

Gathering is a choice to pay attention to the Spirit of God's loving presence around us (and within us) rather than other distractions of lesser importance. *Lighting the Paschal Candle is a reminder of the Source of Light & Life that shines in the darkness.*

Priest Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.
Priest There is one Body and one Spirit;
People There is one hope in God's call to us;
Priest One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
People One God and Father of all.
Priest The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Priest Let us pray.



All 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—*especially (insert names of candidates here)*—that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Praise is the natural human response to the love of God when we become attentive to all this means in our lives.

Sing

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.
In him there is no darkness at all. (1st John 1:5) The night and the day are both alike. (Psalm 139:11)
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

Priest In baptism we are called by name, adopted into Christ's Body as living members, and marked as Christ's own forever. Receive these candles as a sign of the Light of Christ that burns *for* you and *within* you.

Each mentor lights the candle of each confirmand from the Paschal Candle.

Youth Minister Now carry the Light as we go and listen to the promise and hope of God.

Listening is what God asks of those who follow. *Shema, Israel! Hear, O Israel!*

We listen to the stories of God from Holy Scripture and they convey the themes of God's light shining in the darkness; God's dream of liberty and justice for all people; and God's willingness to entrust us with the gifts and call to carry Divine Light into world.

A Reading from the Book of Exodus 14:21-25

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. ²²The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴At 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. ²⁵He 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.'

Psalm 139:1, 10-17 *Confirmands respond with the bold, italicized phrases.*

LORD, you have searched me out and known me; *

you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *

and the light around me turn to night,"

Darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; *

darkness and light to you are both alike.

I will thank you because I am marvelously made; *

your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

My body was not hidden from you, *

while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;

all of them were written in your book; *

they were fashioned day by day, when as yet there was none of them.

How deep I find your thoughts, O God! *

how great is the sum of them!

If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand; *

to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.

A Reading from the 1st Letter of John 4:7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for **God is love**. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.

In this is love, **not that we loved God but that he loved us** and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us *so much*, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and *his love is perfected in us*.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Mark 1:9-11

Glory to you, Lord Christ

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit of God descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." *The Gospel of the Lord.*

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

“What is the Good News in these Lessons?” asks the preacher.

And the people of God say, “I believe the Good News is....”

The other way we say this is to speak the following ancient, devotional prayer:

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.

Youth Minister Now carry the Light of what you have heard and give thanks for the gift of water and of Holy Baptism.

Give Thanks for the gift of water and the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

Priest The Lord be with you

People And also with you.

Priest Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Priest We thank you, Almighty God, for *the gift of water*.

❖ Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.

❖ *Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise.*

❖ In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, *to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.*



We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism.

In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it

we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. *Amen.*

Each confirmation candidate asperges the gathered community with these words:

[Remember your Baptism. Remember that you are loved.]

*The priest opens the Oleum Sacrum (sacred oil) with which the confirmation candidates were anointed at their baptisms, and anoints the hands of each as a reminder that the gifts and call of God are irrevocable, and that **we are—literally—blessed to serve.***

Priest Remember that you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in baptism, and marked as Christ's own forever.

I anoint your hands as a reminder that you are blessed to serve.

Youth Minister Now carry the Light of your faith, hope, and love; and offer this power back to God in prayer.

Prayer is our response to God. It is our chance to honestly say that we cannot fix everything by ourselves. We entrust the people, places, and things of this world to God's loving care. And we give thanks for the people, places, and things that we have received as a blessing. So, let us take turns and pray:

- ❖ For the Church around the world and right here—including the people for which I am thankful and the mission to which I am committed, especially...*(all may add names)*.
- ❖ For our nation and all who hold authority and power, that they might use it to seek justice, love mercy, and work for the common good, especially...*(all may add names)*.
- ❖ For the welfare of the world, especially places which are afflicted by war, poverty, disease, natural disasters, and other hardships, especially...*(all may add names)*.
- ❖ For the thanksgivings and concerns I carry for family and friends, at home, in school, and throughout my social network, especially...*(all may add names)*.
- ❖ For those who have died, including these people whom I still hold in my memories and in my love, especially...*(all may add names)*.

Priest Eternal and loving Father, you have gifted us with the power of faith, hope, and love. Even with this power, we cannot fully express our gratitude for our blessings nor fix all of our concerns. And so we give all these back to you in our prayers. Mercifully hear our prayers, and give us the grace and strength to live more like we pray.

Confession is good for your soul! This is our opportunity to say, honestly and unequivocally—"I'm not perfect! I need a do-over!" And this is the only place in the world where we can trust God's answer to be—"YES! You are my beloved. With your sincere repentance and willingness to start over, I am well pleased."

All God of all mercy, we confess that we have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you created. We now turn back from the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will.

Priest May Almighty God forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, the beloved Son, and reveal your own belovedness as a Child of God, a living member of Christ's reconciling mission in this life and in the life to come.

Peace is a gift from God that only comes to life when it is shared by two or more people.

Priest The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

Youth Minister Now carry the Light of your peace to God's Table and prepare to share even more of God's Presence in this Holy Communion.

Offertory means to offer gifts. We offer gifts of bread and wine to be transformed into Sacrament, and gifts of money to be transformed into Mission. We also offer gifts of praise, singing together of God's amazing grace.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see, Alleluia
Alleluia, allelu, alleluia, alleluia; Alleluia, allelu, alleluia, allelu, alleluia

Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come,
Tis grace that's brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home, Alleluia
Alleluia, allelu, alleluia, alleluia; Alleluia, allelu, alleluia, allelu, alleluia

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun, Alleluia
Alleluia, allelu, alleluia, alleluia; Alleluia, allelu, alleluia, allelu, alleluia

Celebrate the good news that God so loved the world he gave us his Son, and that he invites us to this Sacred Table to remember this profound love over and over again!

From The Book of Common Prayer, p. 402

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give him thanks and praise.



Gracious Father, we give you thanks for the gift of life—a gift that begins in water and darkness, just as the beginning of your creation happened when your Spirit moved over the waters and in the darkness. From similar water and darkness you delivered your people from slavery in Egypt and brought them out into a promised land. In similar water and darkness you called your Son beloved when the world desperately needed his light.

Tonight we give you thanks for the gift of our faith which began in the waters of our baptisms, long before we could understand what it means to be given a gift that cannot be taken away and a call that can never be silenced. ***We especially celebrate these young people—(insert the names of the candidates here)—as they prepare to make a mature and public affirmation of this gift and this call at their confirmation next Sunday.***

And so we join with them, and with the saints and angels in heaven and on earth, proclaiming your glory, as we say,

Celebrant and People

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, 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 you because you gave us the gift of your only Son as a Light to all people. In him there is no darkness at all. Even on the darkest night of his earthly life, he shared gifts of bread and wine as he prepared to give his own body and blood for our sake.

And so, Father, we bring you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, 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. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Father, we now celebrate the memorial of your Son. By means of this holy bread and cup, we show forth the sacrifice of his death, and proclaim his resurrection, until he comes again.

Gather us by this Holy Communion into one body in your Son Jesus Christ. Make us a living sacrifice of praise.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. *AMEN.*

Priest We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

People We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

The people share the gifts with one another, saying these words:

The Body of Christ, the Bread of Heaven.

The Blood of Christ, the Cup of Salvation.

A Final Thanksgiving Prayer is our response to the gift of Holy Communion.

After all have received the Sacrament, the people say this thanksgiving prayer.

- ❖ Loving God, we thank you for the gift of your light which we have celebrated tonight.
- ❖ Thank you for the gift of your Story of love which we have heard.
- ❖ Thank you for the gift of our Baptism, in which we are adopted as beloved children.
- ❖ Thank you for the gift of prayer, by which we share our needs and hopes with you.
- ❖ Thank you for the gift of Peace you have empowered us to share with one another.
- ❖ And we thank you for the gift of Holy Communion, through which we celebrate the life we share with You and one another through Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Help us remember these gifts and be thankful for this call. Amen.

A Blessing takes many forms. Instead of a spoken blessing by the priest tonight, your mentors and teachers will present you with a blessing in the form of a gift.

Mentors & Teachers We present you with this Book of Common Prayer. The gift of these prayers has been passed down for hundreds and thousands of years. Now, we pass them on to you. Keep the prayers. Keep the faith. And God bless you.

Go! You have not been blessed to sit still.

Priest You have been blessed in order to be a blessing for others.
So, go forth and shine the Light, Faith, Hope, and Love you have received!

People Thanks be to God!

