



Thursday 26th May 2022
Ascension Day

We welcome you to St Matthew's Church
this evening and pray you are blessed as we
worship our ascended Lord together.

Don't forget to silence your mobile!

Our Celebrant is Revd Simon Foster.

Our Preacher is Revd Linda Fox.

¶ The Gathering

God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
Psalm 47.5

♪ Hymn ♪

Hail the day that sees Him rise, *Alleluia!*
to His throne above the skies; *Alleluia!*
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given,
Alleluia!
enters now the highest heaven! *Alleluia!*

There for Him high triumph waits;
lift your heads, eternal gates.
He hath conquered death and sin;
take the King of Glory in!

Lo! the heaven its Lord receives,
yet He loves the earth He leaves;
though returning to His throne,
still He calls mankind His own.

See! He lifts His hands above;
See! He shows the prints of love:
hark! His gracious lips bestow
blessings on His Church below.

Still for us He intercedes,
His prevailing death He pleads;
near Himself prepares our place,
He the first-fruits of our race.

Lord, though parted from our sight,
far above the starry height,
grant our hearts may thither rise,
seeking Thee above the skies.

There we shall with Thee remain,
partners of Thy eternal reign,
there Thy face forever see,
find our heaven of heavens in Thee.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Thomas Cotterill (1779-1823) and others

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

Please be seated

Introduction

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 Ascension Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1.1-11)

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ²until 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 over the course of

forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.⁴ 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 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.'

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

The Confession and Absolution

Invitation to confession

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.

Hebrews 4.14; 10.22

**O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory:
holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.
In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips
to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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.

Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory be to God in heaven,
peace to those who love him well;
on the earth let all his people
speak his grace, his wonders tell:
Lord, we praise you for your glory,
mighty Father, heaven's king;
hear our joyful adoration
and accept the thanks we bring.**

**Only Son of God the Father,
Lamb who takes our sin away,
now with God in triumph seated -
for your mercy, Lord, we pray:
Jesus Christ, most high and holy,
Saviour, you are God alone
in the glory of the Father
with the Spirit: Three-in-One!**

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The Collect

A period of silent prayer

Risen Christ,
you have raised our human nature to the
throne of heaven:
help us to seek and serve you,
that we may join you at
the Father's side, where you reign with
the Spirit in glory, now and for ever.
Amen.

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Let us prepare ourselves for the Word
of God as it comes to us in the reading
of Holy Scripture.

Our hearts and minds are open.

Epistle

Ephesians 1.15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord
Jesus and your love towards 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 47

¹Clap your hands together, all you
peoples;

O sing to God with shouts of joy.

²For the Lord Most High is to be
feared;

he is the great King over all the earth.

³He subdued the peoples under us
and the nations under our feet.

⁴He has chosen our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob, whom he loves.

⁵God has gone up with a merry noise,
the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.

⁶O sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

⁷For God is the King of all the earth;
sing praises with all your skill.

⁸God reigns over the nations;
God has taken his seat upon his holy
throne.

⁹The nobles of the peoples are gathered
together
with the people of the God of Abraham.

¹⁰For the powers of the earth belong to
God
and he is very highly exalted.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

♪ Hymn ♪

The head that once was crowned with
thorns

is crowned with glory now:
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty Victor's brow.

The highest place that heaven affords
is His, is His by right,
the King of kings, and Lord of lords,
and heaven's eternal Light;

The joy all of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below,
to whom He manifests His love
and grants His Name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is given;
their name, an everlasting name,
their joy, the joy of heaven.

They suffer with their Lord below,
they reign with Him above,
their profit and their joy to know
the mystery of His love.

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.

Thomas Kelly (1769-1855)

The Gospel

Alleluia.

Alleluia.

God has highly exalted Jesus Christ.

Alleluia.

At the name of Jesus every knee
shall bow.

Alleluia.

Let every tongue confess that Jesus
Christ is Lord.

Alleluia.

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

Luke 24.44-53

Jesus said to the disciples, '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.' 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 worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated

The Sermon

Let us stand to affirm our faith in Jesus
Christ the Son of God.

The Creed

**Though he was divine,
he did not cling to equality with
God, but made himself nothing.**

**Taking the form of a slave,
he was born in human likeness.
He humbled himself
and was obedient to death,
even the death of the cross.
Therefore God has raised him on
high, and given him the name
above every name:
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
and every voice proclaim that Jesus
Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
Amen.**

cf Philippians 2.6-11

Please be seated

Prayers of Intercession

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
you have exalted your Son Christ Jesus
to your right hand,
and made him the head over all things
for his body the Church:
hear us as we pray for the Church
throughout the world...

Make us and all your people receptive to
the gifts he pours upon us,
that we may use them to your glory,
and the building up of the body
of Christ.

Lord, in your mercy:
hear our prayer.

Lord God Almighty, the Ancient of Days,
you have given your Son all authority in
heaven and on earth:
hear us as we pray for the world he
came to redeem...

Grant that we may know even in this
time the things that make for peace,
and may strive for the reconciliation of
all people in his kingdom of justice
and love.

Lord, in your mercy:
hear our prayer.

Father of all, whose Son has promised to
be with us always, to the end of the age:
hear us as we pray for those among
whom we live and work...

Grant that we may be so aware of his
presence with us,
that people may take note of us, that we
have been with Jesus.
Lord, in your mercy:
hear our prayer.

O God our Redeemer, whose Son ever
lives to make intercession for us:
hear us as we pray for those in any kind
of need...

May he who has borne our infirmities
strengthen and heal them,
that they may find grace to help in time
of need, and rejoice in his salvation.
Lord, in your mercy:
hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, whose Son has borne
our humanity into the heavenly realms,
and gone before us to prepare a place
for us:

hear us as we remember before you
those whose earthly sojourn is over,
and whose life is now hidden in him
with you...

Make us joyful and expectant, that at his
coming with all his own we too may go
forth to meet him, and share in his
eternal joy.

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Please stand

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.

Let us offer one another a sign of
Christ's peace

♪ Hymn ♪

Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
His the sceptre, His the throne;
alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone:
hark! the songs of peaceful Sion
thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation
hath redeemed us by His blood.

Alleluia! not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
alleluia! He is near us,
faith believes, nor questions how:
though the cloud from sight received
Him,
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget His promise,
'I am with you evermore'?

Alleluia! bread of angels,
Thou on earth our food, our stay;
alleluia! here the sinful
flee to Thee from day to day:
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
earth's Redeemer, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia! King eternal,
Thee the Lord of lords we own;
alleluia! born of Mary,
earth Thy footstool, heaven Thy throne:
Thou within the veil hast entered,
robed in flesh our great High Priest;
Thou on earth both Priest and Victim
in the eucharistic feast.

William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

Blessed be God,
by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice
of praise.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Eucharistic Prayer (E)

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 and good,
our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere
to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ the King of glory.
Born of a woman,
he came to the rescue of our
human race.
Dying for us,
he trampled death and conquered sin.
By the glory of his resurrection
he opened the way to life eternal
and by his ascension,
gave us the sure hope
that where he is we may also be.
Therefore the universe resounds
with Easter joy and with choirs of angels
we sing for ever to your praise:

**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.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of
your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had
supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them
and said:

Take, eat; this is my body which is
given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took
the cup of wine.

Again he praised you, gave it to them
and said:

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.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus
did, in him we plead with confidence his
sacrifice made once for all
upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and
cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:
**Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life:
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all
the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with St Matthew and all the
saints to feast at your table
in heaven.

**Through Christ, and with Christ,
and in Christ, in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, all honour and glory
are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Looking for the coming of his kingdom,
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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 for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

Lord, we died with you on the cross.
Now we are raised to new life.

We were buried in your tomb.
Now we share in your resurrection.

Live in us, that we may live in you.

Agnus Dei

**Jesus, Lamb of God,
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins,
have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

I heard the voice of a great multitude
crying, Alleluia. The Lord our God has
entered into his kingdom.

**Blessed are those who are called to
the supper of the Lamb.**

Alleluia.

♪ Hymn ♪

My God, and is Thy table spread,
and doth Thy cup with love o'erflow?
Thither be all Thy children led,
and let them all Thy sweetness know.

Hail, sacred feast, which Jesus makes,
rich banquet of His flesh and blood!
Thrice happy he who here partakes
that sacred stream, that heavenly food!

Why are its bounties all in vain
before unwilling hearts displayed?
Was not for them the Victim slain?
Are they forbid the children's bread?

O let Thy table honoured be,
and furnished well with joyful guests;
and may each soul salvation see,
that here its sacred pledges tastes.

Philip Doddridge (1702-1751)

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

God our Father,
you have raised our humanity in Christ
and have fed us with the
bread of heaven:

mercifully grant that, nourished with
such spiritual blessings,
we may set our hearts in the
heavenly places;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

**We thank you, Lord,
that you have fed us in this
sacrament, united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of the
heavenly banquet**

prepared for all peoples.

**Send us out in the power of your
Spirit to live and work
to your praise and glory.**

Amen.

♪ Hymn ♪

Christ triumphant, ever reigning,
Saviour, Master, King!
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining,
hear us as we sing:

*Yours the glory and the crown,
the high renown, the eternal name.*

Word incarnate, truth revealing,
Son of Man on earth!

Power and majesty concealing
by Your humble birth:

Suffering servant, scorned, ill-treated,
victim crucified!

Death is through the cross defeated,
sinners justified:

Priestly King, enthroned for ever
high in heaven above!
Sin and death and hell shall never
stifle hymns of love:

So, our hearts and voices raising
through the ages long,
ceaselessly upon You gazing,
this shall be our song:

*Michael Saward (1932-2015) © Michael Saward/
Jubilate Hymns*

Reading

*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.

*No responses are used at the end of the
reading.*

Silence is kept.

Responsory

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.**

Silence is kept.

Blessing

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 upon you and remain with you and all
those whom you love and all those for
whom you pray this Ascension Day
and for evermore.

Amen.

Waiting expectantly for the promised
Holy Spirit, go in the peace of Christ.
Alleluia, Alleluia.

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Please take this service sheet with you.

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