

The Vigil

In the name of the creator, redeemer, and sustainer, Amen.

The Vigil is one of my favorite services. The liturgy is beautiful, full of meaning, and is foundational to who we are as Christians. I really struggled to put a long sermon together for this evening for that reason. I have talked to so many people who have their own unique experiences with this service so it felt inauthentic to try and distill such a powerful part of our tradition into one sermon. So tonight, I decided to offer more of a reflection instead of a longer sermon.

I feel the service and its beauty preaches in many ways, so to honor that, my reflection is more of an invitation.

The Easter Vigil is one of those services that truly connects us to what has been, what is, and what is yet to come. We hear the ancient stories of creation and of God's acts and promises to God's people. We recognize it as one of the first that would have been celebrated in the early church. We celebrate it today with open hearts listening for what the spirit might be saying to us in our own challenging times.

As we hear the stories of creation, I wonder how they connect for us in this unprecedented time of climate crisis. How might we recommit ourselves to the care of creation alongside our commitments to each other? Maybe hearing these stories with new hearts will move us to action.

We began our liturgy this evening by blessing the fire, acclaiming the risen Christ as the light of the world, and as we bless the water for Baptism, it reminds us of the promise of new life.

These moments in our service remind us of the foundations of our tradition and inform our faith.

As we prepare to renew our baptismal vows, we recall that our baptism is the Sacrament through which we are united to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

We renew these solemn promises and vows to ground ourselves in our Christian community. People with beliefs grounded in a loving God, called to treat God's creation and each other with that same loving spirit.

That God's love is freely given without condition and that we are called to live out our baptismal vows not only with one another but also with all those whom we encounter.

Our service tonight invites us to experience the spaces in between. In between light and dark, death and life, known and unknown.

Leaning into the mystery of the service, I invite us all to listen with new hearts to feel where the Spirit may be moving as we experience the ancient in new ways.

How might these ancient mysteries call us to action? What might you hear in a new way as we renew our baptismal?

May God open our hearts, minds, and spirits to that which we need to hear as we continue this most holy night of actively listening to the lessons, renewing our vows to God and one another, and sharing in the Eucharist this evening and always.

Amen