

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Acts 1:1-11

Jesus' ascension, promise and commission

Luke in the Gospel locates the ascension on Easter Day. In his second volume (scroll) which we call the Acts of the Apostles, he places it forty days later. This provides a help for how he expects his readers to interpret the literal-historical nature of this event. He uses the term ἀτενίζοντες (Acts 1:10) "looking intently", exactly paralleling the vision of Stephen (Acts 7:55) as he looked intently up to heaven and "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." This parallel again underscores how the original author understood the perception he was describing.

Or

God is king of all the earth

Many anomalies exist in the post-resurrection activities of the apostles as reported in the New Testament. Here they were specifically instructed to stay in Jerusalem. During this time, they witnessed many appearances of Jesus. Naturally, they began to question what purpose Jesus had in mind, and even more naturally, they got it wrong.

The Psalm - Psalm 47 or 93

Ephesians 1:15-23

Christ is the supreme Lord over all things

The human body is a primary metaphorical source in the scriptures. As in so many cultures today, the left hand was used for sanitation. The right hand was used for ordination, taking vows, and represented strength. We still use the concept of "right hand man".

Or

Thanksgiving and prayer

Using the traditional Hebrew *berakah* or prayer of blessing as his model, the apostle presented his majestic vision of humanity in God's universal plan of salvation. Through the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ all things in heaven and earth have been brought under the reign of God's sovereign love.

or Acts 1: 1-11

Luke 24:44-53

Jesus commissions and blesses the disciples

The law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms indicate the three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures TNK. Luke in the Gospel locates the ascension on Easter Day. In his second volume (scroll) which we call the Acts of the Apostles, he places it forty days later. This provides a help for how he expects his readers to interpret the literal-historical nature of this event.

Or

Christ has fulfilled the Scriptures.

In an unusual alternative to the passage from Acts 1, Luke presented another version of the ascension of Jesus. First he instructed the apostles so that they would understand the Old Testament scriptures fulfilled by his teaching and ministry. Then he gave them their mission as witnesses and told them they would be empowered to carry it out. Finally, he led them out to Bethany on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olive and from there was carried to heaven, leaving them to return to Jerusalem to worship in the temple.

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=%0AActs%201:%201-11%0A%2BOR%0ADaniel%207:%209-14%0Acw%20Psalm%2047%0A%2BOR%0A%20Psalm%2093%0AEphesians%201:%2015-23%0A%2BOR%0AActs%201:%201-11%0ALuke%2024:%2044-53

Gospel Acclamation

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

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

O Lord,
from whom all good things do come;
Grant to us thy humble servants,
that by thy holy inspiration
we may think those things that be good,
and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same;
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God,
that like as we do believe thy only-begotten Son
our Lord Jesus Christ
to have ascended into the heavens;
So we may also in heart and mind thither ascend,
and with him continually dwell,
who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end.

Collect Two

God our redeemer,
you have delivered us from the power of darkness
and brought us into the kingdom of your Son:
Grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life,
so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

POST COMMUNION

God our Father,
whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life:
May we also thirst for you,
the spring of life and source of goodness,
through him who is alive and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

God our Father,
you have raised our humanity in Christ
and feed us with the bread of heaven.
Mercifully grant that, nourished with such spiritual blessings,
we may set our hearts in the heavenly places;
where he now lives and reigns for ever.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1

Our Lord and brother, Jesus Christ, has been raised to the right hand of God. Let us pray to him that he would intercede for us and for all the world before our Father in heaven.

The response to
Ascended Lord, is
hear our prayer.

Suggested intercessions

- * for those who exercise authority in both church and state
- * for those caught in sin, and for the freedom which forgiveness brings
- * for the release of captives
- * for lands ruled by oppressive regimes
- * for justice for the poor and a curbing of those who flaunt the law of God
- * for those who bear intolerable burdens of illness, grief, or anxiety
- * for all who eagerly await the return of Christ and the coming of God's kingdom

Concluding prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, you ascended into heaven, to your Father and our Father, to your God and our God. Always remember us, and never cease to represent our cause before the throne of God, with whom you live and reign, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2

Presider or deacon

Let us offer prayers to God through Jesus Christ, who was taken up to heaven and intercedes for us at the right hand of God.

Deacon or other leader

For peace from on high and for our salvation.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For this holy gathering and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and fear of God.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For the newly baptized illumined by the light of Christ.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For *N* our bishop and the presbyters, the deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God. **Glory and praise to you, O living God.**

For the world and its leaders, our nation and its people.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For all those in need, the suffering and the oppressed, travelers and prisoners, the dying and the dead.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

For ourselves, our families, and those we love.

Glory and praise to you, O living God.

With all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

To you, O Lord.

Presider

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, who exalted Christ into glory and granted all who have been baptized to share in his royal priesthood. Hear our prayers for all your creation and welcome us to the table of your eternal banquet; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 3

Intercessory

We offer our prayers on behalf
of our neighbours whose needs are known to us.
We pray both for the sisters and brother we know
and for those who are strangers.

Prayers of the People, concluding with:

Open our minds to understand the scriptures, O God,
so that when sin cripples our hope,
we may discover the freedom of your forgiveness;
when suffering and death overtake our lives,
we may know the joy of the risen Christ;
and when we feel abandoned,

we may comprehend the power of the promised Spirit,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 4

This truth was made known among the first disciples: that Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. Let us rejoice that it has also been made known among us. We pray, saying, "Hear us, Lord," and respond, "Hear us, Alleluia!"

That all members of the Church might be faithful in their promise to forgive sins.
Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

That those who are not baptized might receive the gift of faith. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

That new fathers and mothers might be supported in this time of wonder and uncertainty. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

That the newly baptized, their sponsors, each new catechumen and all who have been joined to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ might work towards a world of justice and peace. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

For our refusal to be stirred by the cries of the hungry we ask forgiveness and pray for hearts quick to respond. Hear us, Lord.

Hear us, Alleluia!

God of All Truth, help us to embrace death and resurrection, even as we make our prayers to you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION INVITATION

Jesus says: 'When I am lifted up from the earth,
I will draw everyone to me.'

(Thanks be to God.)

Come, everything is ready.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Eternal Father,
your Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven,
to rule over all things as Lord.
As we have eaten of the one bread,
and drunk from the one cup,
keep your church in the unity
that the Spirit gives,
and bring all creation
to worship at the feet of Christ.
For he lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever.
Amen.

SEASONAL BLESSING

This seasonal blessing may be used together with (ie before) the usual blessing in the order of service.

(May) Christ our exalted king
pour on you his abundant gifts
and bring you to reign with him in glory; . . .

PRAYERS

Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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.

Let us pray
[that the risen Christ will lead us to eternal life]
God our Father,
make us joyful
in the ascension of your Son Jesus Christ.
May we follow him into the new creation,
for his ascension is our glory and our hope.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.
New Saint Joseph Sunday Missal

Let us pray
[on this day of Ascension
as we watch and wait for Jesus' return]
Father in heaven,
our minds were prepared
for the coming of your kingdom
when you took Christ beyond our sight
so that we might seek him in glory.
May we follow where he has led
and find our hope in his glory,
for he is Lord forever. Amen
New Saint Joseph Sunday Missal

O King of Glory,
Lord of Hosts,
Who didst this day ascend in triumph

above all the heavens!
Leave us not orphans,
but send upon us the Spirit of Truth,
promised by the Father. Alleluia!

The Liturgical Year: Book 9

O Almighty God,
whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ
ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things:
Mercifully give us faith to perceive that,
according to his promise,
he abides with his Church on earth,
even to the end of the ages;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Book of Divine Worship

O Lord,
Your Ascension into heaven
marks the culmination of the Paschal Mystery,
and it contains an important teaching for us.
May we live life as an earthly reality
and develop our human potential to the fullest.
May we make use of the results of science
to achieve a better life on this planet.
But in our best moments
we know that there must be more
than all of this,
a transcending Reality.
As Christians, we know that this Reality
is Your loving Father
Who awaits us with You and the Holy Spirit.
Where You have gone,
we ultimately will come - if we are faithful.

New Saint Joseph People's Prayer Book

O Almighty God, who by thy holy apostle
hast taught us to set our affection on things above:
grant us so to labour in this life
as ever to be mindful
of our citizenship in heavenly places
where our Saviour Christ is gone before;
to whom with thee O Father, and thee O Holy Ghost,
be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

South African Book of Common Prayer

O God, whose blessed Son,
our great high priest,
has entered once for all into the Holy Place
and ever liveth to intercede on our behalf:
grant that we,

sanctified by the offering of his body
may draw near with full assurance of faith
by the way which he has dedicated for us
and evermore serve thee, the living God;
through the same thy Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
O Father, and the Holy Spirit,
one God, world without end. Amen.
Church of South India

Risen and ascended Christ,
you surround us with witnesses
and send us the Counselor
who opens our minds to understand your teaching.
Bless us with such grace
that our lives may become a blessing for the world
now, and in the age to come. Amen.

Precious love,
your ascended Son promised the gift of holy power.
Send your Spirit of revelation and wisdom,
that in the blessed freedom of hope,
we may witness to the grace of forgiveness
and sing songs of joy with the peoples of earth
to the One who makes us one body. Amen.

Living God, your Son Jesus Christ
at his ascension gave gifts to his church.
Lead us, as members of his body on earth,
to use the gifts we have received
to do your will. Amen.

THE LITANY OF THE ASCENSION

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, hear us.
O Christ, graciously hear us.

Jesus, King of glory, your disciples saw you ascend into heaven:
Have mercy on us.
You are seated in glory at the right hand of the Father:
Have mercy on us.
All power in heaven and earth has been given to you, and you rule forever:
Have mercy on us.
You are adored by all God's angels:
Have mercy on us.

Ascension Day Year A - May 25 , 2017

You have opened the kingdom of God to all who believe:

Have mercy on us.

You are able to save completely those who come to God through you:

Have mercy on us.

You promise to give whatever we ask in your name:

Have mercy on us.

You are present through your body and blood in the sacrament of the altar:

Have mercy on us.

You have gone to prepare a place for us:

Have mercy on us.

You will come again in glory to judge the living and dead:

Have mercy on us.

You will take us to yourself, so that where you are, there we may be also:

Have mercy on us.

By your glorious resurrection and ascension,

save us, good Lord.

By your all-powerful intercession,

save us, good Lord.

By your triumphant majesty and power,

save us, good Lord.

That we who have risen with you may set our minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth;

hear us, good Lord.

That we may be holy and without blame before you in love;

hear us, good Lord.

That we may keep your commandments and remain in your love;

hear us, good Lord.

That you would remain with us through the power of the Comforter;

hear us, good Lord.

That we may have peace in you;

hear us, good Lord.

That you would pour out your Holy Spirit on your church:

hear us, good Lord.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:

Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:

Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:

Give us your peace.

Risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ, we know that you are seated at the right hand of the Father in majesty. Send us your Holy Spirit, so that we may also be strengthened to know your constant presence with us according to your promise to remain with us until the end of the age. We ask this in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

Moving toward Christian Unity, the Rev. Ben E. Helmer, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2015/04/18/ascension-day-abc-2015/>

Why do you stand looking into heaven? the Rev. Kirk Alan Kubicek, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/05/07/ascension-day-a-2014/>

Opening our minds to the Ascension, the Katerina K. Whitley, Sermons that Work, Episcopal Digital Network

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2013/04/19/ascension-day-c-2013/>

You Can't Keep a Good Man Down, the Rev. Dr. James B. Lemler, Day 1

http://day1.org/1092-you_cant_keep_a_good_man_down

Walking Downhill, Acts - Alan Sherouse, Day 1

http://day1.org/7239-walking_downhill

Sermon Central - Sermon by Owen Bourgaize. He is a Baptist who states that ignoring the festival, the opportunity is lost of reflecting on the message of the Ascension. Five pages of a thorough examination of the biblical importance of the narrative. He concludes: "Let's rejoice in the witness of the Ascension:

Historically - it assures us of the completed work of Christ.

Spiritually - it teaches us of our Lord's triumphant entry into heaven and his continuing ministry on our behalf.

Practically - it reminds us of the Second Coming of Jesus to judge the world and the need to be ready at all times to give account of our stewardship."

<http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/the-ascension-of-our-lord-jesus-christ-owen-bourgaize-sermon-on-ascension-30689.asp?page=1>

Christian Century - This blog by Kenneth H Carter contrasts "Why are you looking up?" - the vision which we need of heaven, with the "downward vision" of what we need to do here on earth. Put your hand to the plough, be faithful and the Lord will return. Immerse yourself in the daily life of this world. He concludes, "...the downward vision remains: the work of the church goes on, as the needs of the world persist and the poor are always with us. Like all Christian ideas, the ascension must relate to what life is like on the ground. As one of my favorite seminary professors would say, "Tell me who takes out the garbage, and I will tell you about your theology." We live in the interim, gripped by both an upward and a downward vision."

<http://christiancentury.org/blogs/archive/2009-05/why-are-you-looking>

CHILDREN

Footprints

Have you ever had a row for leaving dirty footprints?

Or have you ever tried to cover up your footprints – so that no-one knows what you were doing. Footprints can get us into trouble... and they can also be very helpful... you can follow footsteps... Just outside Jerusalem you can visit the place where it is said that Jesus left his last footprint here on earth. Some say you can see the shape of Jesus' foot

Ascension Day Year A - May 25 , 2017

in the rock. The "Chapel of Ascension" has been a special and holy place for nearly 2,000 years, and there have been various buildings at the site – originally a small chapel with no roof built in the 4th Century (Note: Originally Byzantine – then 12th Century octagonal Crusader reconstruction with additional fortification, then – and to present day – Moslem mosque – Muslims also observe the ascension of Jesus) It is interesting to know about the places where Jesus was... places where people can say – "Jesus was here". Place of the ascension reminds us that Jesus was taken up into heaven to be with God – but he can still leave his footprints – marks that say – "Jesus is here" – now it's our footprints... all the things we do leave a mark – sometimes a bad one... hopefully good ones... and other people will say "Jesus is here". *By Rev Donald McCorkindale, Church of Scotland, et al.*

More information about the Chapel of Ascension

<http://www.sacred-destinations.com/israel/jerusalem-chapel-of-ascension.htm>

Sermons4kids

Centres on balloons, and helium filled ones at that. May need further thought before delivering - but a useful starting point.

http://www.sermons4kids.com/up_up_and_away.htm

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

1st Reading Acts 1: 1–11

250* All hail the power of Jesu's name

398* Alleluia! sing to Jesus

261 Christ, above all glory seated!

260* Christ is alive! Let Christians sing

259* Christ triumphant, ever reigning

263* Crown him with many crowns (vv. 1, 4–6)

695* God of mercy, God of grace

266* Hail the day that sees him rise

267* Hail the risen Lord, ascending

268* Hail, thou once–despisèd Jesus

300 Holy Spirit, truth divine

94* In the name of Jesus

275 Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious

431* Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour

104* O for a thousand tongues to sing

307* Our great Redeemer, as he breathed

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281* Rejoice, the Lord is King!
284* The golden gates are lifted up
285* The head that once was crowned with thorns
8* The Lord is King! Lift up your voice
291 Where high the heavenly temple stands

Alternative Daniel 7: 9–14

1st Reading 125* Hail to the Lord's anointed
468 How shall I sing that majesty
6* Immortal, invisible, God only wise
130* Jesus came, the heavens adoring
132* [Lo! he comes with clouds descending]
276* Majesty! worship his majesty
34* O worship the King all-glorious above
678* Ten thousand times ten thousand
73* The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended

Psalm Psalm 47

275 Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious
323* The God of Abraham praise

Alternative Psalm Psalm 93 [Pr29B*]

553* Jesu, lover of my soul
276* Majesty! worship his majesty
281* Rejoice, the Lord is King!
8* The Lord is King! Lift up your voice
492* Ye servants of God, your master proclaim

2nd Reading Ephesians 1: 15–23 [Pr29A/ASC]

250* All hail the power of Jesus' name

643* Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart

326* Blessèd city, heavenly Salem

* (Christ is made the sure foundation) (omit v. 1)

296* Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire

693* Glory in the highest to the God of heaven

324* God whose almighty word

266* Hail the day that sees him rise

267* Hail the risen Lord, ascending

300 Holy Spirit, truth divine

94* In the name of Jesus

99* Jesus, the name high over all

588* Light of the minds that know him

275* Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious

281* Rejoice, the Lord is King!

491* We have a gospel to proclaim

476* Ye watchers and ye holy ones

The Gospel Luke 24: 44–53

398* Alleluia! sing to Jesus

261 Christ, above all glory seated

266* Hail the day that sees him rise

267* Hail the risen Lord, ascending

634* Love divine, all loves excelling

285* The head that once was crowned with thorns

Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to churchnewsireland@gmail.com with the message Passwords in the title