

ST HILDA'S ASHFORD



THE EASTER VIGIL 2023

<https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/>

The Easter Vigil is a specially designed service which grants us time to wait for the moment of the Resurrection and the time when Christ conquered death. We begin with readings from the Hebrew Scriptures which unfold the redeeming works of God through time. This act of worship has many similarities to the Service of Nine Lessons that also refers to the Hebrew Scriptures to mark the fulfilling of prophecy in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ.

This service starts in near-complete darkness and the readings are read as we are surrounded with the dark pallor of death. As the Vigil continues the moment of the Resurrection is marked with the lighting of the new Paschal Candle, which enters the church in a flood of the new light of life.

It is traditional for this service to take place either on the Saturday night as darkness falls, or on Easter morning as the new day dawns. In either case, light becomes an important symbol to us.

The Service of Light

The minister stands in silence holding the unlit Easter Candle.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, on this most holy night, when our Lord Jesus Christ passed from death to life, the Church invites her children throughout the world to come together in vigil and prayer. This is the Passover of the Lord. We remember his death and resurrection by hearing his word and celebrating his mysteries, confident that we shall share his victory over death and live with him forever in God.

The new fire is blessed.

Let us pray.

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
set us aflame with the fire of your love,
and bring us to the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Easter Candle may be marked here.

Christ yesterday and today,
the beginning and the end,
Alpha and Omega,
all time belongs to him,
and all ages;
to him be glory and power,
through every age and for ever.

All Amen.

Nails or incense studs may be inserted into the Easter Candle.

By his holy and glorious wounds
may Christ our Lord guard and keep us.

All Amen.

The president lights the Easter Candle, saying:

May the light of Christ, rising in glory,
dispel the darkness from our hearts and minds.

Procession

The minister bearing the Candle raises it three times:

Christ our light.

All Thanks be to God.

*The Easter Candle is placed on a stand.
Candles are lit from the Easter Candle.*

The Exsultet

The Exsultet (the Easter Song of Praise) is sung.

The Lord be with you,
All And also with you.

Lift up your hearts
All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
All It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Liturgy of the Word

Dear friends in Christ, as we await the risen Christ, let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, recalling how he saved his people in ages past and in the fullness of time sent his Son to be our Redeemer; and let us pray that through this Easter celebration God may bring to perfection in each of us the saving work he has begun in us.

First reading - Genesis 1 v 1 - 2 v 4a

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. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And 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. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called 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 on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.’ And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And 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 be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.’ And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and 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.

And 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.’ And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.’ And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and

the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it

God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading – Exodus 14 vv 10 - end; 15 vv 20 - 21

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 the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them:

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Almighty and ever-living God, only hope of the world, by the preaching of the prophets you proclaimed the mysteries we are celebrating tonight.

Help us to be your faithful people, for it is by your inspiration alone that we can grow in goodness.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Amen

Third Reading – Ezekiel 36: 24 - 28

I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new

spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Father, you teach us
in both the Old and the New Testament
to celebrate this passover mystery.
Help us to understand your great love for us.
May the goodness you now show us
confirm our hope in your future mercy.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Amen

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gloria in Excelsis

*The lights are switched on and the candles are extinguished.
The bell is rung.*

All **Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

Epistle - Romans 6: 3 - 11

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.

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Prayer

Grant, Lord, that we who are baptised into the death of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ may continually put to death our evil desires and be buried with him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection; through his merits, who died and was buried and rose again for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

Gospel Acclamation

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

All Alleluia.

He has defeated the powers of death.

All Alleluia.

Jesus turns our sorrow into dancing.

All Alleluia.

He has the words of eternal life.

All Alleluia.

Gospel Reading – Matthew 28 vv 1 - 10

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 worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Liturgy of Initiation

**Lead us heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but thee;
Yet possessing every blessing
If our God our Father be.**

**Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us,
All our weakness thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
Self denying, death defying,
Thou to Calvary didst go.**

**Spirit of our God, descending
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy;
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy;
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.**

[James Edmeston]

The candidate for baptism gathers with the president at the baptismal font. The congregation faces the baptismal font.

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we remember that through the paschal mystery, we have died and been buried with him in baptism.

Presentation of the Candidate

The candidate is presented to the congregation. Where appropriate, they may be presented by their sponsors.

The president asks the candidates for baptism

Andre, do you wish to be baptized?

I do.

The president addresses the whole congregation

Faith is the gift of God to his people.

In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling.

People of God, will you welcome this candidate and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

All With the help of God, we will.

The Decision / Renewal of Baptismal Vows

The president addresses the congregation and the candidate for baptism

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?

All I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

All I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?

All I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

All I turn to Christ

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

All I submit to Christ

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?

All I come to Christ

Signing with the Cross

The president or another minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the candidate for baptism, saying

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

When the candidate for baptism has been signed, the president says to him

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

**All Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ
against sin, the world and the devil,
and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,

restore in you the image of his glory,

and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All Amen.

Prayer over the Water

The president stands before the water of baptism and says

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

All who keeps his promise for ever.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ
was baptized in the river Jordan,
we thank you for the gift of water
to cleanse us and revive us.

Saving God,

All give us life.†

We thank you that through the waters of the Red Sea
you led your people out of slavery
to freedom in the Promised Land.

Saving God,

All give us life.

We thank you that through the deep waters of death
you brought your Son,
and raised him to life in triumph.

Saving God,

All give us life.

Bless this water, that your servants who are washed in
it may be made one with Christ in his death and in his
resurrection, to be cleansed and delivered from all sin.

Saving God,

All give us life.

Send your Holy Spirit upon them,
bring them to new birth in the household of faith
and raise them with Christ to full and eternal life;
for all might, majesty, authority and power are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

Saving God,

All give us life.

Profession of Faith

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess with Andre the
faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all
being and life, the one for whom we exist?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

All We believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
Who gives life to the people of God
And makes Christ known in the world?

All We believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

**All We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

Baptism

Andre, is this your faith?

The candidate answers in his own words, or

This is my faith.

The president or another minister pours water on Andre, saying

Andre, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

We sing while the waters of baptism are sprinkled over the people:

**Come down, O love divine,
Seek thou this soul of mine,
And visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
Within my heart appear,
And kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.**

**O let it freely burn,
Till earthly passions turn
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
And let thy glorious light
Shine ever on my sight,
And clothe me round the while my path illuming.**

**Let holy charity
Mine outward vesture be,
And lowliness become mine inner clothing;
True lowliness of heart,
Which takes the humbler part,
And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.**

**And so the yearning strong,
With which the soul will long,
Shall far outpass the power of human telling;
For none can guess its grace,
Till he become the place
Wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.**

[Bianco de Siena tr. R. F. Littledale]

The president says

Almighty God,
we thank you for our fellowship in the household of
faith with all who have been baptized in your name.
Keep us faithful to our baptism,
and so make us ready for that day
when the whole creation shall be made perfect in your
Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

All Amen.

Commission

Those who are baptized are called to worship and serve
God.

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and
fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you persevere in resisting evil,
and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to
the Lord?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you proclaim by word and example
the good news of God in Christ?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all people,
loving your neighbour as yourself?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society,
by prayer for the world and its leaders,
by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?

With the help of God, I will.

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith,
that you may be rooted and grounded in love
and bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

All Amen.

Welcome

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:
Andre, by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

**All We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

The congregation may greet the newly baptized.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Peace

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and
said 'Peace be with you'.

Then were they glad when they saw the Lord.

The peace of the risen Christ be always with you. Alleluia.

All and also with you. Alleluia

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

Come, ye faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness;
God hath brought his Israel
Into joy from sadness;
Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters,
Led them with unmoistened foot
Through the Red Sea waters.

'Tis the spring of souls today;
Christ has burst his prison,
And from three days' sleep in death
As a sun hath risen;
All the winter of our sins,
Long and dark, is flying
From his light, to whom we give
Laud and praise undying.

Now the queen of seasons, bright
With the day of splendour,
With the royal feast of feasts,
Comes its joy to render;
Comes to glad Jerusalem,
Who with true affection
Welcomes in unwearied strains
Jesu's resurrection.

Neither might the gates of death,
Nor the tomb's dark portal,
Nor the watchers, nor the seal,
Hold thee as a mortal;
But today amidst thine own
Thou didst stand, bestowing
That thy peace which evermore
Passeth human knowing.

[St. John of Damascus tr. J. M. Neale]

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you

All and also with you

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks,

almighty and eternal Father,

and on this night of our redemption

to celebrate with joyful hearts

the memory of your wonderful works.

For by the mystery of his passion

Jesus Christ, your risen Son,

has conquered the powers of death and hell

and restored in men and women the image of your glory.

He has placed them once more in paradise

and opened to them the gate of life eternal.

And so, in the joy of this Passover,

earth and heaven resound with gladness,

while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation

sing for ever the hymn of your glory:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

All God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We praise and bless you, loving Father
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit
that broken bread and wine out-poured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends,
and taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, shared it with them and said:
*Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.*

When supper was ended he took a cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
*Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of
sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did.
In him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and the cup of
salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All **Christ has died:**
Christ is risen:
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.
Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with all the saints
to be with you for ever at your table in heaven.
Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's new creation,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

Jesus says, I am the bread of life,
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

**All Lord, our hearts hunger for you;
give us this bread always.**

The president says the invitation to communion

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The president and people receive communion.

Communion Hymns

Just as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fighting within, and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve:
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am (thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down),
Now to be thine, yea thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, of that free love
The breadth, length, depth and height to prove,
Here for a season then above,
O Lamb of God, I come.

[Charlotte Elliott]

Taizé chant:

**Wait for the Lord, his day is near,
Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.**

[© 1984 Ateliers et Presses de Taizé]

Prayer after Communion

God of Life,
who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
have delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin,
that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen
life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Blessing

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

All He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

God the Father,
by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,
open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

All Amen.

God the Son,
who in bursting the grave has won a glorious victory,
give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

All Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
whom the risen Lord breathed into his disciples,
empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

All Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All Amen.

The candles of the congregation are re-lit.

Giving of a Lighted Candle

The president or another person may give the newly baptized a lighted candle, lit from the Easter Candle.

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and has given us a place with the saints in light.
You have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

The Dismissal

With the risen life of Christ within you,
go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!

All Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

Recessional Hymn

**Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Sion, city of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken
Formed thee for his own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.**

**See, the streams of living waters,
Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,
And all fear of want remove:
Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord the giver,
Never fails from age to age.**

**Saviour, if of Sion's city,
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name:
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure
None but Sion's children know.**

[John Newton]

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Contact Information

Vicar

Fr Joseph Fernandes

vicar@sthilda.org

Vicarage 01784 254237

Parish Office 01784 253525

Mobile: 07999 053433

Licenced Lay Ministers

Carolyn Clark carolyn@sthilda.org

Rosalyn Young rosalyn@sthilda.org

Churchwarden

Bobbie Bedford

PCC Secretary

Liz Brian

Email: lizbrian17@aol.com

PCC Treasurer

Christopher Brown

Email: treasurer@sthilda.org

PA to Fr Joseph

Mariane Tank pa@sthilda.org

Church Hall Bookings

Chris Davenport

01784 252170

The Parish Office:

St Hilda's Church, Stanwell Road, Ashford, Middlesex
TW15 3QL

Telephone: 01784 253525 Email: sthilda28@gmail.com

Website: www.sthilda.org

Charity Number: 1134119

CCLI: 708985

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