



**The Ascension of Our Lord
Thursday, May 21st, 2020**

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In today's gospel the risen Christ ascends into heaven and his followers are assured that the Spirit will empower them to be witnesses throughout the earth. The disciples were told to not gaze up into heaven to look for Jesus; we find his presence among us as we proclaim the word and share the Easter feast. We, too, long for the Spirit to enliven our faith and invigorate our mission.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as presiding minister begins.

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

People: **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Pastor: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are raised with him to new life. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

Pastor: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and planted us in a well-watered garden. In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave us water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.

At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life. We praise you for your salvation through water, for the water in this font, and for all water everywhere.

Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. Satisfy the thirsty, and give us the life only you can give. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Pastor: Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

FIRST READING *Acts 1:1-11*

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While 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; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But 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." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward 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."

PSALM 47 *Please read responsively.*

¹Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with a joyful sound.

²**For the LORD Most High is to be feared:
a great king over all the earth,**

³who subdues the peoples under us,
and the nations under our feet;

⁴**who chooses our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob, whom God loves.**

⁵God has gone up with a shout,
the LORD with the sound of the ram's horn.

⁶**Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our king, sing praises.**

⁷For God is king of all the earth;
sing praises with a song.

⁸**God reigns over the nations;
God is enthroned on high.**

⁹The nobles of the peoples have gathered as the people of the God of Abraham.
The rulers of the earth belong to God, who is highly exalted.

SECOND READING *Ephesians 1:15-23*

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Leader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Pastor: The holy gospel according to Luke, the 24th chapter.

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

GOSPEL *Luke 24:44-53*

⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my ⁴⁴words 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." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And 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."

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Pastor: The gospel of the Lord.

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

SERMON

Reverend Matthew Groenke

NICENE 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;
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 and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped 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 INTERCESSION

Leader: Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Leader: Living God, you chose us to be your witnesses in the world. We pray for the church in every place and the congregations in our community (especially). Focus our hearts and minds on the ministry we share in your name. Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Loving God, all creation sings praise to you. You delight in the oceans, and the mountains are your throne. Teach us humility and respect for our home. Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Sovereign God, you rule the heavens, the earth, and time itself. Make this a time of justice, peace, and solidarity among all nations and peoples, so that oppression and violence rule no more. Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Tender God, we wait with hope for your presence to heal us, bless us, restore us, and give us peace. You know all the names of those suffering for whom we pray this day (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Leader: Gentle God, you guide us as we seek wisdom. We pray for teachers, professors, theologians, day care workers, and all those charged with teaching the young and old. Give them endurance and persistence in their valuable work. Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Leader: Infinite God, your inheritance given to all your saints is your presence in our life and in our death. We remember with thanksgiving the faithful departed (*especially Helena, mother of Constantine*). Lord, in your mercy,

People: **hear our prayer.**

Pastor: With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it 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.**

BLESSING

Pastor: May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: What is our mission?

People: **To Shine the Light of Jesus, reflect his unconditional love, and mirror his kindness to all people. AMEN!**

DISMISSAL

Leader: Christ is risen, just as he said. Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

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