

Ascension Day Service

We gather today as Christ's own people – a redeemed people, a united people, and a commissioned people; for we are redeemed by Christ's sacrifice, we are united by his love, and we are commissioned by his word.

Today we remember how Jesus left this earth and returned to the Father, ascending into heaven. Trusting in his reign, let us hear the story of his parting.

Call to Worship

Adapted from Psalm 47

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.

The Lord Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.

God has gone up with a shout, with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God.

Sing praises!

Sing praises to our King.

Sing praises!

For God is sovereign over all the earth, enthroned above the nations.

Praise God who is highly exalted!

Hymn

Prayer of Approach

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Lord, teach us, that we may think your thoughts, Lord, lead us, that we may walk your ways, Lord, fill us, that we may share your Being, Lord, inspire us, that we may advocate your cause, Lord, use us, that we may do your work. This we pray in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray;

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name,

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,

Give us today our daily bread,

And forgive us our sins,

As we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for the Kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever, amen.

Intercessions

Bible Reading: Luke 24. 44 – 53

He said to them, **'This is what I told 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.'**

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them,

'This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.

While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up to heaven.

Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

Hymn

Bible Reading: Acts 1: 4-11

While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. He said:

'This is what you have heard from me; for John baptised with water, but you will be baptised 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.'

Address

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,
From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
Who lives in our hearts through faith,
And fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
Who strengthens us with power from on high.**

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

Communion

The Lord is with us

His Spirit is here

We bless you, High King of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread and wine to offer, which earth has given and hands have made, they will be for us our spiritual food and drink.

Blessed be God forever.

As we bring this bread to you, Lord of the elements, we offer up to you our hearts, our energies our labour, our leisure, our relationships. Our minds, our thoughts, time and talents, all that we create all that we possess, our souls, our coming and our going, our strength, our days and nights, our hopes and fears, the day of our birth and the moment of our death, Oh bread and breath of life.

We pour out this wine and offer to you the woes of life poured out. Disappointment, disease, hurt or pain. As grapes crushed to make this wine so we offer to you all who are crushed by hunger, homelessness, violence or abuse. You who put beam in sun and moon take all this and transform it into the deep rich wine of everlasting life.

Lift up your heart

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us thank the Lord for all that he has done.

Thanks be to God.

High King of the Universe, you brought forth the earth: Breathe wisdom into all your creatures till we reflect your three-fold friendship. In our pain and sorrow, we cry out to you Lamb of God. Perfect Sacrifice for our sins. By the power of your spirit may these gifts of bread and wine be for us Christ's body and blood, who on the night that He was betrayed took bread. Gave you thanks, broke it and gave it to His disciples saying, 'Take eat, this is my body which is broken for you. After supper he took the cup, gave you thanks and said to them 'drink, 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. '

Alas, we have seen the Son of the living God stretched out on a cross. The human frame plunged into blood, a crown of thorns placed about His head. Blood flowing freely from His side.

This cross is like the parting of the day from the night, yet through it, all may now proclaim:

Christ has died

Christ has risen

Christ will come again.

Risen Christ we welcome you.

Father send forth your Holy Spirit among your children.

Feed us with the bread of heaven,

May we be filled with your holiness.

(All who love the Lord are welcome at his table. Come forward to receive the bread, or to receive a blessing)

Heaven is intertwined with earth. We have taken divine life into ours.

I rise up today clothed in the strength of Christ. I go free to weave Christ's patterns.

I shall not fear.

I go loved to serve Christ's weak ones.

I shall not be overwhelmed.

I go armed to rout out Christ's foes.

I shall not be alone.

Hymn

The saving streams from the pierced side of Christ cleanse us.

The Sacred Three, shield us, protecting us from all that destroys; and lead us always along Christ's path.

May the peace of Christ go with us wherever he may send us.

May he guide us through the wilderness and protect us from the storm.

May he bring us home rejoicing at the wonders he has shown us.

May he bring us home rejoicing once again unto his doors.

In the name of the Father

And of the Son

And of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sources: lifeinliturgy@gmail.com Church of Australia & Living Water From An Ancient Well, Celtic Communion Service & Times and Seasons, Services and Prayers for the Church of England.

Intercessory Prayers

High and holy God, robed in majesty, Lord of heaven and earth, we pray that you will bring justice, faith and salvation to all peoples. [*Especially we pray ...*]

You chose us in Christ to be your people and to be the temple of your Holy Spirit; we pray that you will fill your Church with vision and hope. [*Especially we pray*

Your Spirit among us affirms that we are fellow-heirs with Christ and pleads for us in our weakness; we pray for all who are in need or distress.

In the resurrection of Jesus, you have opened heaven to us and enabled us to share in your glory: the joy of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit from before the world was made. May your whole Church, living and departed, come to a joyful resurrection in your city of light.

Let us commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray, to the mercy and protection of God.