“...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.”

These words from the liturgy for the Great Vigil of Easter (Book of Common Prayer [BCP], p. 285) normally speak to dispersion as the reality that the Church does not exist in one place but exists in all places and across time. This year, as a faithful response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, dispersion takes on a whole new meaning. Rather than gathering to observe these incredibly rich and meaningful liturgies as a community, we will instead observe them as a dispersed community—as individuals and families in our homes.

This booklet, a collaboration of Church of the Holy Spirit, West Haven and St. Paul’s Church, Fairfield, contains liturgies that may be observed by individuals or families with or without younger children. To accompany this booklet, you will need/want:

- Home Altar (see page 11)
- Book of Common Prayer (bcponline.org)
- Bible (bible.oremus.org)
- Palm leaf
- Cross
- Candle(s)
- Bowl of water

Though we would ideally be able to gather in-person this week, we hope everyone will take advantage of this opportunity to observe Holy Week in this special way.
Palm Sunday

Begin the service at your front door. If there are several persons present, one will preside.

Opening Prayer:

[The Lord be with you. And also with you. Let us pray.]

Loving God, As we come to the beginning of Holy Week, we remember your triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We sing your praises, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David.” You alone are the true King, the leader greater than all others. Even so, in your great mercy you chose to become like us, taking on human form and living among us. As we celebrate and shout “Hosanna” today, may we remember what will soon follow. Keep us faithful in word and deed, and help us love you with our whole heart. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Matthew 21:1-11

Read the passage of scripture, leaving silence at the end.

Procession

Sing or read the hymn while processing to your home altar or another suitable space. Children or children-at-heart may wish to wave palms or homemade banners or streamers in the procession and to play tambourines or other percussion instruments.

All glory, laud, and honor
To thee, Redeemer, King,
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.

Thou art the King of Israel,
Thou David’s royal Son,
Who in the Lord’s name comest,
The King and Blessed One.

Intercessions

Offer intercessions at your home altar, or another suitable space for devotion, for...

…the Church, its members and leaders, and the mission of God.
…our local communities, the nation, and the world.
…those experiencing hunger, homelessness, sickness, and for all who suffer.
…those dear to you.
…those who have died and for those who mourn.

Lord’s Prayer (BCP 97)

Gathering these prayers, as well as those we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray in the words that Jesus taught us. Our Father...

Prayer

[The Lord be with you. And also with you. Let us pray.]

Saving God, We praise you as we celebrate Palm Sunday. Be with us as we begin our journey through Holy Week, that we may more closely align our lives with yours, knowing suffering and death, yet remaining hopeful in the life you promise. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

You may wish to conclude the liturgy by holding silence, or by sharing a sign of peace with those who may be with you. After a time, you may reflect on your experience. See page 11 for conversation starters.
Praying the Daily Office During Holy Week

Use of prayers to mark the times of the day and express the traditions of the praying community is traditional in Judaism and Christianity. The Daily Office is a combination of ancient and medieval forms of prayer at different times of the day, such as Morning (BCP 75), Noonday (BCP 103), Evening (BCP 115), and Compline (BCP 127).

We commend these to your use as part of your Holy Week observance. The Daily Office may be adapted for individual use.

**Scripture Readings for Holy Week (BCP 957)**

**Palm Sunday Evening**
- Psalm 103
- Zechariah 12:9-11;13:1,7-9

**Monday in Holy Week**
- Psalm 51:1-20
- Lamentations 1:1-2,6-12
- Mark 11:12-25

**Tuesday in Holy Week**
- Psalms 6 & 12
- Lamentations 1:17-22
- Mark 11:27-33

**Spy Wednesday**
- Psalm 55
- Lamentations 2:1-9
- Mark 12:1-11

**Maundy Thursday**
- Psalm 102
- Lamentations 2:10-18
- Mark 14:12-25

**Good Friday**

*Morning*
- Psalm 22
- Lamentations 3:1-9,19-33
- John 13:36-38

*Evening*
- Psalm 40:1-19, 54
- 1 Peter 1:10-20
- John 19:38-42

**Holy Saturday**

*Morning*
- Psalm 88
- Lamentations 3:37-58
- Hebrews 4:1-16

*Evening*
- Psalm 27
- Romans 8:1-11
Agapé for Maundy Thursday

Prepare a simple menu (such as soup, cheese, olives, dried fruit, bread, and wine). If there are several persons present, one will preside.

Blessings

If you are sharing this meal, invite others to gather around the table and hold space for silence. After a few moments, the one chosen to preside offers one or more of the following prayers.

Over Wine  (BOS 84)

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.

Over Bread  (BOS 85)

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; and you have fed us on our way with the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. Let us be fed again soon with that bread of life. And as grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Over the Other Foods  (BOS 85)

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Meal

The meal is then shared with each person serving others. See page 11 for conversation starters for your meal.

Procession

After the meal, the presider invites everyone to process to the home altar, saying or singing the following hymn.

Where true charity and love dwell, God himself is there.  
Since the love of Christ has joined us in one body,  
let us all rejoice and be glad now and always.  
And as we hear and love our Lord, the living God,  
so let us in sincerity love all people.

Reading: John 17:1-26

Read the passage of scripture, leaving silence at the end.
Response: Psalm 63:1-8 (BCP 670)
The Psalm can be read in unison or by alternating by whole verse or half verse.

Prayer

[The Lord be with you. And also with you. Let us pray.]

O God of the crucified and risen One, from whom no trial or trouble can separate us: you feed us with your Word and soothe us with your Spirit, closer to us than breath itself. Make us glad this night for the life of your servant Jesus; Make us servants of all for the sake of Jesus; who for our sake gave his life for the salvation of all. In the Name of Jesus, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

You may wish to conclude the liturgy by holding silence, or by sharing a sign of peace with those who may be with you. After a time, you may reflect on your experience. See page 11 for conversation starters.
Good Friday

Begin at your home altar, or another suitable place of devotion (preferably with a cross). If there are several persons present, one will preside. Begin by praying:

Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Read the passage of scripture, leaving silence at the end.

Response: Psalm 22 (BCP 610)
The Psalm can be read in unison or by alternating by whole verse or half verse.

Gospel: John 18:1-19:42
Read the passage of scripture, leaving silence at the end.

Solemn Collects
You may keep silence after each bidding.

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

Let us pray for the holy catholic Church of Christ throughout the world; for all those who meet in homes on these holy days, for those who are isolated, that all your people might be one.

Silence may be kept.

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those to whom their care is entrusted, that by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

Silence may be kept.

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind; for the hungry and the homeless, the destitute and the oppressed; for the sick and the wounded; for those in loneliness, fear, and anguish; for those who face temptation, doubt, selfishness, and despair; for the sorrowful and bereaved; for prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger; that God in mercy would comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of God’s love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence may be kept.

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence may be kept.

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 tranquility 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; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Lord’s Prayer (BCP 97)

Gathering these prayers, as well as those we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray in the words that Jesus taught us. Our Father...

Concluding Anthem

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

You may wish to conclude the liturgy by holding silence. After a time, you may reflect on your experience. See page 11 for conversation starters.
The Great Vigil of Easter

Prepare your home altar with an unlit candle and a bowl of water. If there are several persons present, one will preside. Begin by lighting the candle and saying:
The light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds. Thanks be to God.

Easter Proclamation (Adapted Exsultet)
Groups of two or more may use the refrain.
Rejoice, all heavenly choirs of angels!
Christ has conquered; the risen Savior shines upon you.
This is the night in which the true Lamb is slain.

Refrain: (ONE) This is the night. (ALL) This is the night.
This the night in which the children of Israel were led through the sea.

Refrain
This is the night in which all who believe in Christ are renewed in grace.

Refrain
The holiness of this night restores joy to those who mourn and humbles earthly pride.

Therefore this night, O God, receive our praise for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

May Christ, the Morning Star, rising from the grave, shed light on the whole human race.

And we pray, O God: preserve and protect your Church, giving us peace, in this time and forever. Amen.

O God, you are the creator of the world, the liberator of your people, and the wisdom of the earth. By the resurrection of your Son, free us from our fears, restore us in your image, and ignite us with your light, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Readings
Read the following passages from scripture, allowing silence afterward for reflection.

Genesis 1:1-2:2
The Story of Creation

Exodus 14:10-15:1
Israel's Deliverance at the Red Sea

Zephaniah 3:12-20
The gathering of God's people
Renewal of Baptismal Vows (BCP 292)
After the vows have been renewed, use your thumb to draw a cross on your forehead, using the water in the bowl. Gatherings with two or more people may draw crosses on the foreheads of one another.

Proclamation
Alleluia, Christ is Risen. The Lord is Risen, indeed. Alleluia!

A Collect for Easter
[The Lord be with you. And also with you. Let us pray.]
Almighty God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection 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 resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Reading: Romans 6:3-11
Read the passage of scripture, leaving silence at the end.

Gospel: Matthew 28:1-10
Read the passage of scripture, leaving silence at the end.

Intercessions
Offer intercessions for...

...the Church, its members and leaders, and the mission of God.
...our local communities, the nation, and the world.
...those experiencing hunger, homelessness, sickness, and for all who suffer.
...those dear to you.
...those who have died and for those who mourn.

Lord’s Prayer (BCP 97)
Gathering these prayers, as well as those we hold in the silence of our hearts, we pray in the words that Jesus taught us. Our Father...

A Collect for Easter
[The Lord be with you. And also with you. Let us pray.]
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.

You may wish to conclude the liturgy by holding silence, or by sharing a sign of peace with those who may be with you. After a time, you may reflect on your experience. See page 11 for conversation starters.
Conversation Starters
Palm Sunday
- What images, words, or phrases do you associate with Palm Sunday?
- What does it mean to you to welcome Christ into your heart and home? What might you do to prepare for Christ’s visitation?
- What is your prayer as you begin Holy Week?

Maundy Thursday
- What images, words, or phrases do you associate with Maundy Thursday?
- How does Jesus call you to serve others?
- What connections do you make between your meal, meals you have shared with others, and the Holy Eucharist?

Good Friday
- What images, words, or phrases do you associate with Good Friday?
- What are your own experiences of death and resurrection?
- How might you explain to someone the significance of the Cross?
- Where do you find yourself challenged by the Cross?

The Great Vigil of Easter
- What images, words, or phrases do you associate with the Easter Vigil?
- Which Easter Vigil reading from Hebrew Scripture is your favorite? Why?
- Where do you see yourself in God’s salvation story?

Home Altar
A home altar is a space set aside for individual or family prayer and devotion. It could be a table or shelf in an accessible, but not high-traffic, area of the home. Some essentials for your home altar include: a white cloth, a candle (symbolizing the light of Christ), a small bowl of water (symbolizing baptism), a cross (as a focal point for devotion), an item representing creation (a plant, a rock, etc.), and a Bible. You may choose to include other items; however, remember: clutter distracts and the point of a home altar is to focus our prayers and devotion. If you have children, this is a wonderful opportunity to invite them to help prepare the home altar. You may ask them to choose the space and to contribute items that are important to them.

Meditations & Music
For meditations and music to accompany the Triduum, visit: stpaulsfairfield.org/eworship
Credits & Acknowledgements

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