

# **ST HILDA'S ASHFORD**



## **EASTER EVE**

**WITH BAPTISM OF ADAM, BEN AND MALACHI**

**6PM 04 APRIL 2026**

*The service begins outside*

## **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 kindled.*

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 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 Easter Acclamation**

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.**

## **The Collect**

Let us pray that we may walk the risen life of Christ in glory.  
Grant, Lord,  
that we who are baptized 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. **Amen.**

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

### First reading –Job ch 12 vv 1 – 12

Then Job answered:

‘No doubt you are the people,  
and wisdom will die with you.

But I have understanding as well as you;  
I am not inferior to you.

Who does not know such things as these?

I am a laughing-stock to my friends;

I, who called upon God and he answered me,  
a just and blameless man, I am a laughing-stock.

Those at ease have contempt for misfortune,  
but it is ready for those whose feet are unstable.

The tents of robbers are at peace,  
and those who provoke God are secure,  
who bring their god in their hands.

‘But ask the animals, and they will teach you;  
the birds of the air, and they will tell you;  
ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you;  
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.

Who among all these does not know  
that the hand of the Lord has done this?

In his hand is the life of every living thing  
and the breath of every human being.

Does not the ear test words  
as the palate tastes food?

Is wisdom with the aged,  
and understanding in length of days?

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

## **New Testament Reading - 1 Peter ch 4 vv 1 - 8**

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an account to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

The end of all things is near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.

*At the end the reader may say*

This is the word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

### **Gradual Hymn:**

**This is the day the Lord has made,  
He calls the hours his own;  
Let heaven rejoice, let earth be glad,  
And praise surround his throne.**

**Blest be the Lord who came to men  
With heavenly truth and grace,  
Who came in God his Father's name,  
To save a sinful race.**

**Today he rose and left the dead,  
And Satan's empire fell;  
Today the saints his triumphs spread,  
And all his wonders tell.**

*[Isaac Watts and NEH Editors]*

## **Gospel Reading** - Matthew 27:57-end

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.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to  
Matthew

**All Glory to you, O Lord.**

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, 'Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, "After three days I will rise again." Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people,

“He has been raised from the dead”, and the last deception would be worse than the first.’ Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.’ So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

*After the reading:*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Christ be with me, Christ within me,  
Christ behind me, Christ before me,  
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,  
Christ to comfort and restore me.**

**Christ beneath me, Christ above me,  
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,  
Christ in hearts of all who love me,  
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.**

*[from St. Patrick's Breastplate  
tr. Mrs. C. F. Alexander]*

## **The Sermon**

### **Presentation of the Candidates for Baptism**

Ben, Adam, Malachi, do you wish to be baptized?

**C I do.**

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 these candidates and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

**All With the help of God, we will.**

## The Decision

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?

**C I reject them.**

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?

**C I renounce them.**

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

**C I repent of them.**

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

**C I turn to Christ.**

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?

**C I submit to Christ.**

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

**C I come to Christ.**

## Signing with the Cross

*[N]* Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

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. **Amen.**

*Taizé chant: Ubi caritas et amor, ubi caritas Deus ibi est*

## **Prayer over the Water**

Praise God who made heaven and earth

**All Who keeps his promise forever**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**All it is right to give our thanks and praise**

We thank you, almighty God, for the gift of water  
to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life.

Over water the Holy Spirit moved  
in the beginning of creation.

Through water you led the children of Israel  
from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land.

In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John  
and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah,  
the Christ,

to lead us from the death of sin to newness of 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 baptize into his fellowship those who come to him in  
faith.

Now sanctify this water that, by the power of your Holy  
Spirit,

they may be cleansed from sin and born again.

Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith  
and continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord;

to whom with you and the Holy Spirit

be all honour and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **Profession of Faith**

Brothers and sisters,  
I ask you to profess together with these candidates  
the faith of the Church.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

**All I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

**All I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
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,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

**All 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.**

## The Baptism

[N] is this your faith?

**C This is my faith.**

[N] I baptize you  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**All Amen.**

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,  
pour upon you the riches of his grace,  
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people  
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,  
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

**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?

**C 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?

**C With the help of God, I will.**

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

**C With the help of God, I will.**

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

**C 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?

**C With the help of God, I will.**

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

**All Amen.**

## **The Welcome**

Adam, Ben, Malachi,  
there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:  
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.**

## **Hymn**

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

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**All and also with you. Alleluia.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*All may exchange a sign of peace.*

# Intercessions

## The Lord's Prayer

**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.

## THE DISMISSAL

### Blessing

The God of peace,  
who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus,  
that great shepherd of the sheep,  
through the blood of the eternal covenant,  
make you perfect in every good work to do his will,  
working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**All** Amen.

Go in the light and peace of Christ.

**All** Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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