

Ascension Sunday

“For the Sake of the Church”

May 24, 2020

Today we celebrate the Ascension of Christ. Forty days after His resurrection Jesus removed His visible presence from earth in order to reign as true God and true man over the whole universe and particularly His Body, the Church. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians prays that by God’s power all who believe in Christ would know the hope of the Gospel, the riches of His glorious inheritance, and His great power in our lives. These blessings come to us as Jesus continues to be present with us in the Word and Sacraments. He fills His Church so that His Church may be the fullness of Him.

Welcome

“A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing” (LSB 493)

A hymn of glory let us sing!	Shall praise Your name eternally.
New hymns throughout the world shall ring:	Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia!	Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Christ by a road before untrod,	O risen Christ, ascended Lord,
Ascends unto the throne of God.	All praise to You let earth accord:
Alleluia, alleluia!	Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!	You are, while endless ages run,
Be now our joy on earth, O Lord,	With Father and with Spirit one.
And be our future great reward.	Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia!	Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Then, throned with You forever, we	

Invocation

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Confession

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: **But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(silence for reflection on God’s Word and for self-examination)

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. 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 neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us,**

renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen

Absolution

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

“What A Beautiful Name”

You were the Word at the beginning
One with God the Lord Most High
Your hidden glory in creation
Now revealed in You our Christ

Chorus 1

What a beautiful Name it is
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a beautiful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Death could not hold You
The veil tore before You
You silence the boast of sin and grave
The heavens are roaring
The praise of Your glory
For You are raised to life again

You have no rival
You have no equal
Now and forever God You reign
Yours is the kingdom
Yours is the glory
Yours is the Name above all names

You didn't want heaven without us
So Jesus You brought heaven down
My sin was great Your love was greater
What could separate us now

Chorus 2

What a wonderful Name it is
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a wonderful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus
What a wonderful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Chorus 3

What a powerful Name it is
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a powerful Name it is
Nothing compares to this
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus
What a powerful Name it is
The Name of Jesus

Readings

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles He had chosen. ³ After His suffering, He presented Himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

⁶ Then they gathered around Him and asked Him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

⁹ After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight.

¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.”

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm 47

Clap your hands, all you nations;
shout to God with cries of joy.

² For the LORD Most High is awesome,
the great King over all the earth.

³ He subdued nations under us,
peoples under our feet.

⁴ He chose our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob, whom He loved

⁵ God has ascended amid shouts of joy,
the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.

⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

⁷ For God is the King of all the earth;
sing to Him a psalm of praise.

⁸ God reigns over the nations;
God is seated on His holy throne.

⁹ The nobles of the nations assemble
as the people of the God of Abraham,
for the kings of the earth belong to God;
He is greatly exalted.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people, ¹⁹ and His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰ He exerted when He raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the Church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way.

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Holy Gospel: Luke 24:44-53

⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what My Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰ When He had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they

worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to You O Christ

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Children's Message

"Jesus Messiah"

He became sin who knew no sin
That we might become His righteousness
He humbled Himself and carried the cross
Love so amazing love so amazing

His body the bread His blood the wine
Broken and poured out all for love
The whole earth trembled and the veil was torn
Love so amazing love so amazing **Chorus**

Chorus

Jesus Messiah Name above all names
Blessed Redeemer Emmanuel
The Rescue for sinners
The Ransom from heaven
Jesus Messiah Lord of all

All our hope is in You
All our hope is in You
All the glory to You God
The Light of the world **Chorus**

Sermon

Prayers

Please add your prayer requests to the live chat

Thanksgivings

Pastor: O Lord, we praise You.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Petitions

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” (LSB 621)

1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded,
For with blessing in His hand
Christ our God to earth descending
Comes our homage to demand.

2 King of kings yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
In the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heav'nly food.

3 Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way
As the Light of Light descending
From the realms of endless day,
Comes the pow'rs of hell to vanquish
As the darkness clears away.

4 At His feet the six-winged seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence
As with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

The Service of Holy Communion

Preface

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary

The Lord's Prayer

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 and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Words of Institution

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen.**

Communion

Pastor: Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

People: **Amen**

(Take and eat)

Pastor: Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.

People: **Amen.**

(Take and drink)

A Time for Prayer and Meditation

Communion Blessing

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. His peace be with you.

People: **Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

"Awesome God"

When He rolls up His sleeves
He ain't just puttin' on the ritz
Our God is an awesome God
There is thunder in His footsteps
and lightning in His fists
Our God is an awesome God

The Lord wasn't joking
when He kicked 'em out of Eden
It wasn't for no reason
that He shed His blood
His return is very close
and so You better be believing that
Our God is an awesome God

Chorus

Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from Heaven above
With wisdom, power and love
Our God is an awesome God

And when the sky was starless
in the void of the night
Our God is an awesome God
He spoke into the darkness
and created the light
Our God is an awesome God

Judgment and wrath
He poured out on Sodom
Mercy and grace
He gave us at the cross
I hope that we have not
too quickly forgotten that
Our God is an awesome God

Offering

<http://stjohnslutheran.net/give/>

You may also mail your offering to St. John's (3521 Linda Vista Ave, Napa, CA 94558)

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. We are so blessed by our risen and ascended Lord and should be filled with confidence, joy, and hope. Yet, we are so often filled with other things – like fear, discouragement, despair, and self-pity. Why?
2. The Apostle Paul prays in verse 17 of Ephesians chapter 1 that “God...may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better.” This wisdom and revelation comes from knowing the Word and will of God. In what ways can you grow in your use of God’s Word to know Him better?
3. In verse 19 Paul speaks of God’s “incomparably great power.” How have you experienced God’s power in your life?
4. Jesus ascended to the right hand of God (a position of authority) to fill and empower His Church to represent Him on earth. In what ways do you seek to display and proclaim Christ in your daily life?

Memory Verse for this Week

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 1:22-23

St. John’s People and Families to Pray for This Week

Paulette Cooper
Ben, Lauren, Sophia, Michael, & David Frey
Brent, Jessica, Beckett, Adleigh, and Tyler Koen
Dawnette & Kaylie Martindale
Joel, Dawn, & Matthew Wahlers
Brian, Brittany, & Cade Cassayre
Daniel, Megan, Corinne, & Natalie Gilbert
Tito, Michele, Nathan, & Chelsea Luna
Belia Ramos, Liliana, Lucas, & Sofia Bennett
Kenneth, Michelle, & Evelyn Wanlass

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