

A Service of Morning Prayer for Sunday May 24, 2020

THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION

Adapted from *Common Worship*, Church of England



GATHERING MUSIC: Olivier Messiaen, L'Ascension

WELCOME

GATHERING

Bishop: O Lord, open our lips

All: and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Bishop: Send your Holy Spirit upon us,

All: and clothe us with power from on high. Alleluia.

Opening Hymn: The Head that Once was Crowned (#491 CP)

1. The head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty Victor's brow.
2. The highest place that heav'n affords
is his, is his by right,
the King of kings and Lord of lords,
and heav'n's eternal Light:
3. The joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below,
to whom he manifests his love,
and grants his name to know.
4. To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is giv'n;
their name an everlasting name,
their joy the joy of heav'n.
5. They suffer with the Lord below,
they reign with him above;
their profit and their joy to know
the myst'ry of his love.
6. The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him;
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

OPENING COLLECT

Bishop: 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.

All: Amen.

Bishop: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Keep a time of silence

Bishop: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and for ever.

All: Amen.

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LITURGY OF THE WORD

PSALM 47

- 1 Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with loud songs of joy.
- 2 For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome,
a great king over all the earth.
- 3 He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet.
- 4 He chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.
- 5 God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
- 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
- 7 For God is the king of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm.
- 8 God is king over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.
- 9 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.**

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

A short silence meditating on the psalm is kept.

A READING: Acts 1:1-11

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 over the course of 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.'

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The reading from Acts continues...

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.'

One: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

A short silence meditating on the reading is kept.

THE GOSPEL: Luke 24:44-53

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

One: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Saint Luke.

All: **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

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

One: The Gospel of Christ

All: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

THE HOMILY: Bishop Susan Bell

'Fairest Lord Jesus' (619 CP) is played during a time of reflection

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INTERCESSIONS

One: Let us pray....

Holy God, in whom we live and move and have our being,
we make our prayer to you, saying, Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: Lord Jesus Christ, you have ascended to the highest heavens, and there you reign over heaven and earth; we pray for those entrusted with power and responsibility among the nations of the world: that they may have wisdom; that justice may be their guide; and service the mark of their leadership.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: Christ our teacher, we pray for all teachers, for educational assistants and all those seeking to guide, teach and support, children and young people through the remainder of this school year and prepare for the next. Grant them inspiration, the gift of communication, and patience in difficult times.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: Christ our friend, we pray with thanks for the gift of friendship, for those who speak to us words of encouragement and affirmation, for those who can challenge us in love, and accept us as we are and who accompany us through our ups and downs. We thank you for the ways they mirror your love, and ask that we may do likewise.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: Christ the healer, stretch out your hand to touch those in need of your healing this day. We lift them before you silently, or aloud in this moment...

Silence is kept.

To them grant the comfort and strength of your Spirit.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

One: Christ, who worked alongside Joseph the carpenter, and the fishermen who followed, we thank you for all those who work for the ongoing functioning and wellbeing of our communities. for all frontline and essential workers. We ask for your protection upon them, for rest that will sustain them, and for safe conditions, and fair pay for all people.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

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One: Christ who gave food to the hungry, we pray for those who hunger at this time, and for those who seek to meet that need.

We pray for our local food banks, and community gardens, for meal deliveries and breakfast programs and all those who enable them.

We pray that in the economic difficulties so many face, we may all open our hearts and hands in generosity and love for our neighbour, that there might be enough for all.

Lord in your mercy,

All: hear our prayer.

Bishop: Trusting in the compassion of God, and in the language of our choice, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**All: 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.**

**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.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen**

Concluding Hymn: O Lord Most High, Eternal King (#245 CP)

1. O Lord Most High, eternal King,
by thee redeemed thy praise we sing.
The bonds of death are burst by thee,
and grace has won the victory.
2. Ascending to the sapphire throne
thou claim'st the kingdom at thine own;
and angels wonder when they see
how changed is our humanity.
3. Be thou our joy, O mighty Lord,
as thou wilt be our great reward;
let all our glory be in thee
both now and through eternity.
4. O risen Christ, ascended Lord,
all praise to thee let earth accord,
who art, while endless ages run,
with Father and with Spirit, One.

Closing remarks and announcements.

THE BLESSING

Postlude: Today Christ Triumphs! (*Johann Sebastian Bach*)