

EASTER VIGIL



The Great Vigil of Easter follows the ancient practice of celebrating the Easter feast at sunset on Easter Eve. The Vigil begins in darkness and consists of four parts: The Light (kindling of new fire, lighting the Paschal candle); The Lessons readings from the Hebrew Scriptures and hymns); Baptism or the Renewal of Baptism; and then a celebratory Eucharist. The Great Vigil is a time of telling and living into the arc of our Great Story.

READ:

It's always good to begin at the beginning. Here is the account of Creation from the Book of Genesis: In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind." The earth brought forth plants yielding trees of every kind bearing fruit. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them give light upon the earth." God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. God set them in the sky to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

WONDER:

At the Easter Vigil we remember our Sacred Stories as followers of the way of Jesus. We remember the stories of scripture and the stories of people of faith. Share one of your favorite faith stories with someone else. It can be from the Bible, from your family history, or from your own life. Share how it has shaped your faith. Read from a book, act it out, call a friend, write a letter or post on social media.

PRAY:

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. (Excerpt from the Exultant. BCP p. 285)

