

Ascension Day is one of the earliest Christian festivals dating back to the year 68 CE. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ met several times with his disciples during the 40 days after his resurrection to instruct them on how to carry out his teachings. On the 40th day he took them to the Mount of Olives, where they watched as he ascended to heaven.

Ascension Day marks the end of the Easter season and occurs ten days before Pentecost. The disciples were told not to gaze up into heaven to look for Jesus but rather we are to find his presence amongst ourselves as we continue to build up the kingdom of God here on earth.

Prelude: "Adagio Molto

A. Guilmant

Processional Hymn #247 (CP) "Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise"

Ascension

Welcome

Gathering of the Community

(A 21st Century Africana Liturgy Resource: A Gathering Litany for Ascension Day from Luke 24:44-53 and Acts 1:1-12)

Let us gather as they gathered on the Mount of Olivet. Let us remember the teachings of the law, psalms, and prophets.

Ride on King Jesus, no one can hinder you!

Let us gather as they gathered when Jesus rose into heaven. Let us remember that every sin has been forgiven.

Ride on King Jesus, no one can hinder you!

Let us gather as they gathered when Jesus rode upon clouds. Let us remember how he promised that we would be clothed in power.

Ride on King Jesus, no one can hinder you!

Let us gather as they gathered upon a hill so high. Let us remember the ascension of our Messiah.

Ride on King Jesus, no one can hinder you!

Almighty God, **to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit so that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Gloria #702 (CP)

Alexandra Teske & Christina Bosco, soloists

Congregation, please join with the choir on each refrain

Gathering Prayer

Holy God, send your promised Spirit of revelation and wisdom, so that, in the blessed freedom of hope, we may witness to the grace of forgiveness and sing with joy to the One who makes us one.

Amen. *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.*

Proclamation of the Word

A Reading from Book of Acts 1:1-11 (pg. #1055)

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 47

Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with a cry of joy.

**For the Lord Most High is to be feared;
he is the great king over all the earth.**

He subdues the peoples under us,
and the nations under our feet.

**He chooses our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.**

God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of the ram's-horn.

**Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our king, sing praises.**

For God is king of all the earth;
sing praises with all your skill.

**God reigns over the nations;
God sits upon his holy throne.**

The nobles of the peoples have gathered together,
with the people of the God of Abraham.

**The rulers of the earth belong to God,
and he is highly exalted.**

A Reading from the Book of Ephesians 1:15-23 (pg. #1133)

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. **Thanks be to God.**

Before Gospel "Open My Eyes, That I May See"

Open My Eyes

V1

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me
free.

Refrain

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see; open my eyes: illumine me, Spirit divine!

V2

Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear, and while the wave-notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear.

Refrain

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see; open my eyes: illumine me, Spirit divine!

The Gospel Luke 24:44-53

The Lord be with you,
And also with you.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Luke,
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so, stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

The Gospel of Christ
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

After Gospel "Open My Eyes, That I May See"

Open My Eyes

V3

Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to
share.

Refrain

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see; open my
eyes: illumine me, Spirit divine!

Sermon Rev. Carol Hardie

Anthem "O God, Your Goodness"

Beethoven/Bullard

The St. James' Choir

Affirmation of Faith Nicene Creed

Let us confess our faith, as we say,

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Mae Cox, Lay-Reader

Confession and Absolution

Dear friends in Christ, God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy; he welcomes sinners and invites them to his table. Let us confess our sins, confident in God's forgiveness.

Most merciful God,
**we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us,
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Almighty God have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn #439 (CP) "Blest Are The Pure In Heart" *Franconia*

The Celebration of the Eucharist

Prayer over the Gifts

Eternal God, our Saviour Jesus Christ has promised to be with us until the end of time. Accept all we offer this day, and renew us in the transfigured life, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer No.#4

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right to give you thanks and praise, O Lord, our God, sustainer of the universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

(CP) #730

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home; by your will they were created and have their being.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill; you made us the stewards of creation.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

But we turn against you, and betray your trust; and we turn against one another. Again and again, you call us to return. Through the prophets and sages, you reveal your righteous law. In the fullness of time you sent your Son, born of a woman, to be our Saviour. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. By his death he opened to us the way of freedom and peace.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

Therefore, we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

#732 (CP) "Holy, Holy, Holy"

Community Mass

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed are you, Lord our God, for sending us Jesus, the Christ, who on the night he was handed over to suffering and death, took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, gave it to his friends, and said, "Take this, and eat it: this is my body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup of wine; he gave you thanks, 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."

Glory to you for ever and ever.

Gracious God, we recall the death of your Son Jesus Christ, we proclaim his resurrection and ascension, and we look with expectation for his coming as Lord of all the nations. We who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring you these gifts. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this offering of your Church, that we who eat and drink at this holy table may share the divine life of Christ our Lord.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

Pour out your Spirit upon the whole earth and make it your new creation. Gather your Church together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, where peace and justice are revealed, that we, with all your people, of every language, race, and nation, may share the banquet you have promised; through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, all honour and glory are yours, creator of all.

Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

We, being many, are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

The Communion

The gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

#747(CP) "Lamb of God"

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

Music During Communion:

Hymn: #57 (CP) "I am the Bread, the Bread of Life" *Picket Wood*

Hymn: #619 (CP) "Fairest Lord Jesus" *Crusaders Hymn*

Prayer after Communion

All your works praise you, O Lord.

And your faithful servants bless you. Gracious God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. May we, who share his body, live his risen life; we, who drink his cup, bring life to others; we, whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so that we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Glory to God,

whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the Church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing for Ascension Day

May almighty God bless you with the knowledge that his only Son has ascended into heaven to prepare a place for you. **Amen.**

May you be lifted up and guided by Christ's intercession at God's right hand. **Amen.**

At Christ's promised return, may you be found blameless and welcomed into the joys of God's eternal kingdom. **Amen.**

And may almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Announcements

Recessional Hymn #246(CP) "Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus"
In Babilone

Dismissal

We are followers of Jesus, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and serving the world God loves. **Thanks be to God.**

Sung Benediction "I Offer My Life" *D. Moen*

All that I am, all that I have, I lay them down before You, O Lord. All my regrets, all my acclaim, the joy and the pain, I'm making them Yours, Lord.

Lord, I offer my life to You, everything I've been through, use it for Your glory. Lord, I offer my days to You, lifting my praise to You as a pleasing sacrifice, Lord, I offer You my life.

Organ Postlude "Prelude and Fugue in F Major" *J. S. Bach*

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