

# **THE EASTER VIGIL**

by

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and

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## Foreword

The Cathedrals' Liturgy Group was formed early in 1994 at the initiative of the Church of England Liturgical Commission to promote good liturgical practice in cathedrals and to enhance the contribution that cathedrals might make to the worship of the wider Church.

Its members, who include deans and provosts, precentors, organists and architects, meet regularly to address a number of issues. These issues are discussed in a series of occasional papers.

The approach has been the same for each paper. Individual members of the Group have written the paper, but successive drafts have been amended in the light of discussions in the . Group~ In each *easel* what we offer is the work of one or two individuals, modified by the Group as a whole, and issued with the general approval (and indeed, enthusiasm) of the Group.

We hope the series may prove helpful to those who order cathedral worship at a time of significant liturgical change and renewal.

Michael Perham

July 1998

## Other Papers in the Series

1. Ordination Liturgy
2. Ministries in the Cathedral Eucharist
3. Towards the Ideal Psalm Cycle
4. Celebrating New Ministries
5. Music at Ordinations

## **mE EASTER VIGIL**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Easter Vigil, perhaps more than any other rite, has undergone a complex series of revisions and developments in the course of which local practice or pastoral expediency or misinterpretation of original intentions or texts have tended to obscure the undergirding principles that make this liturgy one of the most fundamentally important in the Christian observance.

The intention of this paper is to emphasise the centrality of the Vigil and by a sensitive approach to the problems as well as the possibilities that its performance reveals to discover ways in which it can regain its pre-eminence in the liturgical cycle.

The paper on the Easter Vigil falls into three parts:

Part 1 - A historical survey which rehearses the main features of the developments of the rite.

Part 2 - An attempt to identify the principles which under-gird the rite and some of the problems which attend its performance. Example of three cathedrals attempts to implement the principles, circumvent the problems and enlarge the possibilities.

Part 3 - Recommendations.

## Part 1 - A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE EASTER VIGIL

The Easter Vigil has consisted from ancient times of twelve Old . Testament readings which rehearsed the salvation history and then concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist. Sometime in the late second or early third century, baptism became associated with the Vigil and was interposed between the readings and the Mass. To this sequence Was prefaced the even-more-ancient rite of lighting the lamps which early Christians took over from Jewish Sabbath practice. Light, Scripture, Baptism and Eucharist became the principal ingredients of the Easter paschal liturgy .

Although, as we shall see later, developments imposed a displaced chronology which did violence to the symbolic coherence of the rite, the Easter Vigil is essentially a nocturnal celebration. St Augustine is clear that 'we ought to keep watch on this particular Vigil which is, we may say, the Mother of all Vigils when the entire world is committed to keeping a night watch'.

### The Service of Light

The *lucernarium* or lighting of the lamps evolved from the custom in Jewish households when the mother of the household brought in the lamp for the evening meal which began the Sabbath or other Jewish festivals and used a blessing as the lamp was lit. 'Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, King of all eternity, who did'st create lamps of fire'.

The Greek hymn '*Phos Hilaron*' (Hail gladdening light) comes from the third century and accompanied the lighting of the lamps at Vespers (and is still used in the Byzantine Rite for Vespers and is provided as the hymn for the lighting of the light in CCP). The

lighting of the fire which precedes the lighting of the paschal candle perhaps comes from a pagan source (possibly Irish) and was a fairly late development in the evolution of the Vigil.

Originally all that was needed was a spark to light the candle (this is the main focus of the ceremony) but the fact that this was *new* fire after the extinction of the old lights on Good Friday excited the liturgical imagination, and by the eleventh century the use of outdoor bonfires had become widespread. Indeed the 1970 Roman Missal directs that 'a large fire' should be prepared.

Two distinct ways of lighting and sharing the light of Christ are evident. Egeria in her fourth century travels reports from

Jerusalem that the light enclosed in the Holy Sepulchre was brought out and passed from worshipper to worshipper in a 'blaze of light'. In Spain the light was kindled secretly in the sacristy and then dramatically introduced into the darkened church and the triple acclamation '*Lumen Christi*' was made by the congregation who then shared the light. By contrast, the French and North Italian rite developed the principle of procession with a single special candle being introduced into the dark church (a very special candle indeed in late medieval times where the Sarum Use and the Ambrosian rite, for example, requires a candle 32 ft in height). The practice of using a single Easter candle became the general practice in the Western Church, superseding the practice of lighting three candles fixed on a reed which the Roman Rite required until the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

Additional ceremonies have come to mark the lighting of the candle, including the insertion of grains of incense in the sign of the cross. This ceremony tied in with a particular cult of the Wounds of Christ in the Middle Ages, but it is likely that the

instructions '*faciens crucem deincenso*' were misconstrued to mean 'making the cross with incense' rather than 'making the cross with a lighted taper'.

## The Procession

Once lit, the candle was brought by the Deacon into the darkened church. The light of Christ was proclaimed thrice and the light was shared among the congregation. This procession illustrates one very particular aspect of the Christian Pascha. One interpretation of Pascha (which probably derives from a mistranslation of the Hebrew word for Passover which came to be associated with *Passio* or the passion of Christ) has Christ as the main protagonist. Clearly, the paschal liturgy is celebrating the whole saving work of Christ. It is a unitive celebration, not re-enacting any single historic episode or aspect of the story of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection but presenting it whole as God's work of saving his people ...' The Pascha denoted both the passion of Christ and his passing over - his *transitus* from death to life.

But at the same time, there is a sense that it is the Christian as well as Christ himself who is involved as protagonist. In Kenneth Stevenson's words 'On the one hand you have Holy Week as Event and on the other you have Holy Week as Mystery in which the Christian grows', and it was this latter interpretation that encouraged writers like Cyril of Jerusalem to link baptism almost exclusively to Easter. In the procession of the paschal candle, these two interpretations come together - the Christ event is proclaimed and the notion of pilgrimage, new beginnings, of initiation and renewal, of movement to a promised land, are made explicit.

The paschal candle is placed in its stand, preferably next to the lectern, bringing together the notion of divine illumination and the word of God which is the principal focus of the Vigil. .

### The Easter Song of Praise

The *Exultet* (so called from the first words of the canticle in the Latin text) had its precursors in the *Phos Hilaron* (third century), *Inventor Rutuli* of Prudentius, the candle song (of whose elaborateness Jerome complained in 334), and the two blessings of the candle by Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia in the sixth century. The *Exultet* as we know it first appears in the seventh-century Gothic Missal.

This song focuses many of the different strands which the Pascha celebrates. As it rejoices at the rising of Christ from the dead it recapitulates the salvation history when God of old saved our fathers delivering the people of Israel from their slavery and leading them dry-shod through the sea'. It rehearses the sovereignty of God over the created order (even though, sadly, the *Laus Apium* - praise of bees - has been suppressed). And it triumphantly proclaims the *Transitus* of Christ by which Christians have been released from the *Culpa* of Adam which is only reckoned *Felix* by the power of this light and the redemptive grace it proclaims.' The *Exultet* is both *Laus Cerei* - literally praise of beeswax but really praise of the risen Christ - and *Praeconium Pascale* (paschal proclamation) and brings to a conclusion this part of the Easter liturgy.

## The Liturgy of the Word

In the Roman revisions of 1970, the Service of Light is followed by the Liturgy of the Word (and this is reflected in one of the provisions of Lent, Holy Week and Easter - LHWE). Another possibility (preferred in LHWE) is that the Liturgy of the Word precedes the Service of Light and the pros and cons of these two scenarios will be explored more fully in the section on Principles, Problems and Possibilities. The early Jerusalem usage from the fourth century, and which became so influential for other liturgical uses, shows a series of twelve lessons each followed by prayer, with genuflection (Le. kneeling). Before the first lesson, psalm 117 (psalm 118) was sung with the responses 'This is the day which the Lord has made'. No other psalmody accompanies each reading, nor is there prayer after the final reading. After the final reading, the song of the three children is sung and the Bishop leads the newly-baptised into the Church. Thomas Talley in 'Origins of the Liturgical Year' gives the series of Jerusalem lessons (the oldest and most influential series) in the Armenian lectionary as follows:

1.	Genesis 1:1- 3: 24	The story of creation
2.	Genesis 22: 1 - 18	The binding of Isaac
3.	Exodus 12: 1 - 24	The Passover charter narrative
4.	Jonah 1: 1 - 4: 11	The story of Jonah
5.	Exodus 14: 24 - 15: 21	The passage through the sea
6.	Isaiah 60: 1 - 13	The progress to Jerusalem
7.	Job 38: 2 - 28	The Lord's answer to Job
8.	2 Kings 2: 1 - 22	The assumption of Elijah
9.	Jeremiah 31: 31 - 34	The new covenant
10.	Joshua 1: 1 - 9	The command to possess the land
11.	Ezekiel 37: 1-14	The valley of dry bones
12.	Daniel 3: 1- 19	The story of the three children

The 1970 reforms of the Roman Missal reduced the number of obligatory readings from twelve to seven and included among them the Epistle and Gospel for the Eucharistic rite. The Roman rite provides seven Old Testament lessons and LHWE provides twelve: In neither series are the twelve lessons obligatory though the reading of Exodus 14 may not be omitted and LHWE also regards Genesis 1 as obligatory. Both LHWE and the Roman rite (rubric.121) emphasise the importance of not skimping on this 'the oldest feature' of the Easter Vigil and this emphasis on the Word will be returned to in a later section. Each reading in the revisions is followed by a responsorial psalm, by an invitation to silent prayer and then by a collect.

The original Jerusalem readings as given in the Armenian lectionary are all based on narrative and graphically tell the story of the working out of God's redemptive purposes, in particular human lives. Other series also evoke the general theme of creation, resurrection and baptism.

### The Liturgy of Baptism

The third element in the Easter Vigil is that of baptism. The first unequivocal reference to paschal baptism is Tertullian's *De Baptismo* 19 at the beginning of the third century: 'The Passover provides the day of most solemnity for baptism, for then was accomplished our Lord's passion into which we are baptised'. By the fourth century in Rome, Pascha and Pentecost were regarded as the only appropriate times for baptism and in Ambrose's time the Church in Milan confined baptisms to Pascha only, and certainly by the end of the fourth century the Pascha festival was deemed the time for baptism throughout the Church. Today in the Roman and Anglican liturgies the ancient emphasis on the baptismal character of the paschal liturgy has been recovered.

The Roman reforms of 1951 introduced the possibility of renewing baptismal vows so that the faithful could enter into that baptismal character even when baptisms did not occur. Nevertheless, the paschal liturgy without baptism is not quite Hamlet without the Prince (the Prince is certainly there) but Hamlet without the supporting cast. In Kenneth Stevenson's words: 'The faithful cannot enter into the baptismal mystery in nearly such a powerful manner as they can when baptism is celebrated in this fundamentally baptismal feast'. When baptism can precede confirmation within the same rite, this again marks the particular character of the Pascha and, to make this connection, Romans 6 is now regarded as the normative Epistle reading (prescribed, indeed, in the Roman rite) because it links the baptism of new Christians directly to Christ's death and resurrection.

The Liturgy of Initiation follows the (short) homily. The structure of the rite is: blessing of the font (an ancient part of the rite attested to by Hippolytus and Cyprian going back to the closing of the second century), celebration of baptism, renewal of baptismal vows and confirmation.

In the response of the baptismal candidates and the congregation in renewing their vows, the responsorial form of the Apostles Creed (provided as an alternative affirmation in LHWE) restores this creed to its original role as a baptismal creed. There is something to be said for the decision of the candidates for baptism taking place earlier in the Rite, immediately following the entry of the Paschal Light into the church and the first proclamation of 'The Light of Christ'. This emphasises the baptismal character of the Rite and also reinforces the sense of the Christian life as a pilgrimage.

## The Eucharist

The Eucharist comes to the climax of the whole Lent - indeed the whole Great Week and the six weeks of Lent: Just as the Jews, with eager expectation to the coming of the Messiah in the Passover, so the Easter people live in a state of expectation and sense of eschatological longing. Indeed, St Jerome in his commentary on Matthew says: It is a tradition of the Jews that 'the Messiah will come at midnight according to the manner of the time in Egypt when the Passover was first celebrated, whence I think also the apostolic tradition has persisted that on the day of the Paschal Vigils it is not permitted to dismiss before midnight the people who are expecting the advent of Christ'.

## Part 2 - PRINCIPLES AND PROBLEMS

### A. PRINCIPLES

#### 1. Restoring the centrality of the Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil has often been seen as marginal to the celebration of Easter largely because of the difficulty of finding a suitable time for its staging without dividing the congregation between late night and early morning observance and the 'main' Eucharist on Easter morning. The problems do not disappear in a cathedral setting, but cathedrals do have the opportunity to re-establish centrality of the Vigil, perhaps inviting surrounding parishes to participate in the Vigil.

## 2. A Nocturnal Celebration

More than the Christmas celebrations, this Easter liturgy is a commemoration and a celebration that happens at night, and much of the imagery and symbolism of the rite derives from this insistence. Despite the practical and pastoral difficulties of nocturnal celebration, this seems to be an important principle. To quote Kenneth Stevenson, it is not desirable that the whole service is so domesticated that it all happens in the early evening of Saturday and no impression is given that it is toilsome, awkward and hard. Here survives ... the deeply traditional and deeply Christian way of holding death and resurrection, light and word, baptism and Eucharist together'.

## 3. The Easter Vigil as a unity

Despite the elaboration of the Holy Night into a Triduum and the Triduum into the Great Week, the Easter Vigil is essentially a unity which brings together not only the events of the Passion and Resurrection that are central to it, but also the events of the Salvation History from creation onwards. The events of the Great Week bring that history to completion and bring us to the edge of the new age. Part of that eschatological dimension is made clear in the baptisms that properly take place at this celebration and in the Great Fifty Days from Easter to Pentecost that the Vigil inaugurates.

Renewal of baptismal vows is a valuable extension of the baptismal principle, but every effort should be made to ensure that baptisms do take place. The centrality of the rite is placarded . by the presence of the Bishop who presides. This is *par excellence* the Bishop's liturgy.

#### 4. The need for flexibility in putting principles into peril:

The foregoing principles are intended to highlight important features of the tradition which we do well to hold on to, but there is need to be adaptable to particular needs and constraints. Pact. the rigorist approach of the Roman Missal, there is no absolute . blue print for celebrating the Vigil and the flexibility of Lent, H Week and Easter is to be encouraged.

### B. PROBLEMS

#### 1. When should the Vigil take place?

The timing of the Vigil presents a number of practical problems. One wants to adhere to the principles of the Vigil as a nocturnal celebration and as liturgical unity, without making it an esoteric rite for a fraction of the congregation. One should certainly avoid the situation (which was followed in the Western tradition since the eighth century) of so anticipating the Vigil that it takes place in broad daylight! The ideal is for the Vigil to begin in darkness with the Service of Light and the Initiation Rite also in darkness; (with only candle illumination) moving to the sacrament of the Eucharist when, in the morning light, 'Christ is re-united with Church'. The possibility of a Vigil through the night ending the liturgy of the Light, the Procession and Proclamation with Baptism and Eucharist at dawn is discussed below.

For some, this scenario smacks too much of esotericism (and it certainly needs 'education and persuasion of the congregation if it is to become the central liturgical act). Another possibility is to begin the Vigil at 9.30pm or 10.00pm - or even at midnight.

which certainly conveys the sense of the Holy Night and yet is less strenuous for families (and this is a rite full of wonder for children) and the elderly.

Dividing the rite seems to be unsatisfactory. It is most difficult to defend the practice of concluding the Vigil with the lighting of the Paschal candle and singing the Easter proclamation (or preceding the Vigil with those ceremonies) on Easter Eve and separating this liturgy from the Eucharist which is held over to the following day.

The practice of having the Vigil (necessarily truncated) and the lighting, proclamation etc. as the preamble to the main Easter Eucharist at 10.00am in the morning (though it holds to the principle of unity) does violence to all the imagery and symbolism of the rite. It is difficult to sing the *Exultet* with the sunlight streaming through the windows, even if the symbols are regarded merely as metaphors.

## 2. How long should the Vigil be ?

The twelve Old Testament readings provided by *Lent, Holy Week and Easter* and the seven provided in the new Roman rite suggest that the readings from scripture, the rehearsal of the Salvation History and the reflection upon it should not be perfunctory and simply reduced to the mandatory readings. This liturgy of the Word is the oldest feature of the rite and its fundamental element. As *Celebrating Easter* puts it, 'wherever possible, all the readings should be read so that the character of the Easter Vigil, which demands that it should be somewhat prolonged, be respected at all costs'. Certainly a Vigil through the night allows for an extended reflection and a Liturgy of the Word service at some time before the other ceremonies allows this important

component to be observed. LHWE (unlike the modern Roman rite) allows for an all-night watch which recovers the earliest ; Christian practice which St Augustine describes as 'the mother, all vigils'.

### 3. Paschal Candle v Bonfire

The use of bonfires at the Easter Vigil had become fairly wide spread by the eleventh century, and the Roman rite asks for a large fire. Apart from the hazards of fires, there is a liturgical question about their appropriateness. The candle is the primary symbol and the fire is lit simply to light the candle, and should: 'not create such a spectacle that the centrality of the candle is ;, displaced. However, the bonfire works at a number of different levels: if the fire is lit while a reading about leading the Israelites through the wilderness with a pillar of cloud by night is read, the point is illustrated. The bonfire does provide light to read by, if then as the fire dies down, however magnificent it has been, it returns to ash, and the ongoing moving light of the candle becomes the main focus of attention.

### 4. Should the Vigil precede or follow the candle-lighting

The Roman rite (envisaged as one of the options in LHWE) consists of:

- i) Service of Light
- ii) Liturgy of the Word
- iii) Liturgy of Baptism
- iv) Liturgy of the Eucharist

The preferred option in *LHWE*, which recovers a tenth century precedent from Jerusalem, has:

- i) Vigil
- ii) Service of Light
- iii) Liturgy of Initiation
- iv) Liturgy of the Eucharist

There are good arguments for and against both points of view, both of which have ancient precedent to support them. Is the Vigil a time of waiting and expectation which moves from waiting to celebrating, from darkness to light? Or is the Salvation History rehearsed in the readings from the Old Testament only to be properly understood in the light of the Risen Christ? There is a nice theological balance here, but in terms of the drama and dynamic of the liturgy some would argue that the *LHWE*-preferred option is more successful. One compromise, as suggested by Stevenson, is that use is made of a tenth-century Jerusalem rite which begins with the Vespers of the Burial of Christ, the lighting of the Vesper candle, then the Vigil readings and the lighting of the Paschal candle (in Jerusalem emanating from the sepulchre), sharing of the light, end of vespers, baptisms and Eucharist.

There is something to be said (if the practicalities allow) for the Vigil through the night, beginning with Vespers, to take place in an adjoining building - perhaps the Chapter House. The Cathedral itself would then remain empty, silent and tomb-like until the first proclamation of 'the Light of Christ'.

## 5. Place, music and symbols

As with all liturgy, much of the power of the rite comes from presentation and the imaginative care with which it is thought through and executed. It is important that, if the weather allows the lighting of the fire - and if possible the candle - take place

outside. Part of the mystery of this liturgy stems from the mixture of natural light and darkness, with man-made and animal-made artefacts; from the intense involvement of the senses; of being outside and moving in; of a single light in a (and- tomb-like church; of a single voice singing into a silent IS] of the sense of the liturgy having to be invented, as it were, .

scratd:t with only the very basic elements given as equipment This homespunness raises the question of music. Should it be sung by the cathedral choir or is this essentially a congregation

liturgy ? (or is there room for both as the liturgy is embellished' every aspect as it proceeds). Should we be using plainsong or responsorial music, or Schubert or Mozart? Maybe there should be a progression from the simple and less-sophisticated to the~1 complex and more elaborate. Perhaps simply to raise the .

question without prescription, recognises the importance of the~ developing texture of this rite more than almost any other. '

Appendix A is a synopsis of three different styles of celebrating the Easter Vigil in three Anglican cathedrals. The three cathedrals chosen for this survey are Salisbury, Lichfield and Coventry.

### **Part 3 . RECOMMENDATIONS**

From these principles, certain recommendations emerge:

1. The Vigil should happen in the dark either on Holy Saturday evening after dusk or in the early morning of Easter Day before dawn.
2. The Vigil should be organically connected to the Eucharist. Either the Vigil and the Eucharist should be celebrated at night after dusk or early morning or the Vigil (preceded by the Service of Light) should take place throughout the night of Easter Eve culminating in the Eucharist on Easter Morning, Or the Vigil should be celebrated throughout the night, beginning with a Vespers and culminating in the Service of Light at dawn which then continues into the Eucharist.
3. The baptismal character of the Vigil and the Easter Eucharist should be retained with, if possible, baptisms and confirmation taking place as well as the re-affirmation of baptismal vows.

#### **Appendices**

- A. Synopsis of three different styles of celebrating the Easter Vigil in" three Anglican cathedrals.



Cathedral Choir not used. Simple congregational settings (Merbeck).

#### 1. Vigil

Blessing of Vigil light and Vigil candles of the congregation lit. Six readings interspersed with said responsorial psalms and collects. Vigil candles extinguished at the end of the Vigil.

#### 2. Service of Light

Procession from the Cathedral outside to the West door. Kindling of the new fire and lighting of the Paschal Candle. Procession to West end of the Cathedral and so through Cathedral to front of nave, Deacon singing the traditional versicle and response. Exultet.

#### Ministry of the Word

Takes place at the front of the nave. Romans 6: 3 - II; Mark 16: I - 8 with extended Gospel Acclamations before and after Gospel. No sermon.

#### 4. Liturgy of Initiation

Procession to font Renewal of baptismal vows (no baptisms ?). Peace.

#### 5. Liturgy of the Eucharist

Procession to sanctuary and preparation of gifts. Candles extinguished and electric lights put on. Eucharistic prayer. Communion. Post-Communion prayers. Hymn. Solemn Blessing.

### COVENTRY

The celebration of the Easter Vigil is conceived as an ecumenical service and begins on Easter Eve and continues through the night to dawn. Cathedral choir not used. Variety of music used from many different sources. Rite A LHWE. 'I All desires known' - Janet Morley. Canadian Book of Common Prayer.

#### 1. Service of Light

Takes place on Easter Eve in the ruins of the old cathedral. Kindling of new fire with incense. Procession from the ruins to the West screen of the new cathedral where the Easter Candle is lit and the versicle and response is made three times: 'Alleluia. the light of Christ. Thanks be to God. Alleluia. alleluia. alleluia.' Procession to front of nave. Candle placed at Chancel steps. Congregational candles lit during procession. Exultet.

#### 1. Villi

The Vigil with the reading of lessons during the night is introduced with the Burial of

Jesus and the Vigil comes to an end with the reading of the Epistle  
I Peter 1: 3 - 9. 18-21. Procession from the Chancel step to the Baptistry at Dawn.

*NB This pattern as shown represents Coventry's use In the past. It has now adopted a different pattern.*

3. Liturgy of Initiation

Renewal of vows at the Baptistry. The people are sprinkled with water at the end of the liturgy. Procession from the new cathedral back to the ruins.

4. Ministry of the Word

Gospel reading - Matthew 28: 1 - 10. Prayers prepared during the night.

5. Liturgy of the Eucharist

Offertory with flowers and gifts are presented with the bread and wine. Eucharistic prayer and Communion. Post-Communion still in the ruins of old cathedral. Prayers. Solemn Blessing. Hymn. Final Gospel reading - Matthew 28: 16 - 20. The Peace. Distribution of Easter eggs, cakes and other gifts.

## B. 2 *Exultets*

Here are two versions of the *Exultet*. The first (B-1) is that prepared for the new Roman Catholic Liturgy for Easter. This " new poem with new musical texts has the advantage of feeling contemporary with its reference to 'a living universe of soaring stars, of space, and spinning planets, surging seas' and 'the light that bonds the atom' . At the same time it retains all the Old Testament and New Testament resonances of the traditional *Exultet*. The chant for this *Exultet*, though newly-written, retains the simplicity and style of the traditional plain chant. The other advantage of this new setting is that there is more responsorial material. The congregation joins the Deacon in the acclamation thus emphasising the ecclesial nature of the song.

*Please note that this text is still in draft form and has not yet been formally adopted by the Vatican.' It should not be circulated outside this forum at the present time.*

The second setting (B-2) is a more traditional one of the text in Lent, Holy Week and Easter by Brother Reginald SSF.



# Appendix B-1

## EASTER PROCLAMATION: ALTERNATIVE TEXT

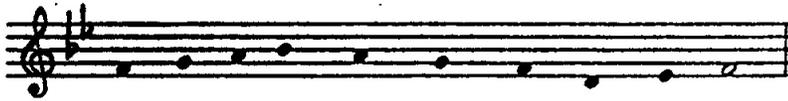
Minister:



1. Ex - ult and sing, O shin - ing an - gel choirs! Ex - ult and dance, bright



stars and blaz - ing suns! The First - born of cre - a - tion, Je - sus Christ,



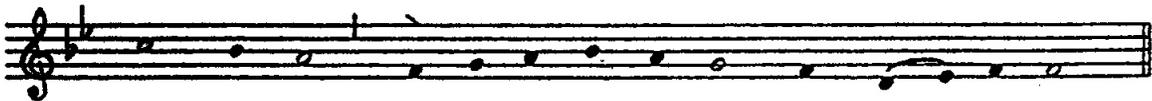
is ris'n in ra - diant splen - dor from the dead!



2. Re - joice, O awe - some night of our re - birth! Re - joice, O mo - ther



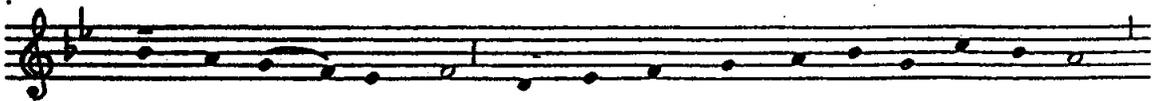
moon, that marks the months! For from your full - ness comes, at



last, the Day when sin is robbed of pow'r and death is slain!



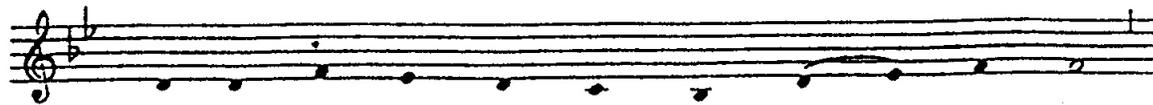
3. A - wak - en, earth! A - wak - en, air and fire! O chil - dren born of



clay and wa - ter, come! The One who made you ris - es like the sun



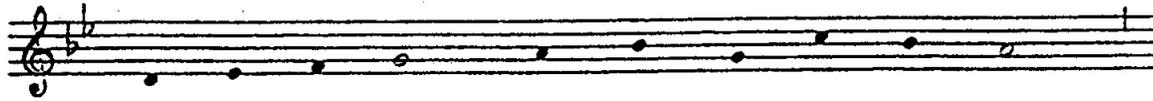
to scat - ter night and wipe your tears a - way!



4. A - rise then, sleep - ers, Christ en - light - ens you!



A - rise from doubt and sad - ness, sin and death!

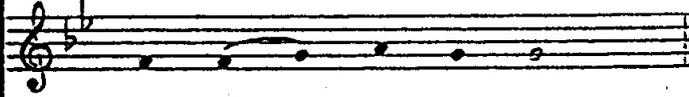


With joy - ful hearts and spir - its set a - fire,



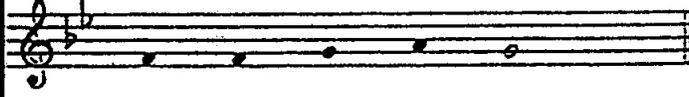
draw near to sing this Eas - ter can - dle's praise!

If the minister is a deacon or priest, he adds:



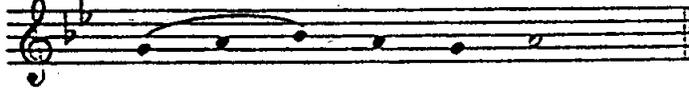
The Lord \_\_\_\_\_ be with you.

The people answer:



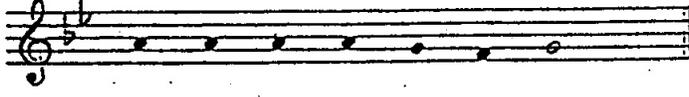
And al - so with you.

Minister:



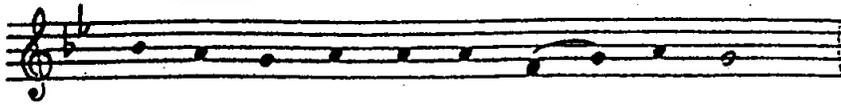
Lift \_\_\_\_\_ up your hearts.

The people answer:



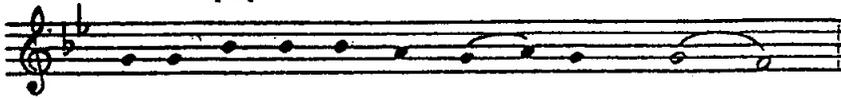
We lift them up to the Lord.

Minister



Let us give thanks to the Lord— our God.

The people answer:

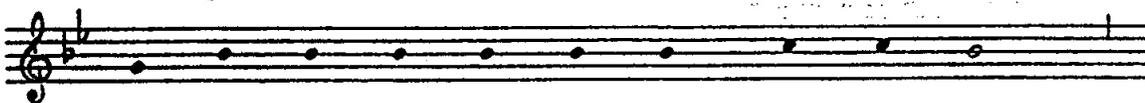


It is right to give our thanks— and praise.—

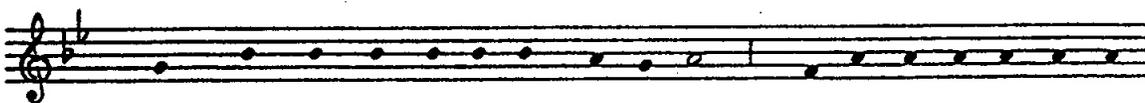
Minister:



5. We praise you, God, for all your works of light!



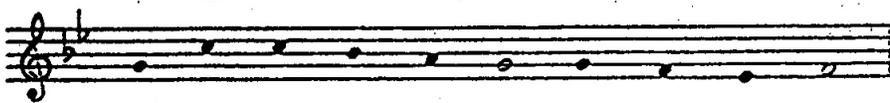
We bless you for that burst of fire and flame



through which you first cre-a-ted all that is: a liv-ing un-di-verse of



soar-ing stars, of space and spin-ning plan-ets, surg-ing seas



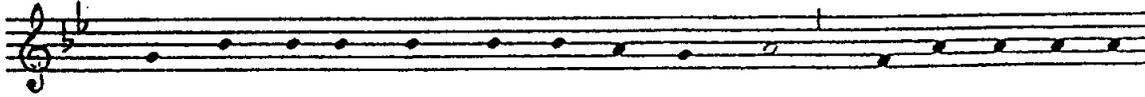
that cra-dle earth and rock a- gainst her breast.

The minister sings the acclamation, which all repeat:



We praise— you, God of ev - er - last - ing light!

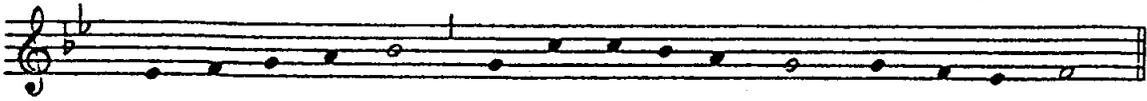
Minister:



6. We praise you for light's beau-ty, mo-tion, speed: for east-ern light that



paints the morn - ing sky; for west - ern light that

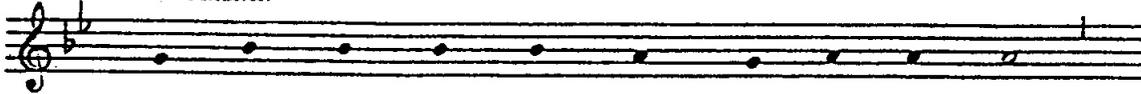


slants u - pon our doors, in - vit - ing us to praise you ev' - ry night.

The people take up the acclamation:



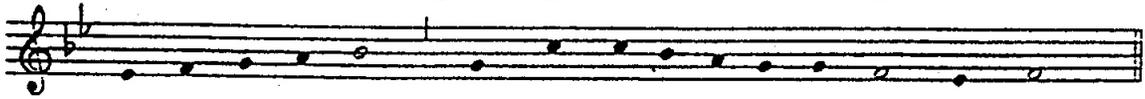
We praise — you, God of ev - er - last - ing light!  
Minister:



7. We bless you for the light in - vis - i - ble:

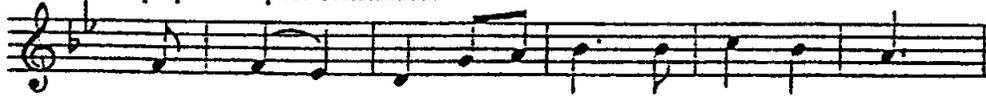


the fire of faith, the Spir - it's grace and truth, the light that bonds the

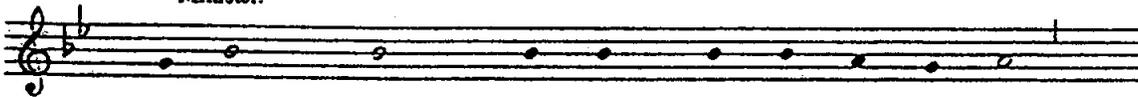


a - tom, stirs the heart, and shines for ev - er on the face of Christ!

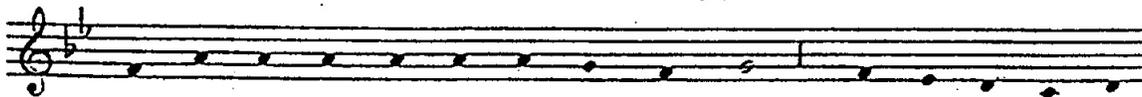
The people take up the acclamation:



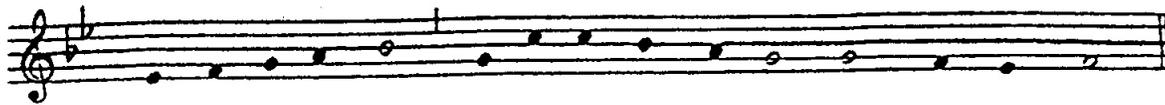
We praise — you, God of ev - er - last - ing light!  
Minister:



8. Cre - a - tor, in the joy of Eas - ter eve,



ac - cept our off - 'ring of this can - dle's light: may all who see its



glow and feel its warmth be led to know your na - ture and your Name.

The people take up the acclamation:

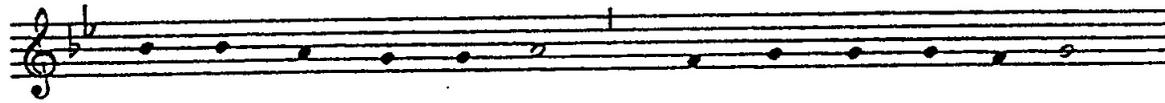


We praise— you, God of ev - er - last - ing light!

Minister:



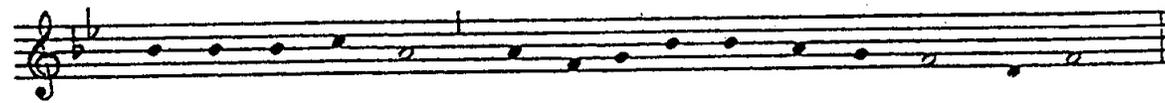
9. For, Fa - ther, it was your own light and love that led your peo-ple Is - rael



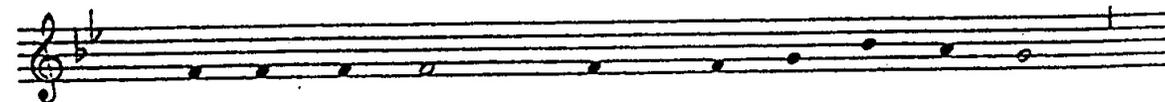
dry - shod through foam - ing seas, and brought them safe at last



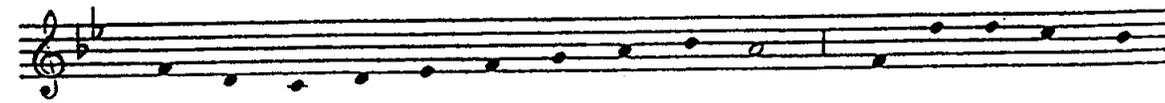
to lands of milk and hon - ey. In your love you led them as a



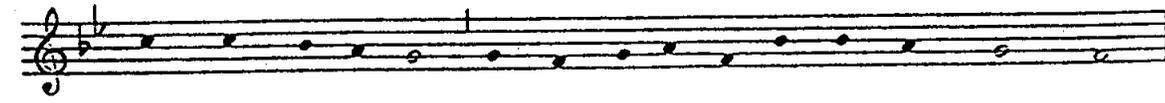
shin - ing cloud by day, and as a flam - ing shaft of fire by night.



10. This is the night, most bless - ed of all nights,

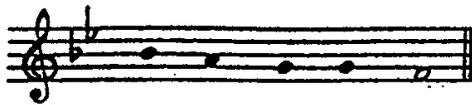


when first you res - cued peo - ple from the sea: a sign of that new



birth which was to come in blood and wa - ter flow - ing from Christ's side!





pre-cious flesh and blood!

The people take up the acclamation:

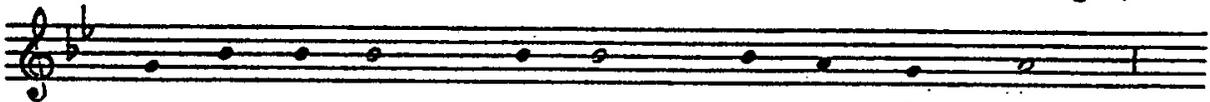


Now is\_ Christ\_ ris-en! Christ is ris-en! We are raised\_ with him!

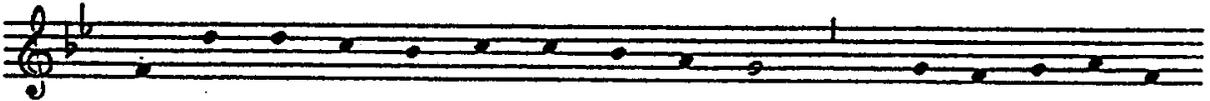
Minister:



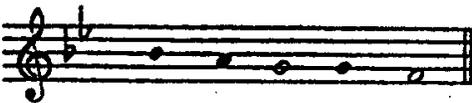
13. O night, more ho - ly than all oth - er nights,



your watch - ful eyes be - held, in won - drous awe,



the tri - umph of our Sav - ior ov - er sin, the ris - ing of the



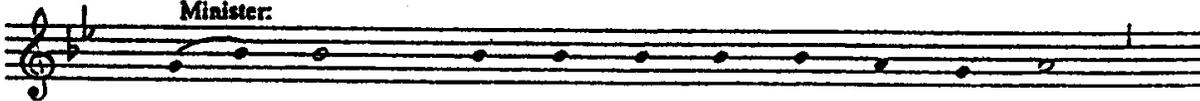
Death-less One from death!

The people take up the acclamation:

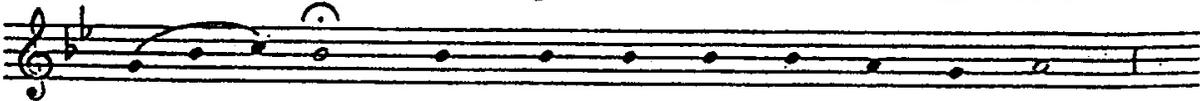


Now is\_ Christ\_ ris-en! Christ is ris-en! We are raised\_ with him!

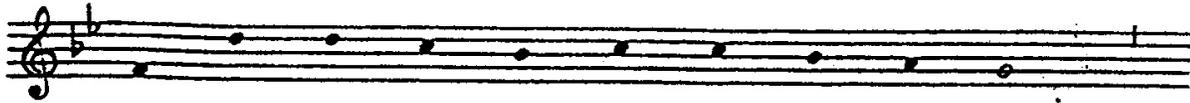
Minister:



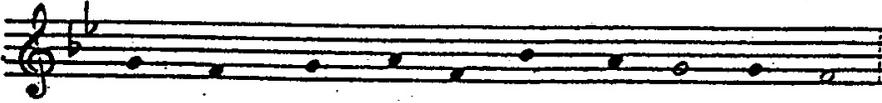
14. O — night that gave us back what we had lost!



O — night that made our sin a hap - py fault!



Be - yond our deep - est dreams this night, O God,



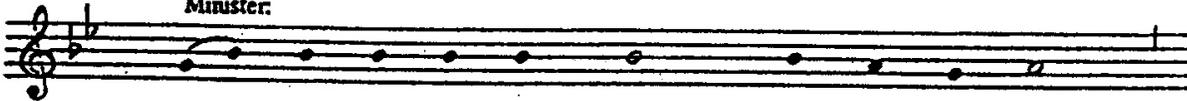
your hand reached out to raise us up in Christ!

The people take up the acclamation:



Now is\_ Christ\_ ris - en! Christ is ris - en! We are raised\_ with him!

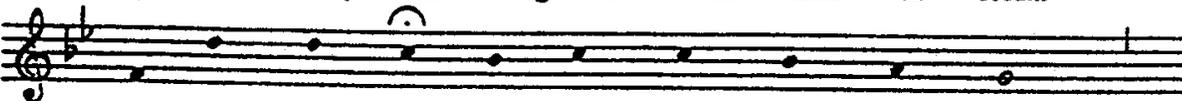
Minister:



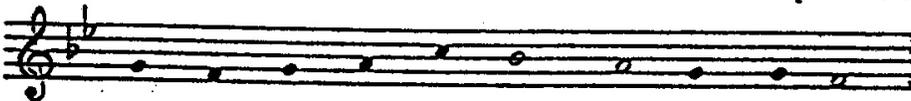
15. O — night of end - less won - der, night of bliss,



when ev - 'ry liv - ing crea - ture held its breath



as Christ robbed death and har - rowed hope - less hell,



re - stor - ing life to all those in the tomb!

The people take up the acclamation:

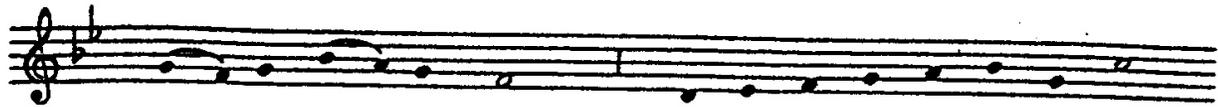


Now is\_ Christ\_ ris - en! Christ is ris - en! We are raised\_ with him!

Minister:



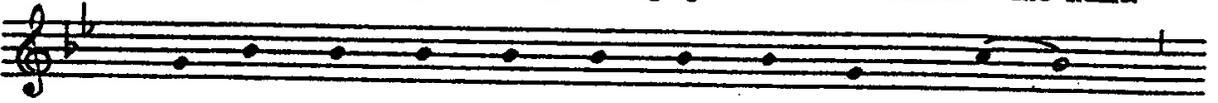
16. And so, our God, Cre - a - tor of all life, with o - pen hearts and



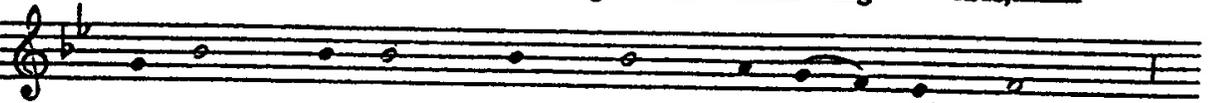
hands\_\_ we come\_\_ to you: a - noint - ed with the Spir - it's pow'r,



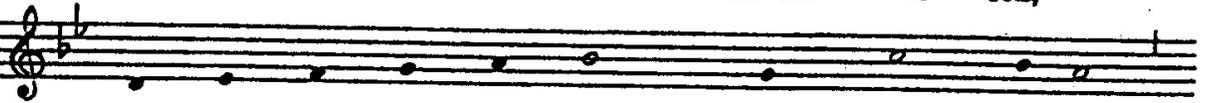
we bear these pre - cious glow - ing gifts of fire\_\_ and flame.



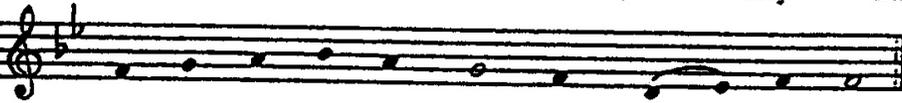
17. We pray that when our night of watch - ing ends,\_\_\_



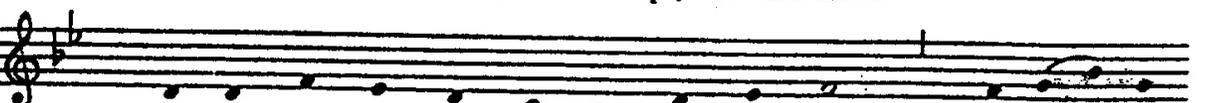
the Morn - ing Star who dawns and nev - er sets,



our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ, may find us all



u - nit - ed in one faith, one hope,\_\_\_ one Lord.



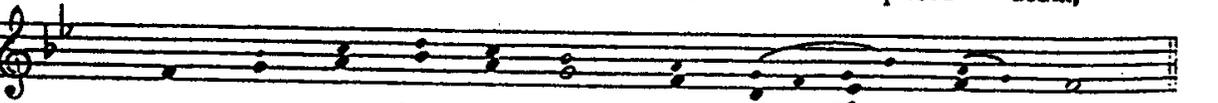
18. For you, a - lone are God, liv - ing and true: all glo - ry,



praise, and pow'r,\_\_\_ be - long\_\_\_ to you

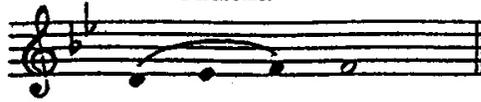


with Je - sus Christ, the One who con - quered death,



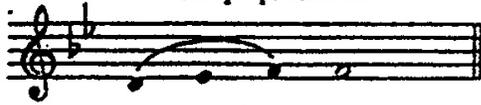
and with the Spir - it blest for ev - - er more.

Minister:



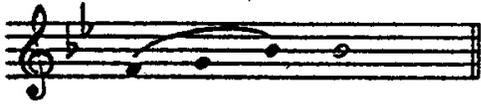
A - men!

The people answer:



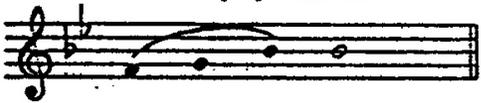
A - men!

Minister:



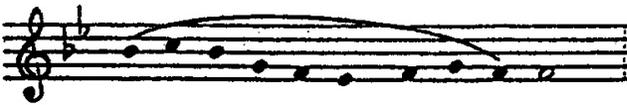
A - men!

The people answer:



A - men!

Minister:



A - - - - - men!

The people answer:

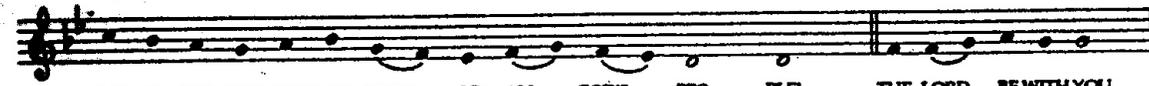
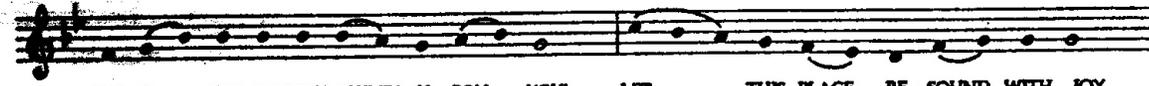
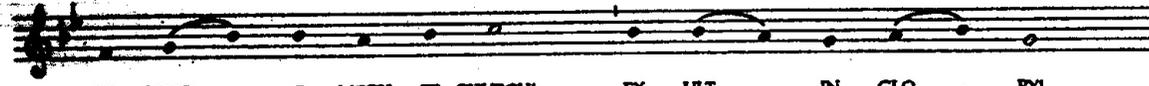
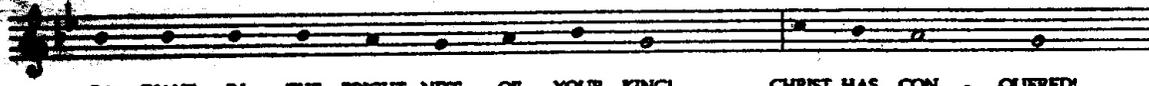
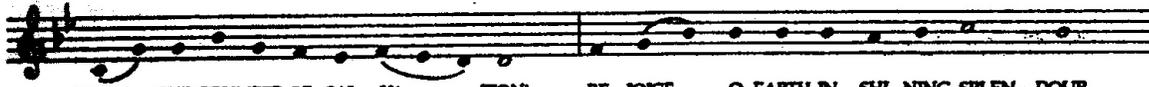
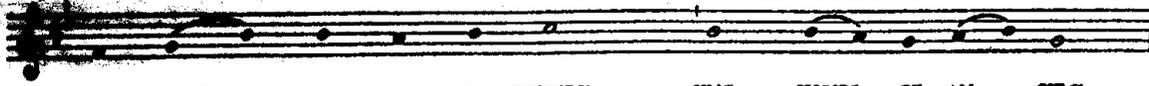


A - - - - - men!

EXULTET (the Easter Song of Praise)

Appendix B.

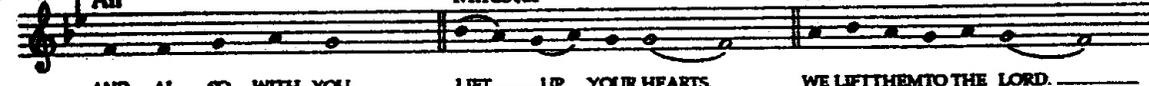
Minister



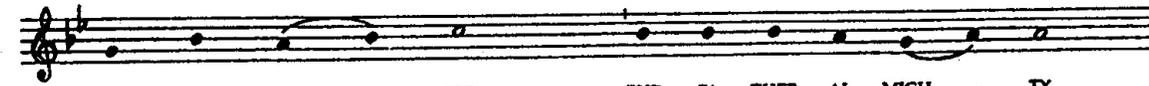
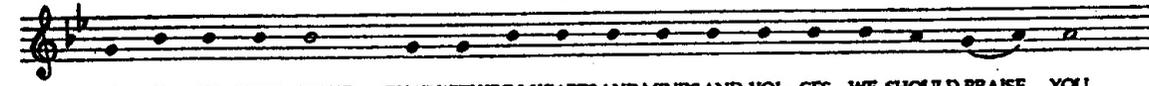
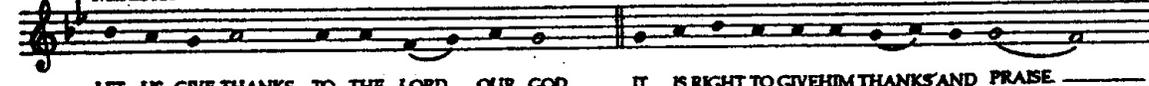
All

Minister

All



Minister



AND YOUR ONLY SON, JE - SUS CHRIST OUR LORD, WHO HAS RANSOMED US BY HIS DEATH,

AND PAID FOR US THE PRICE OF A - DAM'S SIN. FOR THIS IS THE PASS-O - VER OF THAT TRUE LAMB OF GOD,

BY WHOSE BLOOD THE HOMES OF ALL THE FAITHFUL ARE HALLOWED AND PRO - TEC - TED. THIS \_\_\_\_\_ IS THE NIGHT

WHEN OF OLD YOU SAVED OUR FA - THERS, DE - LI - VERING THE PEOPLE OF IS - RA - EL FROM THEIR SLA - VE - RY,

AND LEAD - ING THEM DRY - SHOD THROUGH THE SEA. THIS \_\_\_\_\_ IS THE NIGHT

WHEN JE - SUS CHRIST VAN - QUISHED HELL AND ROSE TRI - UM - PHANT FROM THE GRAVE.

THIS IS \_\_\_\_\_ THE NIGHT WHEN ALL WHO BE - LIEVE IN HIM ARE FREED FROM SIN

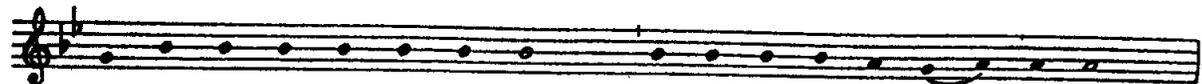
AND RE - STORED TO GRACE AND HO - LI - NESS. MOST BLE - SSED OF ALL \_\_\_\_\_ NIGHTS,

WHEN WICK - ED - NESS IS PUT TO FLIGHT AND SIN IS WASHED A - WAY,

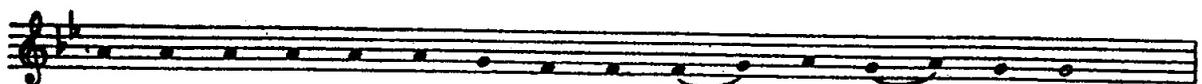
LOST IN - NOCENCE RE - GAINED AND MOURN - ING TURNED TO JOY. NIGHT TRU - LY BLESSED,

WHEN HEAVEN IS WED - DED TO EARTH AND ALL CRE - A - TION RE - CON - CILED TO GOD.

THERE - FORE, HEAVEN - LY FA - THER, IN THE JOY OF THIS NIGHT,



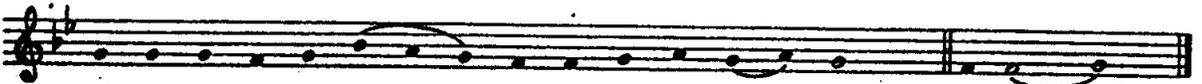
AC - CEPT OUR SAC - RI - FICE OF PRAISE, YOUR CHURCH'S SOL - EMN OF - FER - ING;



AND GRANT THAT THIS EAST - ER CAN - DLE MAY MAKE OUR DARK - NESS LIGHT;



FOR CHRIST THE MORN - ING STAR ——— HAS RI - SEN, NE - VER A - GAIN TO SET,



AND IS A - LIVE AND REIGNS ——— FOR - EV - ER AND EV - ER. A - MEN. ———

## **Bibliography**

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## **The Cathedrals' Liturgy Group - July 1998**

Canon Jeremy Davies  
Precentor, Salisbury Cathedral

Qr Graham Elliott  
Organist, Chelmsford Cathedral

The Reverend Barry Fenton (Secretary)  
Precentor, Westminster Abbey

Devid Hill  
Organist, Winchester Cathedral

James Lancelot  
Organist, Durham Cathedral

Julian Umentani  
Architect, Peterborough Cathedral; Secretary, Cathedral Architects' Association

Adrian Lucas  
Organist, Worcester Cathedral

The Very Reverend John Methuen  
Dean of Ripon

The Very Reverend Michael Perham  
Provost of Derby; Member of the Liturgical Commission

The Very Reverend Michael Sadgrove  
Provost of Sheffield

Canon Jane Sinclair  
Precentor of Sheffield; Member of the Liturgical Commission

Martin Stancliffe  
Surveyor to the Fabric, St Paul's Cathedral; representing the Cathedrals' Fabric  
Commission for England

Canon Charles Taylor  
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