



Italy, 15th Century

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD (OBSERVED)

Dove of Peace Lutheran Church

May 9, 2021

The Ascension of Our Lord (observed)

Sunday, May 16, 2021

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Pastor Stephen Springer

In today's readings the risen Christ ascends into heaven and his followers are assured that the Spirit will empower them to be witnesses throughout the earth. The disciples are told to not gaze up into heaven to look for Jesus (Acts 1:11); we find his presence among us as we proclaim the word and share the Easter feast. We too long for the Spirit to enliven our faith and invigorate our mission.

PROLOGUE

Kevin Seal, pipe organ

Improvisation

The pipe organ has a long relationship with improvisation. In fact, at many times throughout music history, most organ music used in church services was improvised, and many beloved organ compositions are based on or inspired by improvisations. Organ playing is one of the few classical music disciplines that has retained its emphasis on improvisation as an essential skill. This Ascension Sunday, our organist presents a free improvisation inspired by the mystery of the Ascension story.



1 O Christ, our hope, our hearts' de - sire, cre - a - tion's
 2 How vast your mer - cy to ac - cept the bur - den
 3 But now the bonds of death are burst, the ran - som
 4 Oh, let your might - y love pre - vail to purge us
 5 All praise to you, as - cend - ed Lord; all glo - ry



might-y Lord, re - deem - er of the fall - en world, by
 of our sin, and bow your head in cru - el death to
 has been paid; you reign a - bove at God's right hand, in
 of our pride, that we may stand be - fore your throne by
 ev - er be to Fa - ther, Son, and Spir - it blest through



ho - ly love out - poured, by ho - ly love out - poured:
 make us clean with - in, to make us clean with - in.
 robes of light ar - rayed, in robes of light ar - rayed.
 mer - cy pu - ri - fied, by mer - cy pu - ri - fied.
 all e - ter - ni - ty, through all e - ter - ni - ty!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 8th cent.; tr. John Chandler, 1806–1876, adapt.
 Music: LOBT GOTT, IHR CHRISTEN, Nikolaus Herman, 1480–1561

GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised, he abides with us on earth to the end of time, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Acts 1:1-11

Before he is lifted into heaven, Jesus promises that the missionary work of the disciples will spread out from Jerusalem to all the world, and that the disciples will be accompanied and empowered by the Holy Spirit. His words provide an outline of the book of Acts.

A reading from Acts.

[Luke writes:] ¹In 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 during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While 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; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

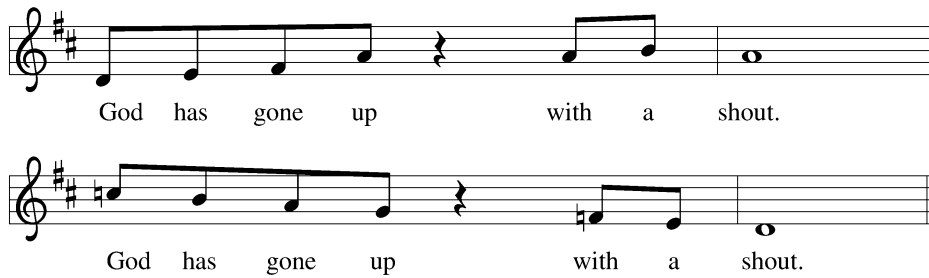
⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They 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."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY (ELW): Psalm 47

The refrain is first introduced by the leader, then repeated by the assembly.



Psalm 47:5

Psalm refrain reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year B* © 2008 Augsburg Fortress.
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- ¹ Clap your hands, | all you peoples;
shout to God with a | joyful sound.
- ² **For the LORD Most High is | to be feared:**
a great king over | all the earth,
- ³ who subdues the | peoples under us,
and the nations un- | der our feet;
- ⁴ **who chooses our inheri- | tance for us,**
the pride of Jacob, | whom God loves. REFRAIN
- ⁵ God has gone up | with a shout,
the LORD with the sound | of the ram's horn.
- ⁶ **Sing praises to | God, sing praises;**
sing praises to our | king, sing praises. REFRAIN
- ⁷ For God is king of | all the earth;
sing praises | with a song.
- ⁸ **God reigns o- | ver the nations;**
God is en- | throned on high.
- ⁹ The nobles of the peoples have gathered as the people of the | God of Abraham.
The rulers of the earth belong to God, who is high- | ly exalted. **REFRAIN**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:15-23

The risen and exalted Christ reigns over the entire universe. The author of Ephesians prays that we are given the wisdom to know the power of the risen Christ and the empowering hope that the knowledge of this inheritance provides.

A reading from Ephesians.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW #169

The assembly sings the acclamation before and after the verse of the day.



Cantor: Go and make disciples of all nations, | says the Lord;*
I am with you always, to the end | of the age. (Matt. 28:19, 20)

GOSPEL: Luke 24:44-53

On the day of his ascension, Jesus leaves his disciples with a commission, a blessing, and a promise of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Gospel According to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁴⁴[Jesus said to the eleven and those with 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.”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 worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Stephen Springer



1 You ser - vants of God, your Mas - ter pro - claim, and pub - lish a -
2 As - cend - ed on high, al - might - y to save, yet still he is
3 Sal - va - tion to God who sits on the throne! Let all cry a -
4 Then let us a - dore and give him his right, all glo - ry and



broad his won - der - ful name; the name, all - vic - to - rious, of
nigh, his pres - ence we have. The great con - gre - ga - tion his
loud and hon - or the Son. The prais - es of Je - sus the
pow'r and wis - dom and might, all hon - or and bless - ing, with



Je - sus ex - tol; his king - dom is glo - rious and rules o - ver all!
tri - umph shall sing, as - crib - ing sal - va - tion to Je - sus, our king!
an - gels pro - claim, fall down on their fac - es, and wor - ship the Lamb.
an - gels a - bove, and thanks nev - er ceas - ing, and in - fin - ite love!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: LYONS, attr. Johann Michael Haydn, 1737–1806

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray - for the Church, the world, and those in need.

We pray for the Church

O Gd, high and holy -

you have made Xp to be the name about all names, above all rule, power and authority,
the head over all things for the church. We pray then as the church, to be bold and able
witnesses - to tell, to live well and to embody the spirit of hope that is our calling .

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Gd, high and holy -

we remember this congregation in our prayers. Let us not cease to give thanks for the blessed cared-for life we have with one another. May we, each and all, continue to find the peace and love, the encouragement and the direction that are the riches of this holy inheritance.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world.

O Gd –

we believe your creating Word both dwells among us and is ascended to a sovereignty over all things, enthroned on high and holding sway as a living lordship. To you then we pray, O high and holy Gd, pour down this reigning, this ruling grace and truth, this new spirit onto our world for relief from suffering and for healing. Let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Gd –

let the promised spirit, who makes hearts ready with repentance and forgiveness, guide us all, our governments, our enterprises, our populations, guide humanity away from wandering into selfishness and its fears so persons may work together for the benefit and livelihood of all people.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those in need.

O Gd, high and holy -

we name in prayer persons in need, believing they are already in your sight and tender care. Let our prayers then remind us of what we can do to be of help to those in need, people lacking food, shelter, security, people struggling, torn and burdened. Let your spirit work its goodness in us all.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Finally O Gd,

enlighten the eyes of our hearts and enliven our spirits, that with deep and vibrant faith we find ourselves joined with all the saints, both here and in heavenly places, joined to give the joyful sounds of hands and voice raising praise and singing hymns of glory to you our high and holy Gd.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

MEDITATION

Members of the Dove of Peace Chancel Choir

Up Through Endless Ranks of Angels
Henry Gerike (b.1948); arr. David Cherwien (b.1957)

This rousing Ascension hymn from Lutheran Book of Worship with lyrics by the great Lutheran hymnist Jaroslav Vajda was not included in our newer Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Cherwien's arrangement as a choir anthem accentuates the majesty of the hymn and our pipe organ.

Up through endless ranks of angels, cries of triumph in his ears,
to his heav'nly throne ascending, having vanquished all their fears,
Christ looks down upon his faithful, leaving them in happy tears.

Death destroying, life restoring, proven equal to our need,
now for us before the Father as our brother intercede;
flesh that for our world was wounded, living, for the wounded plead!

To our lives of wanton wand'ring send your promised Spirit guide;
through our lives of fear and failure with your pow'r and love abide;
welcome us, as you were welcomed, to an endless Eastertide.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Oh, to breathe the Spirit's grace!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Oh, to see the Father's face!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Oh, to feel the Son's embrace! Amen.
Jaroslav Vajda (1919-2008)

COMMISSION

Concluding announcements and ministry opportunities.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.



1 A hymn of glo - ry let us sing! New hymns through-out the world shall
2 The ho - ly ap - os - tol - ic band up - on the Mount of Ol - ives
3 To whom the shin - ing an - gels cry, "Why stand and gaze up - on the
4 "You see him now, as-cend-ing high up to the por-tals of the
5 O ris - en Christ, as-cend-ed Lord, all praise to you let earth ac -



ring: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Christ, by a road be - fore un -
stand, Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! and with his faith-ful fol-l'wers
sky?" Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! "This is the Sav-ior!" thus they
sky." Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! "Here - af - ter Je - sus you shall
cord: Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! You are, while end-less ag - es



trod, as - cends un - to the throne of God.
see their Lord as-cend in maj - es - ty.
say, "this is his glo-rious tri-umph day!" Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le -
see re - turn-ing in great maj - es - ty."
run, with Fa - ther and with Spir - it one.



lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia!

Text: Bede, 673–735; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*

Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Köln, 1623

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Hymne d'action de grâce Te Deum
Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

The Te Deum is an ancient hymn of praise which is strongly associated with the Easter Season. It is thought by many to have been written by St. Ambrose in the 4th century, although the claim is disputed among scholars. Jean Langlais was a French organist and composer. His meditation on the chant tune is predictably French, beginning with the melody accompanied by crashing chords on full organ. The second part begins with an imitative passage based on the melody, before building once again to grand gestures and big chords, evoking the grandeur of a French cathedral.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

John Hoelter, Assisting Minister
Dianne Huston, Lector
Eric Holtan, Cantor
Kevin Seal, Organist