

# **April 19, 2025, The Easter Vigil**

Leading Worship and Music: Rev. James Ravenscroft,  
Rev. Kathy Brett, Rev. Oliver Dingwell, Bob Rose, Jean Rose  
and Glen Warren

Ushering: Jean Thompson, Marilyn Adams and Susan Pike

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*Please rise as you are able where there is an \* in the service.  
Print in **bold** indicates that the portion is read or sung by everyone.*

## **GATHERING IN THE SHADOW OF SORROW**

### **OPENING INVITATION AND READINGS:**

John 19:40-42; "Holy Saturday" by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

### **TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**HYMN:** "O God, Why Are You So Silent" (*More Voices* 73)  
*Everyone is invited to remain seated during this hymn.*

### **OPENING PRAYER**

## **LEANING INTO THE LIGHT OF HOPE**

### **KINDLING OF THE NEW FIRE**

*A fire is lit as a sign of the new life that God always brings.*

### **RECALLING OUR SAVING STORY**

Reading #1: Selected verses from Genesis 1

Response: "This is God's Wondrous World" (*VU* 296, v 1, 2, 3)

Reading #2: Selected verses of Genesis 8 and 9

Response: "My Life Flows On" (*Voices United* 716, v 1, 4)

Reading #3: Selected verses of Exodus 14 and 15

Response: "Lead on O Cloud of Presence" (*VU* 421, v 1, 2)

Reading #4: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Response: "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" (VU 382 V 1,4)

Reading #5: John 20:1-10

## **LIGHTING OF PASCHAL CANDLE AND SHARING OF LIGHT**

*In gratitude for the promise of this night, light is distributed to everyone and a song of praise for the resurrection (The Exsultet) is sung.*

**MESSAGE:** Rev. Kathy Brett

## **CELEBRATING OUR SHARED RESURRECTION**

**READING:** Romans 6:3-11

## **RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL FAITH**

*The congregation has a chance to renew their baptismal promises.*

Do you believe in God, who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus the word made flesh,  
and works in us and others through the Spirit?

**I do, by God's grace.**

Will you follow in the way of Jesus, living with respect  
for all creation, loving and serving others, seeking justice  
and resisting evil? **I will, by God's grace.**

Will you proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge  
and our hope, and join with others to make known God's reign?

**I will, by God's grace.**

Renew your baptism and be thankful!

*The congregation is sprinkled with water as a reminder of their baptism.  
Everyone sings Halle, Halle, Halle" (Voices United 958)*

## **OFFERTORY**

*We present our gifts and give thanks they will be used in God's service.*

**\*HYMN:** "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ" (VU 468)

## **SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION/PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Christ is risen! **Christ is risen, indeed!**

Open your hearts. **We open them to God.**

Let us give thanks. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is right to thank and praise you, Living God, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us your holy breath, calling us to be your children. And though at times we forgot that call and wandered from you, you remained steadfast, again and again restoring your people and calling them to be a blessing to the nations. Grateful for this abiding love we join all of your angels and saints in a song of praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One  
who comes in God's name. Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and thank you Redeeming God, for your Son, Jesus Christ. You affirmed him as your child and through his death, and resurrection, gave birth to your Church. Called to embody his love in the world, we remember how on the night before Jesus died, he took bread and after giving you thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take, eat. This is my body, given for you." In the same way, he took the cup, saying: "Take, drink. This is a sign of the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you eat and drink, remember me."

We remember, Sustaining God, grateful that on this day we experience the in-breaking of your kin-dom, your new life revealed in resurrection. We proclaim the mystery of our faith:  
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

We pray, Gracious God, that you animate your Spirit in us and these gifts, that all who share this living bread and saving cup may be renewed in your grace, affirmed in your love to share what it means to be your children, a blessing to the nations. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory is yours, Holy God, now and forever. **Amen.**

# THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*Voices United* p. 921)

## SHARING IN COMMUNION

This is the bread of life, **Christ shared in hope for the world.**

This the fruit of the vine, **Christ shared in openness and joy.** This is the banquet of blessing, **Christ inviting everyone in love.**

*Everyone is welcome to share communion – all ages, beliefs, identities and life experiences. There is a centre station to receive the bread and two side stations to receive non-alcoholic juice in small glasses.*

*Consume the bread and juice before returning to your pew. A gluten free option is available on request. If you're unable to come forward, someone will bring communion to you once everyone has received.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (in unison):

**Holy God, here at this table we tasted your promise of new life and welcomed you into our lives. Strengthened by this gift, send us to proclaim your resurrection, to live the grace of your renewing love. In Jesus' we pray. Amen.**

**\*HYMN:** "Christ Is Alive" (*Voices United* 158)

## BENEDICTION

Risen with Christ: **we know the reassurance of God's presence.**

Risen with Christ: **we accept the challenge to walk God's way.**

Risen with Christ: **we are proof God's life will never die.**

Go forth in joy, in the blessing of God: Abba, Christ and Spirit!

Go, for Christ is Risen! **Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!**

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### St. James United Church

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Pamela Norman

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Minister Emeritus:

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Music Director:

Amy Dalziel

Associate Music Director

Bob Rose

Office Administrator

Stephanie Harnum

Technology Support:

Jake Thompson

Church Custodian:

Bruce Winsor

Office: 1-709-722-1881, x200; Email: [info@stjamesuc.org](mailto:info@stjamesuc.org);  
Emergency Cellphone: 1-709-351-0983;  
Website: [www.stjamesuc.org](http://www.stjamesuc.org)

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