

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



ASCENSION OF OUR LORD
MAY 12, 2024
10:30 A.M.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

Introduction

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 our faith and find his presence among us as we proclaim the word and share the Easter feast. We too long for the Spirit to enliven invigorate our mission.

A Hard Blessing

She chopped deeper into her friend's thicket of grief and fear with these words: "This is a hard blessing for you, a privilege you never imagined or wished for; losing everything you've gained is an un hoped-for freedom few people receive." The winnowing encouragement pressed beyond the shocking rupture in his settled life. Bereft, one word commanded every spark in his mind, every contraction of his heart: gone.

What is there left to believe in when loss hollows your soul? How can courage be found? How can one imagine, let alone trust, that there will again be joy when the tomorrow you hoped for disappears like a wilderness trail after sunset?

Whatever can be made of the ascension account told in Luke and retold in Acts, there is no missing the severity of loss experienced by the disciples. It was a breath-hardening stupor that descended, making senseless Jesus' community of ragtag vagabonds. At the same time, the disciples were challenged to carry on anew after their Lord's strange departure. Even as there was grief and fear for the disciples, there was also "great joy" (Luke 24:52). Despite loss, still there was "power from on high" (Luke 24:49) and the Holy Spirit to accompany them (Acts 1:8). But, we can imagine, these gifts of joy and power were not gained without struggle and uncertainty: a hard blessing.

The last marvelous word of wonder in this Jesus story does not settle on his departure but on his arrival; not from whom he has gone but to whom he comes; not on the emptiness of loss but in the wholeness found in being claimed by God's love. The enduring wonder of Jesus' divine contradictions is not discovered in a supernatural flash—"Why do you stand looking up toward heaven?" (Acts 1:11)—but rather in the daily witness of God's grace and hope, which abound "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Our God Saves

In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son,
In the name of the Spirit, Lord, we come.
We're gathered together to lift up your name,
To call on our Savior, to fall on your grace.
Hear the joyful sound of our offering,
As your saints bow down, as your people sing;
We will rise with you, lifted on your wings,
And the world will see that:

Our God saves, our God saves.
There is hope in your name
Mourning turns to songs of praise:
Our God saves, our God saves!
(Verse 4)

Kneel at the feet of our friends,
silently washing their feet:
this is the way we will live with you.

(Refrain)
Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbors we have from you.

OPENING LITANY (inspired by John 15:1-8)

God is the True Vine,

And we are the branches.

Connected to God.

Connected to bear fruit!

Connected to God.

Or we wither away.

Connected to God.

Or useless!

We come to worship God, who is the True Vine.

God, teach us how to remain connected so that we might bear good fruit!

GATHERING SONGS

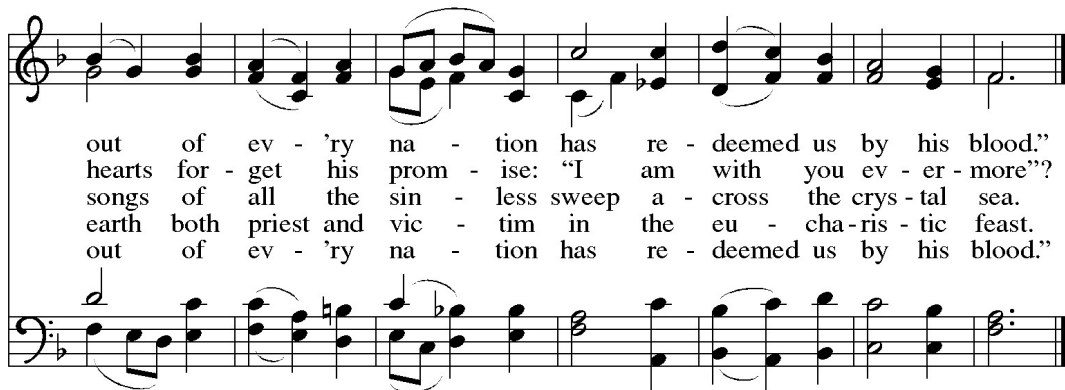
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus (ELW 392, verses 1, 2 & 4)

1 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus; his the scep - ter,
 2 Al - le - lu - ia! Not as or - phans are we left in
 3 Al - le - lu - ia! Bread of heav - en, here on earth our
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! King e - ter - nal, Lord om - nip - o -
 5 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus; his the scep - ter,

his the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! his the tri - umph, his the
 sor - row now; Al - le - lu - ia! he is near us; faith be -
 food, our stay; Al - le - lu - ia! here the sin - ful flee to
 tent we own; Al - le - lu - ia! born of Mar - y, earth your
 his the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! his the tri - umph, his the

vic - to - ry a - lone. Hark! The songs of peace - ful
 lieves, nor ques - tions how. Though the cloud from sight re -
 you from day to day. In - ter - ces - sor, friend of
 foot - stool, heav'n your throne. As with - in the veil you
 vic - to - ry a - lone. Hark! The songs of peace - ful

Zi - on thun - der like a might - y flood: "Je - sus
 ceived him when the for - ty days were o'er, shall our
 sin - ners, earth's re - deem - er, hear our plea where the
 en - tered, robed in flesh, our great high priest, here on
 Zi - on thun - der like a might - y flood: "Je - sus



out of ev - 'ry na - tion has re - deemed us by his blood."
 hearts for - get his prom - ise: "I am with you ev - er - more"?
 songs of all the sin - less sweep a - cross the crys - tal sea.
 earth both priest and vic - tim in the eu - cha - ris - tic feast.
 out of ev - 'ry na - tion has re - deemed us by his blood."

That's Why We Praise Him

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

He came to live, live a perfect life;
 He came to be the Living Word, our Light.
 He came to die so we'd be reconciled;
 He came to rise to show his power and might.

(Refrain - All)

That's why we praise him, that's why we sing;
That's why we offer him our everything.
That's why we bow down and worship this King,
'Cause he gave his everything, 'cause he gave his everything.

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

He came to live, live again in us;
 He came to be our conquering King and Friend.
 He came to heal and show the lost ones his love;
 He came to go prepare a place for us.

(Refrain - All)

That's why we praise him, that's why we sing;
That's why we offer him our everything.
That's why we bow down and worship this King,
'Cause he gave his everything, 'cause he gave his everything.

(Music Ministers/All)

Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah.
Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah.
Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah.
Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah.

(Refrain - All)

**That's why we praise him, that's why we sing;
That's why we offer him our everything.
That's why we bow down and worship this King,
'Cause he gave his everything,
'Cause he gave his everything,
'Cause he gave his everything.**

~~~~~  
*Jesus, Name above All Names*



1. Je sus, name a - bove all names, beau - ti - ful Sav - ior,  
2. Je sus, lov - ing Shep - herd, Vine of the branch - es,  
3. Praise him, Lord a - bove all lords, King a - bove all kings,



glo - ri - ous Lord. Em - man - u - el, God is with us,  
Son of God. Prince of Peace, Won - der - ful Coun - se - lor,  
God's on - ly Son. The Prince of Peace, who by his Spir - it



bles - ed Re - deem - er, Liv - ing Word. \_\_\_\_\_  
Lord of the u - ni - verse, Light of the world. \_\_\_\_\_  
comes to live in us, Mas - ter and Friend. \_\_\_\_\_

## **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the wellspring of grace, our Easter and our joy. **Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

Immersed in the promises of baptism, let us give thanks for what God has done for us.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your voice thundered over the deep and water became the essence of life. Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers. The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day. Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea into freedom's land. In a desert pool the Ethiopian official entered your boundless baptismal life.

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love, freeing us to live as Easter people. We rejoice with glad hearts, giving all honor and praise to you, through the risen Christ, our source of living water, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Look, here is water!

**Here is our water of life! Alleluia!**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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. Amen.**

## **THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

# WORD

*Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,  
Jesus interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.*

## 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 the book of Acts.

[Luke writes:] In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After 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. 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 toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They 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."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

**Psalm 47**

*God has gone up with a shout. (Ps. 47:5)*

Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
shout to God with a joyful sound.

**For the LORD Most High is to be feared:**

**a great king over all the earth,**

who subdues the peoples under us,  
and the nations under our feet;

**who chooses our inheritance for us,  
the pride of Jacob, whom God loves.**

God has gone up with a shout,  
the LORD with the sound of the ram's horn.



**Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
sing praises to our king, sing praises.**

For God is king of all the earth;  
sing praises with a song.

**God reigns over the nations;  
God is enthroned on high.**

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 highly exalted.

## **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 the book of Ephesians.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I 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, so 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, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God 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, far 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. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**\*\* 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.**

[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.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And 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.” Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ..**

**YOUTH MESSAGE**

**MESSAGE**

*Pr. Jamie Vannoy*

**\*\* NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;**

he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

### GATHERING OF GIFTS

#### OFFERTORY

*“Allelu-Alleluia” by Aaron David Miller*  
*Angie Seltzer, soprano*  
*Lisa Donovan, mezzo-soprano*

#### OFFERING PRAYER

Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine. **Amen.**

# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another .

## **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.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The risen Christ is made known to us in the breaking of the bread. Come and eat at God's table.

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

## **REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION**

**\*\* TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace.  
**Amen.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**\*\* BLESSING**

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The God of resurrection power, the Christ of unending joy, and the Spirit of Easter hope bless you now and always. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG**

*Crown Him (Majesty)*

(Verse 1)

Crown him with many crowns,  
The Lamb upon his throne.  
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns  
All music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing  
Of him who died for me,  
And hail him as thy matchless King  
Through all eternity!

(Refrain)

Majesty, Lord of all,  
Let every throne before him fall,  
The King of kings,  
Oh, come adore  
Our God who reigns forevermore.

(Verse 2)

Crown him the Lord of life  
Who triumphed o'er the grave  
And rose victorious in the strife

For those he came to save.  
His glories now we sing,  
Who died and rose on high,  
Who died eternal life to bring  
And lives that death may die.

(Refrain)

Majesty, Lord of all,  
Let every throne before him fall,  
The King of kings,  
Oh, come adore  
Our God who reigns forevermore, forevermore.

(Bridge - Music Ministers / **All**)

All hail Redeemer, hail,  
For he has died for me.  
His praise and glory shall not fail  
Throughout eternity.  
**All hail Redeemer, hail,  
For he has died for me.  
His praise and glory shall not fail  
Throughout eternity.**

(Refrain)

Majesty, Lord of all,  
Let every throne before him fall,  
The King of kings,  
Oh, come adore  
Our God who reigns forevermore.  
Praise God, who reigns forevermore.  
You're the God who reigns forevermore.

**\*\* DISMISSAL**

Hallelujah! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad

**Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.**

**Hallelujah, thanks be to God**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below;

praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**POSTLUDE**

**“W + 2” = Worship Plus Two**

**Make a commitment to not only worship each week  
but also try to find a way to serve in the congregation  
and seek out a way to serve our community.**

**YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD**

## Upcoming Commemorations

### **Matthias, Apostle**

**Tuesday, May 14, 2024**

Matthias was the apostle added to the Twelve after Jesus' resurrection, as a replacement for the dead Judas Iscariot. He had traveled among the followers of Jesus throughout the Lord's ministry. Formerly commemorated on February 24, Matthias's celebration is moved to May 14 in agreement with most Western calendars.

### **Erik, King of Sweden, martyr, died 1160**

**Saturday, May 18, 2024**

Erik is considered the patron saint of Sweden. As king of that nation, he tried to bring peace in the region, and to spread Christianity in Scandinavia. He was also known for his attempts to make fair laws and to protect those who were poor or sick.

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