

# A Service of the Word for use at home for Ascension Day, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

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*The Ascension is one of the great feasts in the Christian liturgical calendar, and commemorates the bodily ascension of Christ into heaven.*

*There is some evidence that the Ascension was first celebrated on the fiftieth day of Easter (Pentecost), but it was soon moved to the fortieth day in faithfulness to Luke's chronology.*

*The feast is one of the ecumenical feasts (i.e. universally celebrated), ranking with the feasts of the Passion, of Easter and of Pentecost among the most solemn in the church calendar.*

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## **The Gathering**

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Hymn - All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name (AMNS 140)**

All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
let angels prostrate fall;  
bring forth the royal diadem  
and crown Him, crown Him, crown Him,  
crown Him Lord of all.

Crown Him, ye morning stars of light,  
who fixed this floating ball;  
now hail the strength of Israel's might,  
and crown Him...

Crown Him, ye martyrs of your God,  
who from his altar call;  
extol the Stem-of-Jesse's Rod,  
and crown Him...

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,  
ye ransomed of the fall,  
hail Him who save you by His grace,  
and crown Him...

Sinners, whose love can ne're forget  
the wormwood and the gall,  
go spread your trophies at His feet,  
and crown Him...

Let every tribe and every tongue  
before Him prostrate fall,  
and shout in universal song  
the crownèd, crownèd, crownèd,  
crownèd Lord of all.

## **The Greeting**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

## **Introduction**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for forty days we have been celebrating with joyful hearts the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the power of sin and death. He appeared to his disciples many times and told them about the kingdom of God.

Today we recall how he left this earth and returned to his Father, ascending into heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. Trusting in his reign over all creation, and submitting to his kingly yet loving rule, let us hear the story of his parting.

## **The Ascension Reading**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1.4-11)

While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Seeing we have a great high priest  
who has passed through the heaven,  
Jesus the Son of God,  
let us offer him the praise worthy of his name.

## **The Gloria**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.**

## **The Collect**

**Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that as we believe your only-begotten Son  
our Lord Jesus Christ  
to have ascended into the heavens,  
so we in heart and mind may also ascend  
and with him continually dwell;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## The Liturgy of the Word - Daniel 7.9-14

As I watched,  
thrones were set in place,  
and an Ancient One took his throne;  
his clothing was white as snow,  
and the hair of his head like pure wool;  
his throne was fiery flames,  
and its wheels were burning fire.  
A stream of fire issued  
and flowed out from his presence.  
A thousand thousand served him,  
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him.  
The court sat in judgement,  
and the books were opened.

I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. As I watched in the night visions,  
I saw one like a human being  
coming with the clouds of heaven.

And he came to the Ancient One  
and was presented before him.  
To him was given dominion  
and glory and kingship,  
that all peoples, nations, and languages  
should serve him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
that shall not pass away,  
and his kingship is one  
that shall never be destroyed.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Canticle - Revelation 15.3,4**

**All nations shall come and worship you, O Christ,  
and share in the feast of your kingdom.**

Great and wonderful are your deeds,  
Lord God the Almighty.

Just and true are your ways,  
O ruler of the nations.

Who shall not revere and praise your name, O Lord?  
for you alone are holy.

All nations shall come and worship in your presence:  
for your just dealings have been revealed.

**To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honour and glory and might,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

**All nations shall come and worship you, O Christ,  
and share in the feast of your kingdom.**

## **Gospel Reading - Luke 24.44-end**

Alleluia, alleluia.

Go and make disciples of all nations, says the Lord.  
Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.  
**Alleluia.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus 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 worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

### **The Creed**

**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,**

**was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and 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 and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped  
and glorified,  
who 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 Intercession**

Let us join our prayers with those of our Saviour Christ,  
seeking the Father's blessing and the gifts of the Spirit.

Jesus Christ, great high priest, living for ever to intercede for us,  
pray for the Church, your broken body in the world ...

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, king of righteousness,  
enthroned at the right hand of the majesty on high,  
pray for the world, and make it subject to your gentle rule ...



Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, Son of Man, drawing humanity into the life of God,  
pray for your brothers and sisters in need, distress or sorrow ...

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, pioneer of our salvation,  
bringing us to glory through your death and resurrection,  
surround with your saints and angels those who have died  
trusting your promises ...

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ, Lord over all things,  
ascended far above the heavens and filling the universe,  
pray for us who receive the gifts you give us for work in your service ...

Lord, hear us.

**Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus Christ,  
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit  
and in the bond of peace,  
and bring the whole created order to worship at your feet;  
for you are alive and reign with the Father  
and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

## The Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. If you love me, rejoice because I am going to the Father'. Alleluia. *John 14.27,28*

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace[, including those joining us on Zoom].

## 2nd Hymn - Hail the Day that sees Him Rise (AMNS 87)

Hail the day that sees Him rise, *Alleluia.*  
to His throne above the skies; *Alleluia.*  
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given, *Alleluia.*  
enters now the highest heaven. *Alleluia.*

There for Him high triumph waits;  
lift your heads, eternal gates!  
He hath conquered death and sin;  
take the King of Glory in!

Lo, the heaven its Lord receives,  
yet He loves the earth He leaves;  
though returning to His throne,  
still He calls mankind His own.

See, He lifts His hands above;  
see, He shews the prints of love;  
hark, His gracious lips bestow  
blessings on His Church below.

Still for us He intercedes,  
His prevailing death He pleads;  
near Himself prepares our place,  
He the first-fruits of our race.

Lord, though parted from our sight,  
far above the starry height,  
grant our hearts may thither rise,  
seeking Thee above the skies.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

Looking for the coming of his kingdom,  
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**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 Agnus Dei**

**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.**

God our Father, you have raised our humanity in Christ:  
mercifully grant that, nourished with your spiritual blessings,  
we may set our hearts in the heavenly places;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1.12,13a,14)**

Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying. They were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

As we wait in silence,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we listen to your word,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we worship you in majesty,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your refreshing,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your renewing,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your equipping,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your empowering,  
**make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Hymn - Christ Triumphant (MP 77)**

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,  
Saviour, Master, King,  
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,  
hear us as we sing:

*Yours the glory and the crown,  
the high renown, the eternal name.*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,  
Son of Man on earth!  
power and majesty concealing  
by your humble birth:

*Yours the glory...*

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,  
victim crucified!  
death is through the cross defeated,  
sinners justified:

*Yours the glory...*

Priestly King, enthroned for ever  
high in heaven above!  
sin and death and hell shall never  
stifle hymns of love:

*Yours the glory...*

So, our hearts and voices raising  
through the ages long.  
ceaselessly upon You gazing,  
this shall be our song:

*Yours the glory...*

## **The Blessing**

May the Spirit,  
who set the Church on fire upon the day of Pentecost,  
bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ.  
And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.  
**Amen.**

## **The Dismissal**

Waiting expectantly for the promised Holy Spirit,  
[we] go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.  
**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

This compilation prepared by John Bland. May 2020

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