

**THE SERVICE WITHOUT COMMUNION: ASCENSION, Thursday 21 May, 2020.
Year A**

OPENING SENTENCES

God raised Christ from the dead, Alleluia!
and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places. Alleluia!
 In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

LHS 106 Since Christ is gone to heaven, His Home

**1 Since Christ is gone to heaven, His home,
 I know that I will follow;
 And in this hope I overcome
 All anguish, doubt, and sorrow.
 For where the head is, well I know,
 The members He has left below
 In time He surely gathers.**

**2 Since Christ hath reached His glorious throne
 And gifts for men obtaineth,
 My heart can rest in heaven alone,
 No other rest remaineth.
 I long to be with Him on high;
 My heart and thoughts would ever fly
 To Him who is my treasure.**

**3 From Thy ascension let such grace
 To me, O Lord, be given,
 That steadfast faith may guide my ways
 Unfaltering up to heaven,
 And at Thy voice I may depart
 With joy to dwell where Thou, Lord, art:
 O hear my supplication.**

Auf Christi Himmelfahrt allein
 Josua Wegelin (1604-1640)
 edited by Ernst Sonnemann (1630-1670)
 Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1863
 Revised, Hymnal Compilers

CONFESSION AND DECLARATION OF GRACE

Friends in Christ: Let us confess our sins to God our Father and ask him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

We confess that we are born in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have failed to do. We have not loved you with our whole heart, and we have not loved our neighbour as ourselves. We deserve your 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.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us, and has given his only Son to die for us, and for his sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in his name he has given the right to become children of God, and has given them his Holy Spirit. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all. **Amen.**

PSALM 47 – LHS 691 Clap your hands, all people (Sung by choir)

Clap your hands, all peoples
 Shout to God with loud songs of joy.
 For the Lord, the Most High, is terrible
 A great king over all the earth.
 He subdued nations under us
 And nations under our feet.
 He chose our heritage for us
 The pride of Jacob whom He loves.
 God has gone up with a shout.
 The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
 Sing praises to God, sing praises.
 For God is the king of all the earth
 Sing praises with a psalm.
 God reigns over the nations
 God sits on His holy throne.
 The princes of the peoples gather

As the people of the God of Abraham.
 For the shields of the earth belong to God
 He is highly exalted.
 Glory to the Father and the Son
 And the Holy Spirit
 As it was in the beginning is now
 And shall be for evermore. Amen.

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and
 for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us
 pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE (with descants)

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to
 be people of God.**

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honour, blessing, and glory are his.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing, honour, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb for ever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

GREETING AND COLLECT

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

(Let us pray that Christ will rule over all. [silence])

Thank you, eternal Father, that your Son Jesus ascended to your right hand, to rule over all things as Lord. Keep your church in the unity that the Spirit gives, and bring all creation to submit to Christ as Lord. For he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING - Acts 1:1-11

Hear the word of the Lord as it is written in Acts, chapter 1, beginning at verse 1

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After 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. 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 toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They 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."

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING - Ephesians 1:15-23

Hear the word of the Lord as it is written in Ephesians, chapter 1, beginning at verse 15

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I 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, so 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, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God 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, far 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. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God**GOSPEL - Luke 24:44-53**

The Holy Gospel is written in the Gospel according to St Luke, Chapter 24, beginning at verse 44

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[a] 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[d] returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

CHOIR ANTHEM - Hail, our once despised Jesus - Williams. arr. Carl Crossin.

**1 Hail, our once despised Jesus,
Hail, our Galilean King!
By your suffering you released
And did free salvation bring.
Friend and universal Saviour,
bearer of our sin and shame,
By your merits we find favour;
Life is given through your name.**

**2 Pascal Lamb by God appointed,
all our sins on you were laid;
by almighty love anointed,
you have full atonement made;
all your people are forgiven
through the virtue of your blood;
opened is the gate of heaven;
reconciled are we to God.**

**3 Jesus, hail enthroned in glory,
there forever to abide;
All the heavenly host adore you,
seated at your Father's side;
There for sinners you are pleading,
there you now our place prepare,
Ever for us interceding
til in glory we appear. Amen, Amen.**

Thomas John Williams (1869-1944), arr. Carl Crossin

LHS 108 – The Lord ascendeth

**1 The Lord ascendeth up on high,
The Lord has triumphed gloriously,
In power and might excelling;
The grave and hell are captive led,
Lo, He returns, our glorious head,
To His eternal dwelling.**

**2 The heavens with joy receive their Lord,
By saints, by angel hosts adored;
O day of exultation!
O earth, adore thy glorious king,
His rising, His ascension sing,
With grateful adoration.**

**3 Our great high priest now goes before,
Upon His Church His grace to pour,
And still His love He giveth:
O may our hearts to him ascend;
May all within us upward tend
To Him who ever liveth.**

Arthur Tozer Russell (1806-1874) and others

SERMON - Pastor Joshua Pfeiffer

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty, from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen**

*or: Christian; *'catholic' here means 'universal'*

LHS 115 Rejoice, the Lord is King

**1 Rejoice, the Lord is king!
Your Lord and king adore;
Mortals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph evermore:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

**2 Jesus, the Saviour, reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains,
He took His seat above:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

**3 His kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

**4 He sits at God's right hand
Till all His foes submit,
And bow to His command,
And fall beneath His feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Offertory

**Let the vineyards be fruitful Lord,
And fill to the brim our cup of blessing.**

**Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
That we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
Unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

Ascension Day Litany

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, hear us.

O Christ, graciously hear us.

Jesus, King of glory, your disciples saw you ascend into heaven:

Have mercy on us.

You are seated in glory at the right hand of the Father:

Have mercy on us.

All power in heaven and earth has been given to you, and you rule forever:

Have mercy on us.

You are adored by all God's angels:

Have mercy on us.

You have opened the kingdom of God to all who believe:

Have mercy on us.

You are able to save completely those who come to God through you:

Have mercy on us.

You promise to give whatever we ask in your name:

Have mercy on us.

You are present through your body and blood in the sacrament of the altar:

Have mercy on us.

You have gone to prepare a place for us:

Have mercy on us.

You will come again in glory to judge the living and dead:

Have mercy on us.

You will take us to yourself, so that where you are, there we may be also:

Have mercy on us.

By your glorious resurrection and ascension,
save us, good Lord.

By your all-powerful intercession,
save us, good Lord.

By your triumphant majesty and power,
save us, good Lord.

That we who have risen with you may set our minds on things that are above,
 not on things that are on earth;

hear us, good Lord.

That we may be holy and without blame before you in love;

hear us, good Lord.

That we may keep your commandments and remain in your love;

hear us, good Lord.

That you would remain with us through the power of the Comforter;

hear us, good Lord.

That we may have peace in you;

hear us, good Lord.

That you would pour out your Holy Spirit on your church:

hear us, good Lord.

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:

Give us your peace.

Risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ, we know that you are seated at the right hand of the Father in majesty. Send us your Holy Spirit, so that we may also be strengthened to know your constant presence with us according to your promise to remain with us until the end of the age. We ask this in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. 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 favour and give you peace. **Amen.**

LHS 113 Crown Him with Many Crowns v1,3,5

**1 Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own:
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless king
Through all eternity.**

**3 Crown Him the Lord of love;
Behold His hands and side,
Those wounds yet visible above
In beauty glorified:
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
For Thou hast died for me;
Thy praise shall never, never fail
Throughout eternity.**

**5 Crown Him the Lord of heaven,
Enthroned in worlds above;
Crown Him the king to whom is given
The wondrous name of Love:
Crown Him with many crowns
As thrones before Him fall;
Crown Him, ye kings, with many crowns,
For He is king of all.**

Sts. 1,3: Matthew Bridges (1800-1894)
Sts. 5: Godfrey Thring (1823-1903)