All: Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with harp, O God, my God.
One: Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?
All: Hope in God; for I shall again praise the Lord, my help and my God.

A brief period of silence, for reflection on the Psalm

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

Brief silence

A New Testament Lesson: (A Reading from I Peter 4:1-2, 8-11)
One: Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention, so as to live the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God.
All: Above all, maintain constant love for one another,
One: for love covers a multitude of sins.
All: Be hospitable to one another without complaining.
One: Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,
All: serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.
One: Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

**Great Silence**
(The sound of the gong signals the beginning and the ending of this time. During the silence the camera will pan very slowly around the sanctuary, focusing on stained glass windows, eventually returning to the candlelit table. This will last about four minutes)

**Pastoral Prayer**

One: Gracious God, you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.
We have recalled your mighty acts in holy history,
we have seen your power
in sending light to conquer darkness.
This Holy Saturday morning we thank you for the resurrection dawn
that makes every day new. This morning we thank you for
the beauty of your creation . . .
for the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness . . .
for the sustaining love of family and friends . . .
and for the fellowship of faith in your church . . .
Lord in your mercy . . .
All: **Hear our prayer.**

One: Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord.
We pray for…
for those who govern nations of the world . . .
for the people in countries ravaged by war or disease . . .
for all who work for peace and international harmony . . .
for all who strive to save the earth from destruction . . .
and for the church of Jesus Christ in every land . . .
Lord in your mercy . . .
All: **Hear our prayer.**

One: Loving God, Lord of life and wholeness,
As we await the good news of your resurrection on the Holy Saturday,
We offer to you our prayers for those on the front lines of response to the coronavirus.
Keep them and their loved ones safe.
We pray for those who are suffering with covid-19 or other illnesses,
   Asking that you would be present to them and those who love them.
We pray for the light of hope to shine through our fear and anxiety,
   Give us the gift of peace in you, O God.
Lord in your mercy…
All: **Hear our prayer.**

One: We know that you hear our prayers, Lord. Listen also as we join our voices in praying the prayer taught to us by your Son, Jesus, with open hearts.
All: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

*Brief silence*

**Closing Words**

*All candles, except the Paschal Candle, are extinguished.*

One: We are an Easter people.

All: **Once we were no people; now we are God’s people.**

One: Once we walked in darkness; now we walk in the light.

All: **Let us go forth, and tell of the wonderful deeds of Christ,**

One: who brought us out of darkness into this marvelous light.

All: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**Closing Sung Prayers**

#352 My Lord! What a Morning