

ST. MARY OF THE HILLS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA



THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

APRIL 4, 2026
7:45PM

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

7:30PM

THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

In darkness, fire is kindled.

THE BIDDING AND BLESSING OF THE NEW FIRE

Dear friends in Christ: 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. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing his Word and celebrating his Sacraments, we share in his victory over death.

Let us pray.

O God, through your Son you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: Sanctify this new fire, and grant that in this Paschal feast we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting light; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE INSCRIPTION & BLESSING OF THE PASCHAL CANDLE

The Celebrant traces the cross, Alpha and Omega, and the year on the Paschal Candle, saying this prayer,

Christ yesterday and today, the Beginning and the End.
Alpha and Omega,
His are the time and the ages.
To him be glory and dominion through all ages of eternity. **Amen.**

The Celebrant then places five grains of incense, on each into the four points and center of the cross on the Candle, saying,

Through his holy and glorious wounds
may Christ the Lord guard us and preserve us.

Using a taper, the Paschal Candle is lighted from the New Fire, and the Celebrant says,

May the light of Christ gloriously dispel the darkness of our hearts and souls.

The people proceed into the Church in silence and take their place in the pews.

The procession enters the Church. The Celebrant pauses three times to raise the Paschal Candle, and sings, each time at a higher pitch,

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

At the second and third pause, the Versicle and Response is sung successively a step higher.
Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

The Paschal Candle is placed in its stand. The cantor sings the Exsultet as the people's candles are lighted from the Paschal Candle.

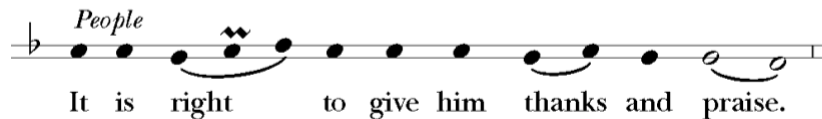
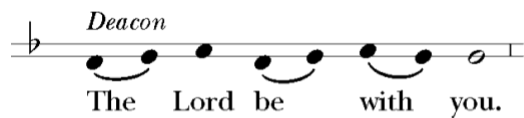
THE EXSULTET

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels,
and let your trumpets shout Salvation
for the victory of our mighty King.

Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth,
bright with a glorious splendor,
for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.

Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church,
and let your holy courts, in radiant light,
resound with the praises of your people.

All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame,
pray with me to God the Almighty
for the grace to sing the worthy praise of this great light;
through Jesus Christ his Son our Lord,
who lives and reigns with him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**



It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night, when you brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem a slave, you gave a Son.

How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord.

How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and man is reconciled to God.

Holy Father, accept our evening sacrifice, the offering of this candle in your honor. May it shine continually to drive away all darkness. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find it ever burning--he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Celebrant

Let us hear the record of God's saving deeds in history, how he saved his people in ages past; and let us pray that our God will bring each of us to the fullness of redemption.

Reader A reading from the book of Exodus.

As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

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

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

SALVATION OFFERED FREELY TO ALL

Isaiah 55:1-11

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah.

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
 listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
 and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
 for he has glorified you.
Seek the LORD while he may be found,
 call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
 and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
 and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

THE RESPONSE

The First Song of Isaiah, *Ecce, Deus*

S-213
Tone III

The people join in singing the antiphon at the beginning and end of the canticle.



Surely, it is God who saves me; *
I will trust in him and not be afraid.
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, *
and he will be my Savior.
Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing *
from the springs of salvation.
And on that day you shall say, *
Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;
Make his deeds known among the peoples; *
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, *
and this is known in all the world.
Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

The people stand for the collect and are then seated for the reading that follows.

THE COLLECT

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, you have created all things by the power of your Word, and you renew the earth by your Spirit: Give now the water of life to those who thirst for you, that they may bring forth abundant fruit in your glorious kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A NEW HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT

Ezekiel 37: 1-14

Reader A reading from the book of the Prophet Ezekiel.

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act," says the Lord.

THE RESPONSE

MOTET—*Sicut cervus*

G.P. de Palestrina (c. 1525-1594)

As the deer longs for the water-brooks,
so longs my soul for you, O God.

The people stand.

THE COLLECT

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, by the Passover of your Son you have brought us out of sin into righteousness and out of death into life: Grant to those who are sealed by your Holy Spirit the will and the power to proclaim you to all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE FIRST EUCHARIST OF EASTER

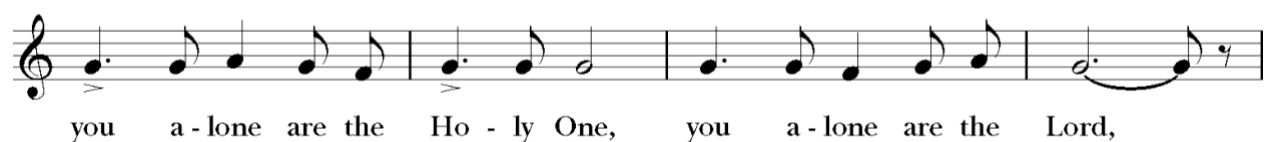
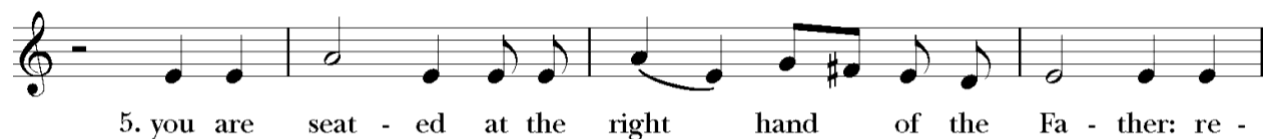
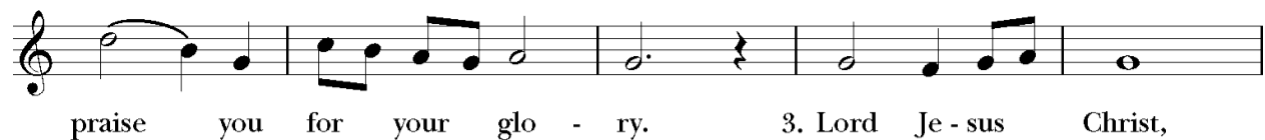
THE EASTER ACCLAMATION

Celebrant

Al - le - lu - ia. Christ is ris - en.

People

The Lord is risen indeed. Al - le - lu - ia.



7. you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the
 Ho-ly Spi-rit, in the glo-ry of
 God the Fa-ther. A-men.

THE COLLECT

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.

A - men.

THE EPISTLE READING

Romans 6: 3-11

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

Celebrant Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People **I do.**

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People **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.**

Celebrant Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People **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.**

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

THE ASPERGING OF THE CONGREGATION

The celebrant blesses the water. The congregation is sprinkled with holy water as the choir sings the antiphon.

ANTIPHON

Vidi aquam

Mode VIII

I saw water flowing out of the Temple, from its right side, Alleluia:
And all to whom this water came were saved,
And they shall say: Alleluia, Alleluia.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, FORM III

BCP, 387

The leader and people pray responsively.

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest;
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and for those of others.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

THE PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People exchange a sign of peace.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE OFFERTORY

ANTIPHON

The earth trembled and was still: when God arose to judgment, alleluia.

ANTHEM

I got me flowers (from Five Mystical Songs) Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

I got me flowers to strew thy way; I got me boughs off many a tree:

But thou wast up by break of day, And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sun arising in the East, Though he give light, and the East perfume;

If they should offer to contest With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this, Though many suns to shine endeavour?

We count three hundred, but we miss: There is but one, and that one ever.

Words: George Herbert (1593-1633)

All stand to sing the Hymn.

HYMN 200

Come, ye faithful, raise the strain

Gaudeamus pariter (1544)

Ho - ly, ho - ly,
 ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the
 high - est. Bless - ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

The Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father; In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, 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; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, 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."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

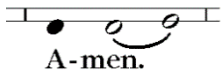
We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. 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 for ever.

People



THE LORD'S PRAYER (Contemporary)

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,


**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

The consecrated bread is broken; the Cantor and People then sing,


This setting is not used in Lent.

Cantor




Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

All




Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Cantor



Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us; there - fore let us

All



keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Facing the people, the Celebrant says an invitation to Communion.

MINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

To receive the sacrament, extend your hands so that the priest may place the bread in the palm of your outstretched hands. Gluten free wafers are available. For those who desire to receive the wine that follows, guide the chalice toward your lips to drink from the cup. If you prefer to receive a blessing, cross your arms over your chest as a sign to the priest.

For those unable to receive the sacrament this day, we offer this prayer:

In union, O Lord, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, in thanksgiving for your resurrection, I desire to offer to you praise and thanksgiving. I remember your death, Lord Christ; I proclaim your resurrection; I await your coming in glory. Since I cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, I beseech you to come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. **Amen.**

MUSIC AT THE COMMUNION

ANTIPHON

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, alleluia:
therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

HYMN 183

Christians, to the Paschal victim

Victimae Paschali laudes

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

The Celebrant and people say together,

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

THE EASTER BLESSING

May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing. **Amen.**

May God, who through the water of baptism has raised us from sin into newness of life, make you holy and worthy to be united with Christ for ever. **Amen.**

May God, who has brought us out of bondage to sin into true and lasting freedom in the Redeemer, bring you to your eternal inheritance. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

All stand to sing the final hymn.

HYMN 210

The Day of Resurrection

Ellacombe

The Easter Flowers are Given

In loving memory of Marshall Culp by Kaye Culp

In loving memory of Raeford Brown by Sandra Brown

In loving memory of Belinda Wright Scanlon, Bob & Elsie Wright, and Joseph Keith Van Dyke by Darlene Van Dyke

In honor of Hudson Van Dyke, my family, Fr. Richard Lawler, and Beth Lawler by Darlene Van Dyke

In loving memory of Dean & Fran, Karen & Greg, and William & Michael by Lynn Searfoss & Greg Rhoads

In honor of Katy Thompson by John Carlson

In loving memory of Ed, Dorothy, Peggy, and Sally Lou Carlson by John Carlson

In honor of this parish by AJ & Jane Barghothi

In honor of our family, grandchildren, and all those who have passed by Doug & Mary Galke

In honor of Graham Pruett by Carly Pruett

In honor of our children & grandchildren by Mark & Michelle Curry

In honor of our parents by Pete & Sally Page

In loving memory of Barbara Weedan Page, Horace Thomas Burgess, and Della McGee Burgess by Pete & Sally Page

In loving memory of H. Randolphe Clementi Holder, and Eric & Walter "Torch" Turnbow by the Holder-Turnbow Family

In honor of Judy & Gary Gloster, and the resurrections this year by Owene Courtney

In honor of Drew-Lynn McNicoll-Pierce by Joann Hallmark

In loving memory of Jordan Hallmark, Alex Hallmark, Sara Hallmark, Gene Hallmark, and Grover & Carrie Howell by Joanne Hallmark

In honor of Eugene George Purcell Jr, and Wesley Osborne Doggett by Peter & Valerie Purcell

A Gift to the Music Program is Given

In honor of our choir by Kaye Culp

+++

St. Mary of the Hills Episcopal Church

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