

A Service of Spiritual Communion for Ascension Day

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here.

His Spirit is with us.

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.

**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.

Seeing we have a great high priest who has passed into the heavens,
Jesus the Son of God,
let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,
and make our confession to our heavenly Father.

**Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
In your mercy
forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.**

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon *you*,
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,
and keep *you* in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us pray that our risen and ascended Lord will lead us to eternal life.

Silence is kept.

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.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1.4-11)

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 baptised with water, but you will be baptised 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 towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards 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

Alleluia, alleluia.

Go and make disciples of all nations, says the Lord.

Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 24.40-end

And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

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

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The 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,
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.**

**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.

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 for ever.
Amen.

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
and also with you.

*We turn to the order of service for Spiritual Communion joining at the point
of the Lord's Prayer*

OUR Father,
which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that 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.

Act of Spiritual Reception

In union, dear Father, with Christian people throughout the world and across the centuries gathered to make Eucharist, hearing your holy Word and receiving the Precious Body and Blood, we offer you praise and thanksgiving.

Even though we are exiled from tasting the Bread of Heaven and drinking the Cup of Life we pray that you will unite us with all the baptised and with your Son who gave his life for us.

Come Lord Jesus, dwell in us and send your Holy Spirit that we may be filled with your presence.

**O LORD and heavenly Father,
we your humble servants entirely desire your fatherly goodness
mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving;
most humbly beseeching you to grant,
that by the merits and death of your Son Jesus Christ,
and through faith in his blood,
we and all your whole Church may obtain remission of our sins,
and all other benefits of his passion.
Amen.**

Silence is kept

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1.12,13a,14)

Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away.

When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying.

They were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

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.

THE peace of God, which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord:
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.