SAINT THOMAS CHURCH
FIFTH AVENUE

The new fire is lit at the beginning of the Great Vigil on Holy Saturday

HOLY WEEK
& EASTER DAY
2015
Welcome to Saint Thomas, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

Our mission is to worship, love and serve Our Lord Jesus Christ through the Anglican tradition and our unique choral heritage.

The Reverend Canon Carl F. Turner, Rector
John Scott, LVO, D.Mus., Organist and Director of Music
The Reverend Charles F. Wallace, Headmaster
Holy Week at Saint Thomas

The penitential forty days of Lent, which began with Ash Wednesday on February 18, come to their final end with the most significant eight days of the liturgical year: Holy Week & Easter Day.

Holy Week, from Palm Sunday to the Easter Vigil, is the heart of the Christian year. It is the public presentation, through Holy Scripture, music and preaching, of those mighty acts whereby God in Christ has reconciled the world to himself. These events—the last supper; Jesus’ arrest, trial and passion; his death and burial; and his resurrection on the third day—make up what is called the *paschal mystery*. The word *paschal* means *Passover*, and here refers not only to the exodus of God’s people Israel from bondage in Egypt, but also to the Lord’s Passover from death to life and, moreover, to the deliverance of believers from the deadly bondage of sin into freedom and eternal life. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

Saint Thomas Church freely offers Holy Week and Easter liturgies to all who desire to take part. In addition to said liturgies, there is at least one choral service per day during Holy Week. You may read more about these services in this brochure and on our website, where you will also find audio webcasts of all choral services. Whether you are a life-long parishioner, new to Saint Thomas, new to Christianity, or drawn to the Church for reasons that you may not entirely understand, you are most welcome to enter our doors and to join us in worship of the Risen Christ.

All baptized Christians are invited to make their Holy Communion at Saint Thomas. Holy Communion is available at every service listed in this brochure except Tenebrae on Holy Wednesday, the Three Hours Devotion on Good Friday, and Evensong on Palm Sunday and Easter Day. If you are not baptized and would like to be, we can help you with that! Please make yourself known to us by introducing yourself to one of the priests or by sending us an email at welcome@SaintThomasChurch.org.

www.SaintThomasChurch.org
The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday

8am  Blessing of the Palms and Said Eucharist
9am  Blessing of the Palms and Sung Eucharist
     sung by the Junior Choristers
11am Liturgy of the Palms and Solemn Eucharist of the Passion
       sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
       sermon by Fr Turner
4pm  Solemn Evensong
       sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
       sermon by Fr Daniels

Holy Week begins with Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, an event we mark at the beginning of the three morning services (8am, 9am, and 11am) on Palm Sunday. The glory of Christ’s triumph, however, was not what the people of the time wanted or expected. They wanted a king who exercised dominion, ideally in a show of force, over the powers of this world, especially the occupying Romans. What they got instead was a king who, while creator and sustainer of that very world, exercised his complete power by making himself, in obedience to the Father and in fulfillment of the prophecies, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world. With this begins
Christ’s Passion, the event that dominates our Palm Sunday observance: the realization that Christ’s victory, and thereby our victory through Christ, is by way of the cross.

The Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church organizes Sunday worship in such a way as to present on Sundays that which will be covered in more detail throughout the upcoming week. It is for this reason that on Palm Sunday we cover everything from Christ’s entry into Jerusalem through to his death on the cross. It is also for this reason that Palm Sunday is called the Sunday of the Passion.

So you will notice in the morning services on Palm Sunday that the Old Testament lesson is Isaiah 50:4-9a, which is the same as the lesson assigned at the masses at 8am and 12:10pm on Holy Wednesday. And you’ll notice that at the 11am service on Palm Sunday, the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ is sung by three cantors and the choir, just as it is at the Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday (on Palm Sunday according to Saint Matthew, and on Good Friday according to Saint John). And, of course, the music selected for Palm Sunday tells the story of what is to come, as in this anthem, *Christus factus est*, taken from Philippians 2:8-9, and set to music by Anton Bruckner:

\begin{quote}
Christ was made obedient
for us unto death,
even the death of the cross.
Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him,
and given him a name,
which is above every name.
\end{quote}

By Solemn Evensong at 4pm on Palm Sunday, we are already going deep into what this sacrifice is going to mean for Jesus and for us. Do not expect to come to Solemn Evensong waving palms! At Evensong, we hear from the prophet Zechariah, who tells us the Lord will put those he calls his own into the fire, that they may be refined. And we hear from Saint Matthew regarding the cleansing of the Temple by Jesus. We begin to see that this Jesus is not a Lord who comes to save us from our enemies; this Jesus is a Lord who comes to save us from our fallen selves. And so it is that the liturgies of Palm Sunday—the Sunday of the Passion—orient our hearts and minds to what God has to say to us throughout the week ahead.
Monday in Holy Week

8am    Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist (Said)
12:10pm Solemn Eucharist
        sung by the Gentlemen of the Saint Thomas Choir
5:30pm Evening Prayer and Holy Eucharist (Said)
6:30pm Musical Meditation: Symphonia Elegiaca by Camil van Hulse
        played by Stephen Buzard, Assistant Organist

Mass is normally celebrated three times each weekday at Saint Thomas. At 8am it is preceded by a short form of Morning Prayer; at 5:30pm by either choral Evensong or Evening Prayer. During Holy Week, however, the schedule is slightly different. The 8am services are only held on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The said service of Evening Prayer and Mass is offered only on Monday and Tuesday.

These services, held in the Chantry Chapel, are ideal for those who want to hear the word of God, pray, and make their Holy Communion. Although there is no music during these services, they are quite powerful in their simplicity and intimacy, and are among the many ways at Saint Thomas to deeply meditate on the paschal mystery.

Together with the Mass, Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer last about 35 minutes. These services are in the Chantry Chapel, which is to the left side of the church after you enter the Fifth Avenue doors.

Note also that on Monday through Thursday during Holy Week, we offer a Solemn Eucharist sung by the Gentlemen of the Choir at 12:10pm at the High Altar. These services last about 45 minutes, and are quite beautiful in their relative austerity. They will be somewhat familiar to those who attend services at 9am on Sundays, but they have unique characteristics appropriate for Holy Week. For example, at the Offertory, the Gentlemen of the Choir sing a tract. On Monday through Wednesday, these tracts are taken from the Lamentations of Jeremiah. We will hear these same words from Jeremiah again at Tenebrae on Wednesday evening. On Maundy Thursday, the tract is Jacob Handl’s setting of Isaiah 57:1-2: Behold, see how the just man dieth and no one taketh it to heart.
The Gospel at all three of the Masses on Holy Monday is John 12:1-11, in which we have the account of Mary using costly ointment to anoint the feet of Jesus, and then drying his feet with her hair (as depicted, at left, in the Faith Window of Saint Thomas Church). This simple act occurs over the objections of Judas Iscariot, who chastises Mary for wasting something that could be sold to profit the poor. Jesus, however, who knows his own death is imminent, allows Mary to prepare him as it were for his burial. This same Judas will betray Jesus on the night of the Feast of the Passover, when at the Last Supper it is Jesus who is washing the feet of his disciples. We remember these events at the Solemn Liturgy of Maundy Thursday.

Holy Monday ends with a one hour musical meditation at 6:30pm, featuring Stephen Buzard, Assistant Organist of Saint Thomas Church. Stephen plays the rarely heard Symphonia Elegiaca by the Belgian-American organist and composer, Camil van Hulse (1897-1988), a piece that is appropriate not only for Holy Week but also as we mark the hundredth anniversary of the start of World War I.

Born in Belgium, van Hulse served in the war, suffering severe lung damage from exposure to poison gas and tuberculosis. Constructing the work on material borrowed from the Requiem mass, van Hulse dedicated the symphony to the American impresario, Bernard R. La Berge, who died on December 28, 1951, after devoting his life to the advancement of organ music. The work is at once virtuosic and contemplative, exciting and meditative. In style, it is stark and modernist like Stravinsky, yet with the liturgical sensibility of Duruflé—a unique yet neglected voice of the organ repertoire. American organist Claire Coci premiered the work on April 12, 1954 at the American Academy of Arts and Letters in New York.

Programs for this performance are placed at the back of the nave beginning at around 6pm. We encourage you to attend Evening Prayer and Mass at 5:30pm in the Chantry Chapel first, if you are able. The Mass will end by 6:10pm.
Tuesday in Holy Week

8am    Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist (Said)
12:10pm Solemn Eucharist
         sung by the Gentlemen of the Saint Thomas Choir
5:30pm  Evening Prayer and Holy Eucharist (Said)
6:30pm  Musical Meditation: Haydn’s *The Seven Last Words of Christ*
         performed by the Dodd String Quartet

Holy Tuesday follows the same format as Holy Monday, with said services in the Chantry Chapel at 8am and 5:30pm, a Solemn Eucharist sung by the Gentlemen of the Choir at the High Altar at 12:10pm, and a musical meditation at 6:30pm.

The Gospel at all three Masses on Holy Tuesday is John 12:20-36, a rich passage that begins with Jesus telling Philip and Andrew that “the hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified…. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” And then, later in the passage, he tells the disciples: “when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself,” by which he foretold his death days later on the cross, the event we commemorate on Good Friday.

Indeed, all of Holy Tuesday anticipates Christ’s crucifixion on Good Friday. It is portrayed musically in a one hour performance at 6:30pm of *The Seven Last Words of Our Savior On the Cross* (German: *Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze*), performed by the Dodd String Quartet. This orchestral work by Joseph Haydn, commissioned in 1785 or 1786 for the Good Friday service at Cádiz Cathedral in Spain, was adapted by Haydn for string quartet in 1787.
The seven main meditative sections are framed by an introduction and an “earthquake” conclusion, for a total of nine movements. These movements portray in music the same last seven words that you will hear on Good Friday itself, when the clergy of Saint Thomas Church meditate on the seven last words of Christ during the Three Hours Devotion beginning at noon.

APRIL 1

Wednesday in Holy Week

8am       Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist (Said)
12:10pm    Solemn Eucharist
           sung by the Gentlemen of the Saint Thomas Choir
5:30pm    The Office of Tenebrae
           sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys

Holy Wednesday begins as did Monday and Tuesday, with Morning Prayer and Mass at 8am in the Chantry Chapel, and a Solemn Eucharist at the High Altar sung by the Gentlemen of the Choir at 12:10pm. At these two Masses, the Gospel of John moves on to chapter 13, in which Jesus identifies Judas as the one who would betray him, and tells Judas to “do quickly what you are going to do.”

It is a sad scenario: Jesus knows what Judas is about to do, and Judas knows that Jesus knows, yet Judas does it anyway, and Jesus submits himself to that betrayal, because of his obedience to the Father. As the epistle (Hebrews 12:1-3) assigned for the day puts it, “Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.”
On the evening of Holy Wednesday we offer a preview of the upcoming three days: Maundy Thursday through Holy Saturday. If it were a normal week, we would pray the daily office (Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer) on Thursday and Friday. Because of the Holy Week liturgies, however, neither Morning Prayer nor Evening Prayer services are held for the remainder of Holy Week. Therefore, on Holy Wednesday, we offer the Office of Tenebrae at 5:30pm, a service that anticipates the monastic offices for Thursday through Saturday.

Tenebrae means “shadows” and refers to the gradual extinguishing of six candles as the office proceeds—through the speaking and singing of psalms, lamentations and canticles—until only one candle remains. As each candle is extinguished, the lights of the church are turned lower and lower, until only the seventh candle, the Light of Christ, shines in the darkness.

As the choir sings Christus factus est, the seventh candle is removed from sight, hidden away behind a door near the altar. You might recall we also heard Christus factus est on Palm Sunday. That moment on Sunday anticipated this moment tonight. On Sunday, Christus factus est was sung to the music of Anton Bruckner. This evening, we hear the same words set to the music of Felice Anerio.

While the Light of Christ is hidden away, the choir sings Gregorio Allegri’s Miserere mei, Deus (Psalm 51), echoing Ash Wednesday, when it was sung to begin the season of Lent. Then, after a loud sound, the seventh candle returns to its rightful place, lifted high. By its light all leave in silence.
The Triduum

Maundy Thursday, April 2
5:30pm  The Solemn Liturgy of Maundy Thursday
  sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
  sermon by Fr Turner

Good Friday, April 3
5:30pm  The Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday
  sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
  sermon by Fr Turner

Holy Saturday, April 4
5:30pm  The Great Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter
  sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
  sermon by Fr Spurlock

The Triduum takes us through a series of three choral services on three consecutive evenings, Thursday through Saturday, at 5:30pm. Together, these three liturgies comprise the center of our Holy Week observance, and are much more powerful (and comprehensible) if you attend all three as parts of a whole, rather than as separate or separated events. Think of them as the paschal mystery broken down into three parts: passion (Thursday evening), death (Friday evening) and resurrection (Saturday evening/Sunday morning). Details of each service can be found on the following pages.
12:10pm   Solemn Eucharist 
         sung by the Gentlemen of the Saint Thomas Choir

5:30pm   The Solemn Liturgy of Maundy Thursday
         sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
         sermon by Fr Turner

Our observance of Maundy Thursday begins with the Gentlemen of the Choir singing at a Solemn Eucharist at 12:10pm. This is an ideal opportunity for those who work nearby to make their Holy Communion over the lunch hour, particularly for those who are unable to attend a Mass in the evening.

It is good that this day in particular includes a Mass, for Maundy Thursday is the occasion on which we commemorate the Last Supper, in which Jesus took bread and wine and consecrated them as his body and blood, and commanded his disciples to continue to “do this in remembrance of me.”

And remember we have. The first Eucharistic Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer begins: All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation,
and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that, his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

This “perpetual memory” occurs nearly one thousand times per year at Saint Thomas, and, in all times and places, a countless number of times. So it is that on Maundy Thursday, in particular, we “do this in remembrance” of him at the 12:10 Mass, and then in greater depth at the **Solemn Liturgy of Maundy Thursday at 5:30pm**.

The 5:30pm liturgy is the first liturgy of the Triduum. In it, we remember that, on the night in which the Lord was betrayed, but before the Last Supper, he washed the feet of his disciples. In like manner, before Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday, the rector of Saint Thomas washes the feet of twelve parishioners, in a ceremony known as the *Mandatum*. It is this ceremony that may have given rise to the use of the word *Maundy* in *Maundy Thursday*.

The word *mandatum* means *mandate*, and it refers to the new commandment that Jesus gave his disciples after he washed their feet, as recorded in the Gospel of John, Chapter 14: “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.” And then, a bit later in Chapter 14: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

How appropriate then, that during the *Mandatum*, the choir sings *Ubi Caritas* by Maurice Duruflé: *Where charity and love are, there is God. The love of Christ hath joined us in one.*

After the *Mandatum*, we commemorate the institution by Christ of the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, just as we did at the 12:10pm Mass earlier in the day. *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast.*

As Holy Communion comes to a close, the choir and congregation sing words written by Thomas Aquinas and set to the tune, *Adora Devote*:

> O memorial wondrous of the Lord’s own death;  
> Living Bread that givest all thy creatures breath,  
> Grant my spirit ever by thy life may live,  
> To my taste thy sweetness never-failing give.
After Holy Communion, the Sacrament is moved, in procession, to the altar of repose, where it will remain until the Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday. The procession to the altar of repose pauses in three places along its route, as the congregation sings *Now my tongue, the mystery telling*, another hymn written by Thomas Aquinas.

The Sacrament is carried in procession to the altar of repose.

These same three places will be visited again in the following two liturgies: it is where the cross stops on its procession to the altar on Good Friday, and it is where the Light of Christ pauses on its entry into the church during the Great Vigil. This is just one way in which the physical movements of the three liturgies of the Triduum echo one another, and in which together they tell the story of our salvation through the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With the Sacrament at the altar of repose, just before the service ends, priests and acolytes strip the high altar bare. Nothing is left, not even the dust, which is scrubbed away from the surface of the altar by the rector. The altar has been prepared for the coming sacrifice. By now it is clear that Christ has not only been stricken, smitten and afflicted of God (Isaiah 53), but betrayed, denied, and abandoned by his friends. Darkness falls, the liturgy ends, and choristers scatter like Jesus’ friends. All leave in silence, except for those who wish to keep watch at the altar of repose, where the reserved Sacrament is kept.
On Good Friday, from **noon until 3pm**, in a dimly lit church with an altar stripped bare, we gather together to contemplate the mystery of God incarnate, who was sacrificed for those he created and loves. This Three Hours Devotion is unique among the services held at Saint Thomas. In contrast to most worship services at the high altar, at noon on Good Friday there are no processions, no motets or anthems, no readings from the Old Testament or the Epistles, and no Holy Communion. The treble voices of the choir and the pealing of the bells have been silenced.
On Good Friday, the chancel and altar are unadorned. The service involves a series of seven meditations on the seven last words of Christ spoken from the cross. This year they will be offered by Fr Daniels (words one and two), Fr Spurlock (three and four), and Fr Austin (five, six and seven). Between each meditation, there are prayers, psalms, hymns, and long periods of silence. You may stay for the entire three hours (as many do), or you may come for any part of it.

The service ends at 3pm, the traditional time we commemorate the death of Christ, at which point the bell tolls 33 times.

When evening comes, we offer the second liturgy of the Triduum: the **Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday at 5:30pm**. Beginning where the Solemn Liturgy of Maundy Thursday ended, with the Lord betrayed and abandoned, the church remains unadorned.

It is on this night that we hear Chapter 53 of Isaiah, words that reverberate throughout history, immortalized in music by Handel’s *Messiah*:

> He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

> Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearsers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

If you pay attention to the details, you’ll notice the many ways in which the Triduum liturgies are interwoven. For example, the psalm sung by the choir on Good Friday (Psalm 22) is the same psalm sung at the stripping of the altar the night before. You’ll also notice a connection to Palm Sunday as well: the singing of the Passion by three cantors. On Palm Sunday at 11am they sang the Passion according to Saint Matthew; on Good Friday they sing the Passion according to Saint John.

After a sermon by Fr Turner, the Solemn Collects are prayed by the Celebrant. These solemn intercessions are chanted for the Church, the world, the suffering, the unconverted, and the departed.

During the singing of Cross of Jesus, the three sacred ministers walk from the chancel to the narthex, where they take hold of the large wooden cross. After the hymn, they carry it down the center aisle, stopping at the exact same places the Sacrament paused in procession on Maundy Thursday. At each stop, a cantor sings “Behold the Wood
of the Cross, whereon was hung the world’s salvation.” And the people respond, “O come, let us worship.”

The Cross is carried through the chancel to its place on the High Altar, at which point all kneel, and the three sacred ministers prostrate themselves in the chancel. The Reproaches, adapted from Tomás Luis de Victoria, are sung by the choir: O my people, what have I done unto thee? or wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me.

As the choir sings the reproaches and as the people kneel, the three sacred ministers prostrate themselves in the chancel.

Then, as the congregation remains kneeling, the choir sings an anthem, and two priests go to the altar of repose, where the Sacrament was taken the night before, and bring the Sacrament back to the High Altar in a procession led by acolytes carrying candles. This is done because there is no consecration of bread and wine on Good Friday itself. So we use reserved Sacrament from the night before.

In the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the congregation confesses its sins and says the Lord’s Prayer. All baptized Christians are invited to come forward to receive the Body and Blood. The Post-Communion Prayer is said by all kneeling and a motet by Antonio Lotti is sung: He was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried.

Christ has died, killed by those he loved. With that fact made painfully obvious, darkness falls. The clergy, choir, and acolytes depart in silence, followed by the congregation.
Holy Saturday

5:30pm  The Great Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter
sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
sermon by Fr Spurlock

The third service of the Triduum is actually two liturgies in one: the Great Vigil, by candlelight, and the First Eucharist of Easter, in great light. The Vigil picks up where Good Friday left off: the nave of the church is in silence and darkness; Christ has died and descended *ad infernum*, into hell.

With the choir already in place in the chancel, the liturgy begins with a knock on the door by the rector, who has just led a vast procession of acolytes and priests to the entrance on Fifth Avenue. After the procession enters the church, the people rise in their pews, holding candles they received when they arrived. The rector gives the Blessing of the New Fire at the back of the church and the people rise and face the narthex:

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.
The paschal candle is in position behind the cantor, who sings the Exsultet.

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.

The rector then prepares a new paschal candle, which will be used throughout the year until next Easter. The paschal candle is lit at worship services through the Easter Season until Ascension Day, and is also lit at funerals throughout the year. He prepares the paschal candle with a knife, incising a cross and outlining the letters of the Greek alphabet—alpha and omega—as he says the words of preparation:

Christ yesterday and today.
The Beginning and the End.
Alpha and Ωmega.
His are the times and ages.
To Him be glory and dominion
through all the ages of eternity.
Through His holy and glorious wounds
may Christ the Lord guard and preserve us.

He then lights the paschal candle saying, “May the light of Christ gloriously rising scatter the darkness of heart and mind.”
Then, from the paschal candle, smaller candles are lit, and from these candles the candles of all in attendance are lit, so that the light grows through the nave of the church as the procession moves forward toward the High Altar. The subdeacon carries the paschal candle and pauses three times, each time chanting “The Light of Christ.” These are the same three places where the procession of the Sarcament paused on Maundy Thursday and where the procession of the Cross paused on Good Friday.

When the paschal candle reaches its resting place in the chancel, the whole of the church is lit by candlelight. Everyone remains standing for the singing by the cantor of the *Exsultet*. It begins:

> 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 splendour, for darkness hath been vanquished by our eternal King. Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, and let thy holy courts in radiant light resound with the praises of thy people.

After the Exsultet, we hear the Liturgy of the Word. At this service, it is a series of five solemn prophecies from the Old Testament:

(1) The Story of Creation (Genesis 1:1—2:2)
(2) The Flood (Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13)
(3) Abraham’s Sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-18)
(4) Israel’s Deliverance from the Red Sea (Exodus 14:10—15:1)
(5) The Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

These passages are read so that we may all remember the record of God’s saving deeds in history, how he saved his people in ages past, and so that we may recommit ourselves to God through Christ, who brings each of us to the fullness of redemption.

The Great Vigil then continues with a ceremony of Holy Baptism. Christian baptism is baptism into Christ’s death and resurrection, just as the congregation has been entering into Christ’s death during the season of Lent, and will celebrate his resurrection at Easter. At the Vigil, as the choir sings Palestrina’s glorious setting of *Psalm 42:1*, the paschal candle is carried to the baptismal font, followed by priests and acolytes, who meet the baptismal candidate at the font next to the Chantry Chapel. After the individual is baptized in the name of
the Holy Trinity, he or she is “marked as Christ’s own forever” by a cross made on the forehead using holy oil, and is welcomed by the congregation into the household of God.

The full procession, led by the paschal candle but otherwise still in darkness, then moves from the chapel to the back of the church, and finally down the center aisle, as the cantor sings the Litany of the Saints and the people chant their responses. The rector asperses the worshipers along the way with water taken from the baptismal font. The paschal candle is returned to its place in the chancel and the three sacred ministers make their way up to the High Altar.

It is from the High Altar that the rector turns and gives the dramatic Easter Acclamation: Alleluia. Christ is risen. The people shout in response, The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Suddenly, the church is flooded in light, the organ blasts and bells ring out, and choir and congregation together join in singing the joyful Easter Hymn: Jesus Christ is risen today. Alleluia! It is now Easter.

Choristers ring bells during the singing of the Easter Hymn.

The First Eucharist of Easter follows the customary form of the Eucharist at Saint Thomas. The Collect of the Day and Epistle are read, the Gospel Procession moves down among the people, led by a thurifer, a sermon is preached, and then, atypically, we sing the
Christus Vincit: Christ has conquered death. After the Peace and the Greetings, children are invited to come up to receive Easter plants which surround the paschal candle. We then proceed with Holy Communion, the first consecration of bread and wine at Saint Thomas since Maundy Thursday.

The service ends with the singing of The Day of Resurrection and all spill out onto Fifth Avenue, many to return on Easter morning. Holy Week has ended and Eastertide begins.

APRIL 5

The Sunday of the Resurrection: Easter Day

8am The Solemn Eucharist of the Resurrection & sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys
11am with the Saint Thomas Brass sermon by Fr Turner

2:30pm Organ Recital performed by Stephen Buzard and Benjamin Sheen, Assistant Organists

3pm Solemn Evensong sung by the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys sermon by Fr Austin
Solemn Eucharist of the Resurrection at 8am and 11am

*Alleluia! Christ is risen!*

*The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

So begins the Solemn Eucharist of the Resurrection on Easter Day. As you would expect, the 8am and 11am services (which are identical) begin with a grand procession, with the choir and congregation, accompanied by the organ and the Saint Thomas Brass, singing two favorite Easter hymns: *Jesus Christ is risen today* and *The Day of Resurrection*.

If you are familiar with Sunday morning worship at Saint Thomas, you will recognize that the liturgical design of the Solemn Eucharist of the Resurrection is the same as nearly any 11am service. There is a reason for this: *every* Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection. Easter Day is special in that it gives us the reason for Sunday worship in the first place; correspondingly, it sets the liturgical mold for our typical Sunday.

Given that the Easter Sunday liturgy is typical of Sunday worship, the liturgy continues with the reading of Scripture. Typically on Sunday mornings we have a reading from the Old Testament, a psalm sung by the choir, the reading of a lesson from one of the Epistles, and then a reading from the Gospels. But the seven Sundays of Easter are slightly different in that the first reading is not from the Old Testament but rather from the Acts of the Apostles. This makes sense, given that the resurrection of Jesus, known to his disciples by his resurrection appearances, is the jaw-dropping event that changed the disciples forever. No longer are we reliant on Old Testament prophesies. We have testimony from eye witnesses!

The Gospel account of the resurrection on this day is taken from Saint John: As Mary Magdalene stands weeping outside the tomb, which is now empty for reasons she does not understand, she sees there two angels in white. They ask her why she is weeping. “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him,” she answers. And then, turning around, a man stands in front of her whom she does not recognize—but he recognizes her. “Jesus saith under her, ‘Mary,’” calling her by name, telling her of his future: “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” He commissions her to tell others of his resurrection, and thus Mary
Magdalene becomes the “apostle to the apostles,” the first witness to testify to the risen Jesus.

After this, the disciples meet the Risen Christ themselves; they do so several times, in fact, until his promised ascension forty days later. Having seen him with their own eyes, the disciples, especially after the arrival of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, are turned inside out: before this, they may have been meek and afraid, but afterwards they are confident and courageous evangelists and apostles, spreading the Good News to all nations. They now know that even death itself can be overcome because of the victory that God has accomplished in the resurrection of Jesus. That dramatic Easter event constitutes a promise of eternal life that is made to all who become one with God through Christ: that is good news, indeed!

We gather at Saint Thomas on Fifth Avenue in 21st century New York City only because of the witness through the centuries that began with the first evangelists meeting the resurrected Jesus on those important first fifty days which immediately followed the resurrection.

As befits this celebration of the resurrection, the music selected for Easter Day is glorious. The mass setting is the Missa Dies Resurrectionis by our very own John Scott, Organist and Director of Music. Anthems and motets include works by Taverner, Bassano, Samuel Scheidt, and others. And, of course, we sing some of the most beloved Easter hymns, the last of which is by Cecil Frances Alexander, arranged by John Scott. It expresses in song the Easter joy:

He is risen, he is risen!
Tell it out with joyful voice:
He has burst his three days’ prison;
Let the whole wide earth rejoice:
Death is conquered, man is free,
Christ has won the victory.

Alleluia!
Solemn Evensong at 3pm

If you cannot attend on Easter morning, consider coming to Evensong at 3pm (be aware it does not include Holy Communion).

The Scripture readings at this service also focus on the time immediately following the resurrection. Pay close attention especially to the second lesson (Luke 24:13-35). This passage tells the story of the famous “Walk to Emmaus,” during which the disciples come to realize that the stranger speaking with them, and then breaking bread with them, is their Risen Lord. Notice how it ties together the entirety of Holy Week and Easter in a single passage: from the Old Testament prophesies, to the disciples being slow to understand, to an account of the events leading to Christ’s death on the cross, to the recognition of the Sacrament of Holy Communion instituted at the Last Supper, to the disciples’ witness of the resurrection.

![Jesus on the road to Emmaus, depicted in the Peace Window](https://example.com/EmmausWindow.png)

At this Evensong, the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys sings the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis set to Dyson in D, as well as the Song of Moses from Handel’s Israel in Egypt. The choir sings this work, in its entirety, at a concert on Wednesday, May 13.

The Easter celebrations don’t end there. We invite you in the name of the Risen Christ to join us not only on Easter Day, but for the seven weeks of Eastertide, as we make our way through the weeks following the Resurrection: Christ’s appearances to his disciples and his ascent into heaven.

*Alleluia! Christ is risen!*  
*The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!*
Some advice: the earlier one arrives, the better the seats. There is no reserved seating on Easter Day and no tickets issued. The doors are open for anyone who wishes to worship at Saint Thomas.

Please note that the 8am and 11am liturgies on Easter Day are exactly the same: same liturgy, same music, same sermon, same organs, same choir, same trumpets. Everything is the same, except the size of the congregation. If you come to the 8am service, you will likely get a good seat. In past years, many hundreds of people have attended the 8am liturgy, but the church has not filled to capacity. The Fifth Avenue doors open at 7am, and a steady stream of people enter over the following hour.

If you want to attend the 11am liturgy, come early enough to get a seat. We don’t begin seating for the 11am Eucharist until after the 8am Eucharist has finished, which will be around 9:30am. Please be aware that in past years, the church has filled to capacity before 11am, and many seats are filled by around 10:15am. Due to the fire code, once the church fills we cannot let anyone else enter.

Whether at 8am or 11am, please do come! It’s the greatest day of the year, and it is truly what Christianity is all about. Our church would not exist without Easter morning. No church would.

Nevertheless, if you can’t make it here on Easter morning, don’t fret. There is Evensong at 3pm, preceded by an Organ Recital at 2:30pm. The recital and Solemn Evensong feature excellent Easter music. If you can’t come then, come worship here whenever you can. Our doors are open every day—each day is a celebration of the Risen Christ. Come, taste and see.
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I attend worship services if I am not a member?

A: All are welcome to attend worship services and other events at Saint Thomas, and we are delighted to welcome newcomers. There are no entry tickets needed for any Holy Week or Easter Day service. Seats are available on a first-come basis. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. If you are not a baptized Christian, we invite you to approach the altar rail for a blessing.

If you are not already a pledging member, we ask that you give generously in support of Saint Thomas each time you visit, just as those who came before you have done, leaving behind the benefits we now all enjoy. If you would like to learn more about baptism and about membership, don’t hesitate to contact us with any of your questions at welcome@SaintThomasChurch.org.

Q: Is there nursery care during the worship services?

A: Children are always welcome to worship with us. However, sometimes parents wish to leave their young children in the care of our nursery staff. Typically at Saint Thomas, nursery care is available during the 11am Choral Eucharist on Sundays. During Holy Week, it is also available during the 5:30pm services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. If you have questions about nursery care, contact Fr Spurlock at mspurlock@SaintThomasChurch.org.

Q: Can I take photos?

A: Please do not take photos or use any recording device during the worship services, concerts and recitals. We also ask that you turn off your phone and any other electronic device. You may take photos in the church building in between the services, but not during them.

New to Saint Thomas?
Let’s meet.

Contact us at welcome@SaintThomasChurch.org

www.SaintThomasChurch.org