

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD
This Ending Is a New Beginning
May 4th and 5th 2024 Communion Sunday

AS WE GATHER

While the Ascension is often underappreciated, it is a very important feast, and its message is deeply profound. We tend to think of Jesus' ascension as an ending point, and no one likes to wave goodbye. Even the apostles felt a sense of apprehension. But our Lord prepared them by opening the Scriptures to them so that they might know where to hear His voice even as His visual appearance would not be with them. We know that they understood this, because they returned with joy and not fear, celebrating this event as a new beginning and not an end.

+ PREPARATION +

HYMN **“A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing”** *LSB 493 v. 1, 2, 5, 6*

1. A hymn of glory let us sing! New hymns through-out the world shall ring:
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Christ, by a road before untrod, Ascends unto the throne of God.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2. The holy apostolic band Upon the Mount of Olives stand.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 And with His faithful foll'wers see Their Lord ascend in majesty.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

5. Be now our joy on earth, Lord, And be our future reward,
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Then, throned with You forever, we shall praise Your name eternally.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

6. O risen Christ, ascended Lord, All praise to You let earth accord:
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 You are, while endless ages run, With Father and with spirit one.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

INVOCATION

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

People: **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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 and examination

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

People: **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life.**

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.**

+ **WORD** +

INTROIT

Psalm 110:1, 4-5; antiphon: Psalm 47:5

People: **God has gone up, God has gone up, God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.**

Pastor: The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My | right hand,* until I make Your enemies Your | footstool." The LORD has sworn and will not | change His mind,* "You are a priest forever after the order of Mel- | chizedek." The Lord is at Your | right hand;* He will shatter kings on the day | of His wrath.

People: **Glory be to the Father and | to the Son* and to the Holy | Spirit; as it was in the be- | ginning,* is now, and will be forever. |Amen.**

God has gone up, God has gone up, God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

“Lamb of God”

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

O Lord, to whom our Savior ascended in His glory and from whose right hand He works to supply His church with the fruits of His redeeming work, keep us in faith that we may be sustained by His mercy and brought to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Acts 1:1–11

(The Lord ascends from their sight and the disciples return to Jerusalem with great joy.)

¹ 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.”

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL *adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6*

Pastor: Christ has risen from the dead.

People: God the Father has crowned Him with glory and honor.

Pastor: He has given Him dominion over the works of His hands;

People: He has put all things under His feet.

EPISTLE

Ephesians 1:15–23

(Paul commends the faith of the congregation in the context of the resurrection and ascension of Christ.)

¹⁵ 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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE

Romans 6:9; Matthew 28:20b

Pastor: Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

People: **Alleluia. Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Alleluia.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 24:44–53

(The evangelist records how Christ opened the Scriptures to the disciples before ascending in glory before their sight.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN OF THE DAY “On Christ’s Ascension I Now Build” *LSB 492*

- 1. On Christ’s ascension I now build the hope of my ascension;
This hope alone has always stilled All doubt and apprehension;

For where the Head is, there as well I know His members are to
dwell When Christ will come and call them.**

- 2. Since Christ returned to claim His throne, Great gifts for me
obtaining, My heart will rest in Him alone, No other rest remaining;
For where my treasure went before, There all my thoughts will ever
soar To still their deepest yearning.**

- 3. O Grant, dear Lord, this grace to me, Recalling Your ascension,
That I may serve You faithfully In thanks for my redemption; and
then, when all my days will cease, Let me depart in joy and peace In
answer to my pleading.**

SERMON

Pastor Matthew Kusch

SERMON TITLE

“He has Ascended....so...what?”

CREED

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!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Risen, ascended, and glorified Lord, hear the prayers of Your people and grant us grace that we may recognize Your presence in Word and Sacrament and receive there the fruits of Your redeeming work until You come again to deliver us into Your presence on high. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Sustain Your church, O Lord, that she may be faithful in all that You have given her to do and be kept in unity of doctrine and life through the days of trial until at last the church in heaven and the church on earth are one in Your presence on high. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Order all things on earth by Your Word that those entrusted with the leadership of the nations may fulfill Your purpose in the pursuit of peace, justice, and godliness on behalf of all people. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Supply to the sick and those who suffer the grace to sustain them in the day of their trouble and give comfort to the dying and those who mourn, [*especially*. . .]. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: By Your Spirit bring us to repentance and to faith in Your Word and promise, that we may approach Your altar with confidence and receive for our benefit Your body and blood given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Help us by Your grace to lead a holy and godly life, worthy of our calling as Your own people by Baptism and faith, and help us to give witness to the hope that is within us before a world in darkness. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Accept the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving we bring with our lips and the tithes and offerings of our hands as the worship acceptable in Your sight. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Having in remembrance all those who have loved Your appearing and who now rest in Your mercy, we pray for that day when we shall join with them in the marriage feast of the Lamb in Your kingdom without end.

People: Glory, honor, blessing, and praise to You, O risen and ascended Lord. Amen.

OFFERING

+ SACRAMENT +

PREFACE

2 Timothy 4:22

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.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who after His resurrection appeared openly to all His disciples and in their sight was taken up into heaven that He might make us partakers of His divine life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

LSB 161

**C: *Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: O Almighty and eternal God, You are worthy to be held in reverence by all people and You have well supplied Your whole creation with all the blessings of life and health. But most of all we praise You for Your gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation in Jesus Christ. Through His Word and Sacraments He continues to bestow upon us, Your people, the blessings of His cross and empty tomb—though we neither deserve nor are worthy of His gifts. Grant us the faith to receive with faith and a joyful heart the gift of His flesh and blood in this Holy Communion.

People: **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

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.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Pastor: Almighty and everlasting God, with thanksgiving we recall before You all that our Savior accomplished for our salvation: His incarnation and birth, His obedient life, His holy cross and passion, His mighty resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His seat at Your right hand in power, and His glorious coming again as Lord and judge of all. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

People: **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.**

PAX DOMINI

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

People: **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

LSB 163

C: *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.*

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”

LSB 821

1. Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; His the scepter, His the throne;
Alleluia! His the triumph, His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion Thunder like a mighty flood:
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation Has redeemed us by His blood."
2. Alleluia! Not as orphans Are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia! He is near us; Faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received Him When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget His promise: "I am with you evermore"?
3. Alleluia! Bread of heaven, Here on earth our food, our stay;
Alleluia! Here the sinful Flee to You from day to day.
Intercessor, Friend of sinners, Earth's Redeemer, hear our plea
Where the songs of all the sinless Sweep across the crystal sea.

4. Alleluia! King eternal, Lord omnipotent we own;
Alleluia! Born of Mary, Earth Your footstool, heav'n Your throne.
As within the veil You entered, Robed in flesh, our great High Priest,
Here on earth both priest and victim In the eucharistic feast.

5. Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; His the scepter, His the throne;
Alleluia! His the triumph, His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion Thunder like a mighty flood:
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation Has redeemed us by His blood."

“Christ High-Ascended, Now in Glory Seated”

LSB 840

1. Christ high-ascended, now in glory seated,
Throned and exalted, victory completed,
Death's dread dominion finally defeated,
We are His witnesses.

2. Christ from the Father ev'ry power possessing,
Who on His chosen lifted hands in blessing,
Sends forth His servants, still in faith confessing,
We are His witnesses.

3. Christ, who in dying won for us salvation,
Lives now the firstborn of the new creation;
To win disciples out of ev'ry nation,
We are His witnesses.

4. Christ in His splendor, all dominion gaining,
Christ with His people evermore remaining,
Christ to all ages gloriously reigning,
We are His witnesses.

5. As at His parting, joy shall banish grieving,
Faith in His presence strengthen our believing;
Filled with His Spirit, love and pow'r receiving,
We are His witnesses.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

LSB 164

*Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name.
He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy
With shouts of thanks giving. Alleluia, alleluia.*

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

Pastor: 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.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN**“Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious” LSB 495**

1. Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious; See the Man of Sorrows now!
From the fight returned victorious, Ev'ry knee to Him shall bow.
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crowns become the victor's brow. Crowns become the victor's brow.
2. Crown the Saviour! Angels, crown Him! Rich the trophies Jesus brings;
On the seat of pow'r enthrone Him While the vault of heaven rings.
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crown the Saviour King of kings. Crown the Saviour King of kings.
3. Sinners in derision crowned Him, Mocking thus the Saviour's claim;
Saints and angels crowd around Him, Own His title, praise His Name.
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Spread abroad the victor's fame. Spread abroad the victor's fame.
4. Hark, those bursts of acclamation! Hark, those loud triumphant chords!
Jesus takes the highest station; Oh, what joy the sight affords!
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him!
King of kings, and Lord of lords! King of kings, and Lord of lords!

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish,
Series B, Quarter 2. Copyright © 2023 Concordia Publishing House.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.