



THE EMPTY TOMB FILLS OUR LIVES:
YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

The Festival of the Ascension

The Festival of the Ascension

Welcome

Hymn

472 A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing sts. 1–4

Stand

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

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights above.

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

Psalm 148:1-2

How majestic is the Lord's name in all the earth!

He has set his glory above the heavens.

Psalm 8:1

For the Lord is the Most High over all the earth.

He is exalted far above all gods.

Psalm 97:9

God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.

God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.

Psalm 47:5,8

The Lord reigns, let the nations tremble.

He sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake.

Psalm 99:1

The throne of our God will last forever and ever.

A scepter of justice will be the scepter of his kingdom.

Psalm 45:6

Praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted.

His splendor is above the earth and the heavens.

Psalm 148:13

Response

472 A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing sts. 5-6

5 Be now our joy on earth, O Lord, and be our
6 O ris - en Christ, as - cend - ed Lord, all praise to
fu - ture great re - ward. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
you let earth ac - cord. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Then, throned with you for - ev - er, we shall praise your
You are, while end - less a - ges run, with Fa - ther
name e - ter - nal - ly. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
and with Spir - it one. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: tr. composite; The Venerable Bede, 673-735, abr. Tune: Geistliche Kirchengesäng, Köln, 1623. Text and tune: Public domain

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, King of glory, on this day you ascended far above the heavens, and at God's right hand you rule the nations. Leave us not alone, we pray, but grant us the Spirit of truth that, at your command and by your power, we may be your witnesses in all the world; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Acts 1:1–11

Jesus promises his disciples that they will not be alone; the Holy Spirit will live within them.

¹I wrote my first book, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began doing and teaching ²until the day he was taken up, after he had given instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³After he had suffered, he presented himself alive to the apostles with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and told them things about the kingdom of God.

⁴Once, when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for what the Father promised, which you 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 were together with him, they asked, “Lord, is this the time when you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons 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.”

⁹After he said these things, he was taken up while they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰They were looking intently into the sky as he went away. Suddenly, two men in white clothes stood beside them. ¹¹They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking up into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day

47D All Peoples, Clap Your Hands

Sung to the tune of “Crown Him with Many Crowns.”

- 1 All peoples, clap your hands, and shout with joy and sing.
The LORD Most High is to be feared; he is the earth’s great King.
He brings the nations down, subdues them in our sight;
he chooses our inheritance; his love is Jacob’s might.**
- 2 God has gone up on high, with shout and trumpet voice;
sing praise to God, our glorious King, sing praise to him, rejoice!
For God is King of all. Sing praise with all your skill;
he sits upon his holy throne and rules the nations still.**
- 3 Nobles from all the earth are joined with Abram’s seed;
the rulers of the world are God’s; he’s lifted high indeed!
So to the Father raise, with his ascended Son,
and Holy Spirit endless praise, eternal Three in One.**

Second Reading

Ephesians 4:7–16

The Church is never alone; we are brought into the body of believers with Christ as our head.

⁷ But to each one of us grace was given, according to the measure of the gift from Christ. ⁸ That is why it says, “When he ascended on high, he took captivity captive and gave gifts to his people.” ⁹ Now what does it mean when it says “he ascended,” other than that he also had descended to the lower parts, namely, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.

¹¹ He himself gave the apostles, as well as the prophets, as well as the evangelists, as well as the pastors and teachers, ¹² for the purpose of training the saints for the work of serving, in order to build up the body of Christ. ¹³ This is to continue until we all reach unity in the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, resulting in a mature man with a stature reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ The goal is that we would no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, when people use tricks and invent clever ways to lead us astray. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we would in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head.

¹⁶ From him the whole body, being joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows in accordance with Christ’s activity when he measured out each individual part. He causes the growth of the body so that it builds itself up in love. (EHV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 28:20

Alleluia! Surely I am with you always,
to the very end of the age. Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 24:44–53

Christ gives the Church his blessing as he departs from our sight.

⁴⁴ He said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

⁴⁶ He said to them, “This is what is written and so it must be: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ Look, I am sending you what my Father promised. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰ He led them out as far as the vicinity of Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ And while he was blessing them, he parted from them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² So they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ They were continually in the temple courts, praising and blessing God. Amen. (EHV)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day

474 Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise

Sermon

We Can Be Glad Jesus Left!

Stand

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Confident of our Lord's return, let us approach our Father's throne of mercy on behalf of the Church and of all people.

Gracious Lord God, amid shouts of joy we celebrate your Son's ascension into heaven where he is now seated in majesty at your right hand. Grant your Church steadfastness in these gray and latter days that she may hold to the truth and boldly confess the saving name of Jesus.

As the devil, the world, and our sinful nature seek to silence our witness, grant us courage to believe and confess that Jesus is Lord.

Even as your beloved Son intercedes on behalf of his Church, so has he commanded us to pray for others.

Hear us, Lord, as we implore you to show mercy to those in need:

to the sick, the lonely, and the depressed grant relief;
to the dying and those who mourn bring comfort;
to the hungry, the homeless, and the unemployed send your help;
to the elderly, give joy for living life to the full;
to the young, send patience to wait for the fuller life to come;
to husbands and wives and their families and to single parents who raise their children alone grant wisdom and strength.

Bestow your blessings to all who depend on your power and grace.

Almighty Father, you are the good Giver of all that we have. In your mercy continue to grant us daily bread, supplying us with what we need before we even ask.

Teach us to be thankful and content, whether we have plenty or are in need.

Come with your guidance, O Lord, and pour out your blessings on all who have gathered here to proclaim your love in speech, song, and symbol. May our worship enrich us so that our work for others adorns your love among them.

Lead us to praise you as we joyfully wait for your return.

O Lord, heavenly Father, we remember the sufferings and death of your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Praising his victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from his ascension before you, where he always intercedes for us as our own high priest. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in his kingdom which has no end.

Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

To you alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Offering

Unless otherwise specified, your offering today will go to WELS Home Missions.

Hymn

475 We Thank You, Jesus, Dearest Friend
Please join to sing verses 4 and 5.

Stand

Luther's Evening Prayer

If comfortable doing so, you may make the sign of the cross on yourself as a remembrance of your baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the \mathcal{T} Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen.



Be seated

Song of Blessing

Go Now in Peace

Hymn

606 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus v. 3

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"?