

Keeping Vigil for the Resurrection at Home

Concerning the Service

This Vigil for the Night Before Easter was designed for saying at home — either as an individual or a gathering of friends and families. This is the night when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave. This Vigil is offered in the hopes of being the first celebration of the Great Fifty Days by individuals or families, speaking or reading aloud or incorporating technology (see the end of the service for links).

The service has been written so that various parts can be shared out among those present; don't be afraid to let children read and lead! Each part is either meant to be read by a single person, or by all. And this is indicated with "One" or "All." The "One" parts may be shared and a single leader is not required. While this service assumes a small gathering it can, when necessary, be done by an individual who while physically alone is nevertheless gathered in spirit with the rest of the church this day, night, or remembrance. This service is meant to be used as a last resort when for times of safety the Church cannot assemble in person to mark this night.

This service should take place after dinner, but before dessert. Extra goodies — baked goods, celebratory beverages, treats to mark this night — should be prepared in advance for the conclusion of this service. A special candle should be set aside for this service, ideally a pillar candle that can burn throughout Easter in a space of comfort and respite. Comfortable seating is encouraged for this service.

Preparation [In times of pandemic/epidemic]

All

We begin by washing, as we were washed in our baptism. We cleanse our hands as we were cleansed in the waters of new birth. We do this not because we are afraid, but because we were commanded to love: and to cleanse our hands, and gather in spirit, is how we love the vulnerable, whom Jesus loved. May we be instruments of love. May the sacrifices we make be for the good of our human family near and far.

Each person present then washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water. Once washed each should help with setting the table as they are able.

Lighting an Easter Light

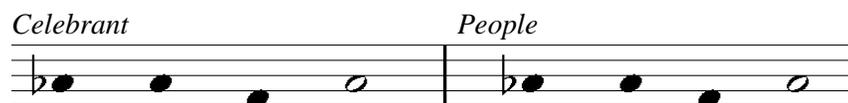
If possible, the home should be in darkness. Perhaps the service doesn't begin until after sunset. After the New fire is lit, someone responsible lights the designated candle in the home.

At the Beloved Community and online:

One 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 the Word, telling our story, and sharing our prayers and voices, we share in God's victory over death.

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.**

(the next portion is sung and chanted)



The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

The Exsultet.

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!

One The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

One Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give God 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 ancestors, 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 we are reconciled to God.

All **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.**

*This candle can be burned for the remainder of the Great Fifty Days whenever a family
gathers to eat or someone sits for quiet.*

Hearing Salvation's History

*The following stories are read aloud. This is a night for telling stories of good news. After the
story, there will be a response (a song or a spoken canticle) and someone says the paired
prayer. Lights should be kept dim for these stories — just enough light for a reader.*

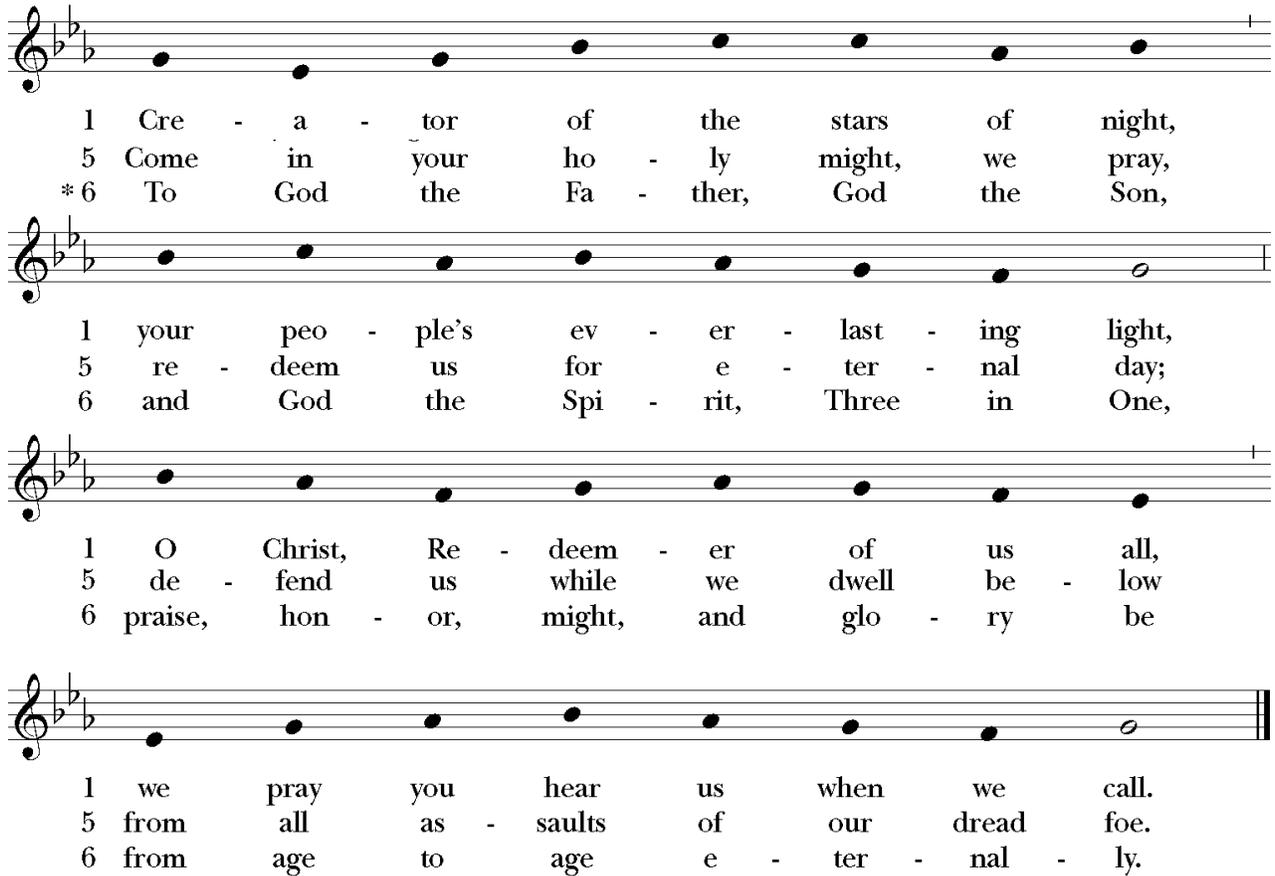
Story 1: The story of Creation —Genesis 1.1-2.2 (NRSV)

Creation by Cynthia Rylant

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Song *Creator of the Stars of Night*



The image shows the musical notation for the hymn 'Creator of the Stars of Night'. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The notes are simple, mostly quarter and half notes, with some rests. The lyrics are written below the notes, with line numbers 1, 5, and 6 indicating different parts of the text.

1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night,
5 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray,
* 6 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son,
1 your peo - ple's ev - er - last - ing light,
5 re - deem us for e - ter - nal day;
6 and God the Spi - rit, Three in One,
1 O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all,
5 de - fend us while we dwell be - low
6 praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be
1 we pray you hear us when we call.
5 from all as - saults of our dread foe.
6 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

Words: Latin, 9th cent.; ver. *Hymnal 1940*, alt.

Music: *Conditor alme siderum*, plainsong, Mode 4; acc. Bruce Neswick (b. 1956)

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One O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Story 2: Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea — Exodus 14.10-15.1 (NRSV)

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot

drivers.” The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.” So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: “I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.”

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s People.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 8 *The Song of Moses*

*The Leader will read up to the asterisk**

The People will read the response in bold

I will sing to the Lord, for he is lofty and uplifted; *

the horse and its rider has he hurled into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my refuge; *

the Lord has become my Savior.

This is my God and I will praise him, *

the God of my people and I will exalt him.

The Lord is a mighty warrior; *

Yahweh is his Name.

The chariots of Pharaoh and his army has he hurled into the sea; *

the finest of those who bear armor have been

drowned in the Red Sea.

The fathomless deep has overwhelmed them; *

they sank into the depths like a stone.

Your right hand, O Lord, is glorious in might; *

your right hand, O Lord, has overthrown the enemy.

Who can be compared with you, O Lord, among the gods? *

who is like you, glorious in holiness,

awesome in renown, and worker of wonders?

You stretched forth your right hand; *

the earth swallowed them up.

With your constant love you led the people you redeemed; *

with your might you brought them in safety to your holy dwelling.

You will bring them in and plant them *

on the mount of your possession,

The resting-place you have made for yourself, O Lord, *

the sanctuary, O Lord, that your hand has established.

The Lord shall reign *

for ever and for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

One 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.**

Remembering Baptism and Telling Its Story

One Before we hear the Good News of our Savior's resurrection, let us pray for those who may be being baptized this night, those whose baptisms are delayed because of pandemic, those preparing for baptism, as we hear of God's acts of salvation through Water and the Spirit.

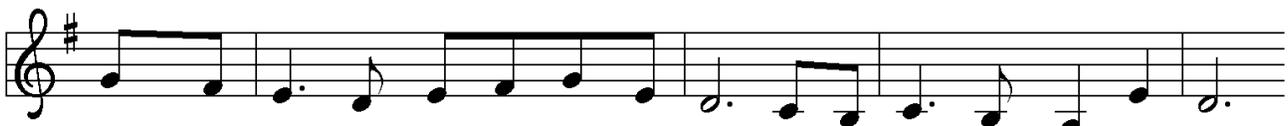
Song *Borning Cry*



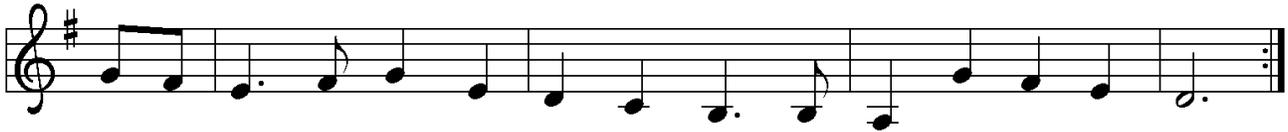
- 1 "I was there to hear your born-ing cry, I'll be there when you are old.
- 2 "When you heard the won-der of the Word I was there to cheer you on;
- 3 "In the mid-dle a - ges of your life, not too old, no lon - ger young,



I re - joiced the day you were bap-tized to see your life un - fold.
you were raised to praise the liv - ing Lord, to whom you now be - long.
I'll be there to guide you through the night, com-plete what I've be - gun.



I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;
If you find some-one to share your time and you join your hearts as one,
When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you shut your wea - ry eyes,



in a blaze of light you wan - dered off to find where de - mons dwell.”
I’ll be there to make your vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun.”
I’ll be there as I have al - ways been, with just one more sur - prise.”



4 “I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I’ll be there when you are old.



I re - joiced the day you were bap - tized to see your life un - fold.”

Text: John C. Ylvisaker, b. 1937
Music: WATERLIFE, John C. Ylvisaker
Text and music © 1985 John Ylvisaker.

Story 3: Baptized into Christ’s Death and Resurrection — Romans 6.3-11 (NRSV)

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.

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people
All **Thanks be to God.**

One Having remembered those who will be baptized, and hearing how we have been joined to Christ in baptism, let us reaffirm our baptismal promises.

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

With God's help, I will continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

With God's help, I will persevere in resisting evil, and whenever I fall into sin, return to the Lord.

With God's help, I will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.

With God's help, I will seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving my neighbor as myself.

With God's help, I will strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.

One O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Proclaiming Christ's Resurrection

Everyone present takes a turn leading the following exchange.

One Alleluia! Christ is risen!

All **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

After everyone has proclaimed the resurrection,

All

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.

One Let's hear one more story: the story of an empty tomb.

Story 5: Jesus' Resurrection — Matthew 28.1-10 (NRSV)

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."

One Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The Reflection

Song: *O Sons and Daughters* vs. 1,2,3, 9



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 O sons and daugh - ters, let us sing
2 That Eas - ter morn, at break of day,
3 An an - gel clad in white they see,
4 That night the_a - pos - tles met in fear;
Insert stanzas 5-8 if desired.
9 On this most ho - ly day of days,



with heav'n - ly hosts to Christ our king:
the faith - ful wom - en went their way
who sits and speaks un - to the three,
a - mong them came their mas - ter dear,
be laud and ju - bi - lee and praise:



to - day the grave has lost its sting! Al - le - lu - ia!
to seek the tomb where Je - sus lay. Al - le - lu - ia!
“Your Lord will go to Gal - i - lee.” Al - le - lu - ia!
and said, “My peace be with you here.” Al - le - lu - ia!
to God your hearts and voic - es raise. Al - le - lu - ia!

After the final stanza



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Text: attr. Jean Tisserand, d. 1494; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: O FILII ET FILIAE, French tune, 15th cent.

One Join us tomorrow for our celebration of Resurrection Day. We will start the party at 9 a.m. And now let us pray: O God of love, you are the true sun of the world, evermore risen and never going down: We pray you to shine in our hearts and drive away the darkness of sin and the mist of error. We pray that we may, this day and all our lives long, walk without stumbling in the way you have prepared for us, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

Sharing the Easter Feast

In this dispersed setting, the Eucharist is not available, but Christ is present whenever two or three are gathered in his name, and the disciples knew him in the breaking of the bread.

One Alleluia! Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us!

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

One When we share our bread with one another

All **The Lamb of God will make us one.**

Song Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! Vs 1,2,4



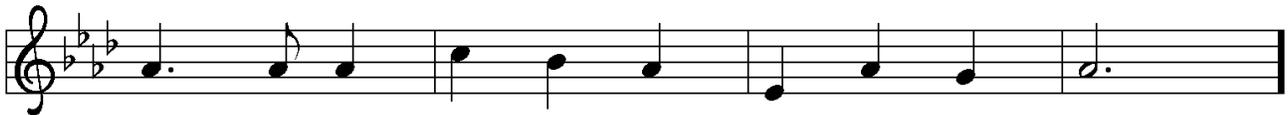
1 Al - le - lu - ia! Je - sus is ris - en!
2 Walk - ing the way, Christ in the cen - ter
3 Je - sus the vine, we are the branch - es;
4 Weep - ing, be gone; sor - row, be si - lent:
5 Cit - y of God, Eas - ter for - ev - er,



Trum - pets re - sound - ing in glo - ri - ous light!
tell - ing the sto - ry to o - pen our eyes;
life in the Spir - it the fruit of the tree;
death put a - sun - der, and Eas - ter is bright.
gold - en Je - ru - sa - lem, Je - sus the Lamb,



Splen - dor, the Lamb, heav - en for - ev - er!
break - ing our bread, giv - ing us glo - ry:
heav - en to earth, Christ to the peo - ple,
Cher - u - bim sing: O grave, be o - pen!
riv - er of life, saints and arch - an - gels,



Oh, what a mir - a - cle God has in sight!
Je - sus our bless - ing, our con - stant sur - prise.
gift of the fu - ture now flow - ing to me.
Clothe us in won - der, a - dorn us in light.
sing with cre - a - tion to God the I AM!

Refrain



Je - sus is ris - en and we shall a - rise.



Give God the glo - ry! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926
Music: David N. Johnson, 1922-1987
Text © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.
Music © 1969 *Contemporary Worship 1*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Service adapted from the Book of Common Prayer by the Rev. Joseph Peters-Mathews, St. Hilda St. Patrick, Edmonds, WA.