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**ASCENSION SUNDAY**

THE GATHERING

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 acclamation*

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.**

[1]

*First Hymn*

Jesus Christ is ris'n today, Alleluia!  
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!  
who did once upon the cross Alleluia!  
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!

Hymns of praise then let us sing Alleluia!  
unto Christ our heav'nly King, Alleluia!  
who endured the cross and grave, Alleluia!  
sinners to redeem and save. Alleluia!

But the pains which he endured, Alleluia!  
our salvation hath procured; Alleluia!  
now above the sky he's King, Alleluia!  
where the angels ever sing. Alleluia!

[1]

*Prayer of preparation*

**Almighty God,**

**to whom all hearts are open,**

**all desires known,**

**and from whom no secrets are hidden:**

**cleanse the thoughts of our hearts**

**by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,**

**that we may perfectly love you,**

**and worthily magnify your holy name;**

**through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Prayers of Penitence*

Hear the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ:

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness but shall have eternal life.”

Let us therefore bring our sins into his light and confess them in penitence and faith.

**Lord God,**

**we have sinned against you;**

**we have done evil in your sight.**

**We are sorry and repent.**

**Have mercy on us according to your love.**

**Wash away our wrongdoing**

**and cleanse us from our sin.**

**Renew a right spirit within us**

**and restore to us the joy of your salvation;**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

May the God of love and power

Forgive you and free you from your sins,

Heal and strengthen you by his Spirit,

And raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen.

[2]

*Gloria in Excelsis*

***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 of the Day*

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.**

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**THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

*The First Reading*

**The Ascension of Jesus**

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.”

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

*Acts 1:6-14 New International Version (NIV)*

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.** Alleluia.

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*Second Hymn*

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*Gospel Reading*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

according to John

Alleluia. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**Jesus Prays to Be Glorified**

17 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

6 “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. 9 I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory

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has come to me through them. 11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

*John 17:1-11 New International Version (NIV)*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.** Alleluia.

*The Sermon*

On the day of ascension Jesus went up. He went up to heaven and sits on the throne of glory. John 17:5 makes it clear that he shared the Fathers glory from before the world was made, ascension is when he returned to that place of glory.

When he came to earth as a baby in Bethlehem the angels declared that he was king, throughout his ministry on earth he remained king, and he was still king when he was lifted up on the cross.

Jesus’s sovereignty over all of creation is never in question. The question that we all need to ask ourselves is, whether we accept Jesus as our king? Do we acknowledge his sovereignty in our own lives?

This means accepting his plan for us and acknowledging that we don’t always get things right. The good news is that as our ascended king, fully God and fully human, he understands our struggles and is always ready to forgive us and help us.

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*The Creed*

Let us declare our faith together in our Lord Jesus Christ.

**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.**

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**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.**

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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 forever. **Amen.**

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**The Liturgy of the Sacrament**

*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.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

*Third Hymn*

**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 chosen King**

**through all eternity.**

**Crown him the Son of God,**

**before the worlds began,**

**and ye who tread where he hath trod,**

**crown him the Son of Man;**

**who every grief hath known**

**that wrings the human breast,**

**and takes and bears them for His own,**

**that all in him may rest.**

**Crown him the Lord of life,**

**who triumphed over the grave,**

**and rose victorious in the strife**

**for those he came to save.**

**His glories now we sing,**

**who died, and rose on high,**

**who died eternal life to bring,**

**and lives that death may die.**

**Crown him the Lord of Heaven,**

**enthroned in worlds above,**

**crown him the King to whom is given**

**the wondrous name of Love.**

**all hail, Redeemer, hail!**

**For thou has died for me;**

**thy praise and glory shall not fail**

**throughout eternity**

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*The Eucharistic Prayer*

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right,

it is our duty and our joy,

at all times and in all places

to give you thanks and praise,

holy Father, heavenly King,

almighty and eternal God,

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

And now we give you thanks

because, after his most glorious resurrection,

he appeared to his disciples,

and in their sight ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us; that where he is, there we might also ascend,

and reign with him in glory.

Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, forever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes**

**in the name of the Lord**

Hosanna, in the highest.

[11]

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood;

who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and gave you thanks; he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks; he gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Therefore, heavenly Father,

we remember his offering of himself

made once for all upon the cross;

we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;

we look for the coming of your kingdom,

and with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

[Great is the mystery of faith:]

**Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

[11]

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of your divine majesty, renew us by your Spirit, inspire us with your love and unite us in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

**Blessing and honour and glory and power**

**be yours for ever and ever. Amen**

*The Lord’s Prayer*

Rejoicing in God’s new creation, as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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**

[13]

*Breaking of the Bread*

We break this bread

to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,**

**because we all share in one bread.**

*Giving of Communion*

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ

which he gave for you,

and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink

in remembrance that he died for you,

and feed on him in your hearts

by faith with thanksgiving.

*Whether you are able to receive the bread and wine from the priest or not, you are invited to say this prayer;*

Jesus, Lord and Saviour,

I thank you for the gift of faith

that you have placed within my heart.

By your Holy Spirit,

grant that my faith and spirit will be fed by your grace,

that I may be able to follow in your ways,

now and always. **Amen.**

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*Post Communion Collect*

Eternal God,

Giver of love and power,

Your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into the world

To preach the Gospel of his kingdom:

Confirm us in this mission,

And help us to live the good news we proclaim;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Prayer after Communion*

**Almighty God,**

**we thank you for feeding us**

**with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.**

**Through him we offer you our souls and bodies**

**to be a living sacrifice.**

**Send us out in the power of your Spirit**

**to live and work**

**to your praise and glory.**

**Amen.**

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*Final Hymn*

Sing of the Lord’s goodness, Father of all wisdom,

come to him and bless his name.

mercy he has shown us, his love is for ever,

faithful to the end of days.

*Come then all you nations, sing of your Lord’s goodness,*

*melodies of praise and thanks to God.*

*Ring out the Lord’s glory, praise him with your music,*

*worship him and bless his name.*

Power he has wielded, honour is his garment,

risen from the snares of death.

His word he has spoken, one bread he has broken,

new life he now gives to all.

*Come then all you nations........*

Courage in our darkness, comfort in our sorrow,

Spirit of our God most high;

solace for the weary, pardon for the sinner,

splendour of the living God.

*Come then all you nations.......*

Praise him with your singing,

praise him with the trumpet,

praise God with the lute and harp;

praise him with the cymbals,

praise him with your dancing,

praise God till the end of days.

*Come then all you nations.......*

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*THE SENDING OUT*

*The Blessing*

God the Father,

who has given to his Son the name above every name,

strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord.

**Amen.**

God the Son,

who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,

plead for you at the right hand of the Father.

**Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit,

who pours out his abundant gifts upon the Church,

make you faithful servants of Christ our King.

**Amen.**

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.**

Waiting expectantly for the promised Holy Spirit,

go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

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