



## **Worship resources Ascension Day**

The Ascension is one of those significant days in the Liturgical Calendar that is also really difficult. There is so much meaning, so many ways of approaching the readings, and yet so many questions that can potentially bog the day down in controversy, theological debate or heavy academic discourse. Yet it remains a day of celebration and an invitation to deeper encounter with God.

Whether we choose to remember the Ascension on the Day (2 June) or wait (une), may our worship invite us into the mystery and the majesty of the embodied and glorified God.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

**Acts 1:1-11**: Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to his disciples. Then he is taken up into heaven, with the assurance of the angels that he will return.

**Psalms 47**: A celebration of and call to praise the God who is high over all.  
OR **Psalms 93**: A psalm celebrating God's reign and majesty

**Ephesians 1:15-23**: Paul's prayer for the Ephesians that they may know the power of Christ who is over all and fills all.

**Luke 24:44-53**: Jesus reminds the disciples of how he has fulfilled the Scriptures, then he promises the Holy Spirit, blesses them and is taken up to heaven.

### **COLLECTS OF THE DAY**

#### **Collect One**

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**

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.

### **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.

### **POST COMMUNION**

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.

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;

## 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.**

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.**

## 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.

## Meditation

Jesus tells the disciples that they must not leave Jerusalem. They must wait for the transforming gift of the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit the church must stay at home and wait, because it is just not worthwhile bothering. With the Holy Spirit things will be remarkable, a total change.

Our Church today is called to proclaim the good news of forgiveness and reconciliation, and the hope of newness that is given voice in the resurrection itself. It is a grand vision of being God's people, God's agents of transformation in the world. The mission of the church here is nothing less than to go into the world as God's people, and proclaim a subversive, transforming message about a suffering God who calls anyone without discrimination to respond.

There is a clear realisation from the very beginning of Luke's Gospel, that we simply cannot do what God has called us to do on any level without God's help. That enabling power for which they are waiting is not something they can generate or make happen by their own efforts. It is a gift of God, in his own time and in his own way. Perhaps this Ascension Sunday, as we observe the return of Jesus to the Father we can remember Luke tells us that the church cannot be the church without the power of the Holy Spirit enabling Jesus' followers to carry out their task as witnesses. Luke is clear that the church is the church only when it has waited until it has been clothed with power from on high.

## LECTIONARY NOTES 1

### REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

If the Ascension has led us to faith in a disembodied, removed God who is watching us “from a distance”, we have missed its message. Whatever the disciples actually saw happen that day, the facts of the experience are far less important than the meaning. The Ascension certainly does not mean that heaven is “up”, hell is “down” and God is looking down on us from some far removed place. Rather, the Ascension offers us a number of crucial truths that, in this world of injustice and inequality, we desperately need to reclaim. First the fact that Jesus did not die, but was seen to “return” to the Godhead physically is a continuation of the story of incarnation. God does not despise the human body – rather God embraces it, inhabits it and glorifies it, making human flesh part of the Godhead! This means that the needs of the body – for food, clean water, sanitation, shelter, and loving, intimate touch – are all part of the Gospel and are included in God’s gift of salvation. Secondly, the

Ascension declares as clearly and loudly as can be that Jesus, and not Caesar (nor any other Empire, government, system or social hierarchy) is Lord over all. This means that our ultimate allegiance must be to Christ first, and that our lives are called to be a reflection of Christ's reign in the midst of the other forces and 'lords' that influence and control our world. Finally, the Ascension always comes with the promise of the Holy Spirit's power which tells us that God is not absent and removed from us, but continues to be completely immersed in the world and in the lives of human beings. The gift of the Spirit also assures us of God's resources and God's inspiration and God's guidance to strengthen and enable us as we seek to live as faithful followers of Christ. It may be tempting to make this celebration about Christian triumphalism, but that would be to deny the meaning of Christ's earthly life. Rather, the Ascension is the necessary next step in that life, ensuring that God remains involved with human beings, that God's presence continues to be available to us, and that we know that everything that makes us human – including our physicality – has been embraced and welcomed into God. It's less about "Christianity" defeating all, and more about Christ drawing all things into the life of God.

### **CONNECTING WITH LIFE:**

**GLOBAL APPLICATION:** In the face of global conflicts that are so often framed in religious terms – in particular the tendency to view all of the Muslim religion in the light of a few radical, militant fundamentalists – the Ascension has a lot to say. In the face of global inequality, and the "might is right" claim to authority and control that is often exercised by business, political and religious organisations, the Ascension has a lot to say. In the face of the devaluing of our embodied humanness through the trivialisation of sexuality, the control of health care and medicine for maximised profits, and the shaming of any body type but the lean, muscle bound, athletic image which is promoted by the diet and fitness industries, the Ascension has a lot to say. In the face of global inequality and the divisions we create between those who are "us" and those who are "them", those who have value (in our eyes) and those (usually in other countries) who don't, the Ascension has a lot to say. We cannot celebrate Christ's Ascension and view power in the militant terms of domination. We cannot celebrate the Ascension and believe that the Christ who is now "Lord of all" is only concerned for some and not for others, only includes and welcomes some (like "us") and not others (like "them"). We cannot celebrate the Ascension and abuse or idolise the body or its sexuality – our own or that of others. No, when we celebrate the Ascension, we affirm our belief that God is committed to humanity – including our physicality – to equality, to justice and to compassionate inclusion of all. And if we believe that Christ really is Lord of all, we cannot help but express this through living

our lives according to the gracious, embodied, just and compassionate values of Christ's reign.

**LOCAL APPLICATION:** In every organisation, every community, every family, every church, power has the potential to turn into a struggle. In every human collective there is the potential for abuse, exploitation and exclusion. But, the Ascension calls us to a different way of being. It begins with a personal recognition of the value that Jesus places on every human being – including ourselves. That Christ would take on our flesh, live our life, die our death, and then rise and take the place of authority over our human world, indicates the extent to which Christ is concerned to change the human system in which only some are valued, and others count for nothing. Then, celebrating the Ascension calls us to work, in our own small corner of the world, to embody the reign of Christ – the justice, equality, compassion and inclusion that Jesus demonstrated in his life, and that he expresses as Lord of all (not just Lord of some). This means that we must strive for collaborative leadership in which power is shared and all have the capacity and the facility to participate if they so choose. This means that we must strive to celebrate all people and their humanity, not just those who are “special” or “important” in some way. This means that we must learn to value every part of our humanness and teach others to do the same – honouring the beauty and dignity in every person, and seeking to preserve the sacredness in the most intimate of human connections – hospitality, identity, and sexuality. This means that, as church, the Ascension calls us to be a community of liberation not condemnation, of celebration not judgment, of this-worldly concern and compassion not other-worldly. In what ways can you express some of these realities in your Ascension Day worship?

## LECTIONARY NOTES 2

### **Acts 1:1-11:**

- Luke's account to Theophilus, Part II. The ascension is such an interesting part of what happens to Jesus, in that, for most, it is something we care about least. Where does it fit in our Christian faith? Is Jesus' ascension important?
- For me, the importance of the ascension is that we are now left without Jesus physically present - that means we have to do it now - we have to do the work that he has been teaching and teaching about. No excuses, no right-there Jesus to do it for us. Just the Holy Spirit to be our Advocate. Jesus' ascension means that Jesus really is asking **us** to get to work.

- Ah, those men in white robes again. They're almost like stage directions in a script - they let you know what's going on that is not, apparently, obvious in any other way. I think if I ran across them they would raise more questions for me than they would answer!
- Luke says that Jesus gives instructions, and shares "many convincing proofs", and is with them for 40 days speaking about the kingdom. It's little verses like these that drive me crazy. Where is all this stuff Jesus said and did? Why didn't Luke record it? Why do we only get to have such little snippets of somebody that we adore so much? Gr!!

***Psalm 47:***

- An audience-participation psalm: "Clap your hands!" Lots of musical settings for these words, and no wonder - they make you want to sing and clap!
- Of course, there in verse 3, is God with subdued people under 'our' feet. Gives the whole psalm the tone of a war-victory psalm of praise.
- "He chose our heritage for us." I like this verse. God chooses our heritage for us - God chooses our history, our people, our story. I'm all for free will, but I manage to balance that, tricky though it sometimes feels, with a clear sense that God has a hand in or at least an eye on all that goes on in my life. Even better to think of it woven into the tapestry of as weighty a word as "heritage."

***Ephesians 1:15-23:***

- I especially like the first part of this passage, verses 15-19. These verses sound like great words of blessing to speak on someone, a person of faith. To pray that God grants wisdom and revelation, enlightenment, riches of Christ's inheritance, knowledge of the immeasurable greatness of God's power. . .
- Aside from that, this passage seems very typical of a lot of the epistle writing. Here is set up the metaphor: Christ as the head of the church and of the body, the church as the body of Christ, and thus under Christ, who is over all things, filling all things.

***Luke 24:44-53:***

- Luke's part 1 account of the ascension. Compare and contrast to his testimony in Acts. I think here, the account is more backward reflective - calling up Moses, the fulfillments of the Old Testament prophecies, talking about what has happened up to this point, whereas Acts is setting the stage for what has yet to happen.
- "And they were continually in the temple blessing God." Indeed - I think we just can't imagine what these first weeks and months for the



disciples must have been life. The emotional roller-coaster they must have been on. But to finally just be driven to give thanks - their friend and teacher was still going to be in charge of their lives.

- Looking back on Luke, moving ahead into Acts. We must take what Jesus has lived, and then live it ourselves. I guess that would be my 'theme' for the day.

*By Beth Quick*

## SERMON OUTLINE

‘ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.’ Acts 1

We know that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his disciples. But these resurrection appearances did not go on indefinitely. Luke tells us that after forty days of teaching the disciples, Jesus was taken up (ascended) to heaven. The final meeting with the disciples took place on the Mount of Olives, outside Jerusalem. But what exactly happened ?

Wandering around a museum in Rome recently, one of the most interesting pieces I saw relates to the legend of Romulus and Remus, twin sons of Rhea Silvia and the god Mars. According to ancient legend, Rome was founded in 753 B.C. by these twins. They were, together with their mother, cast into the Tiber, but the god Tiberinus saved Rhea Silvia from drowning, and the brothers were miraculously rescued by a she-wolf sent by Mars. The wolf reared the twins together with her cubs underneath a fig tree, then after a few years they were found by the shepherd Faustulus, who took the brothers home and gave them to his wife Acca Larentia to raise. The Roman historian Dionysius wrote about Rhea Silvia (Ilia) being visited by a god, who tells her she will bear the twins Romulus and Remus. The god is then "hidden by a cloud and taken from the earth and borne upwards through the air".

In the Hellenistic world, such ascent of a king, prophet, hero or holy man to the heavens, the place of the gods was a well known motif. It signified divinity. Hence Heracles was deified through ascent into heaven and Ganymede became immortal when Zeus lifted him into heaven to serve as cupbearer to the gods. It was also the Greek Philosophy of Plato which taught that human souls were immortal and ascended to the heavens.

The point which I am making is that it was once very normal and understandable for people to think of a flat world with heaven above the clouds, to which people ascended. Hence over time we have thought of

Jesus as taken up to heaven through the clouds and that in this solid area above there was a physical throne upon which Jesus would sit. This was all thought before we had the opportunity to send spacecraft and satellites into space to reveal a huge universe bigger than any of us can fully appreciate. We now know that if Jesus embarked upon a physical journey through the clouds to place called heaven, then it would have been a very long journey indeed. Today some might prefer to think of the Ascension as a metaphor.

Nowadays we do not regard heaven as place beyond the sky, we think of heaven as somewhere where God is where we will be forever. Jesus need not have floated up like Mary Poppins but could have been taken from the disciples in a much more ordinary way. Jesus going on up the mountain into the cloud is perhaps the most natural way for him to leave the disciples. However, if Jesus wanted to reassure his disciples that he was returning to glory with God, then the Ascension would need to make it clear that he was 'going up.' In the Old Testament when God met with people, a cloud often represented his presence and glory. The cloud may or may not have been a supernatural, nevertheless it was most surely a cloud with deep symbolic significance.

For the disciples and for us the meaning is clear, Jesus has gone before us. He has left this world and is exalted to the place from which his reign will be acknowledged as he is Lord of all. This separation of Christ from his followers was the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to be given to the disciples to enable them to have God's presence with them intimately, wherever they might be. The disciples lost the physical presence of Jesus, but they gained the spiritual presence of Jesus in a very real way. This we celebrate next week at Pentecost. *Charles Royden*

## ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

**Episcopal Network** - Why do you stand looking into heaven?

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/?cat=8>

**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>

["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://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2013/04/19/ascension-day-c-2013/>

["Footprints on the Earth,"](#) the Rev. Barbara K. Lundblad, *Day 1*

[http://day1.org/937-footprints\\_on\\_the\\_earth](http://day1.org/937-footprints_on_the_earth)

["More Questions than Answers,"](#) Ascension - Luke Bouman, Göttinger Predigten im Internet: Every Sunday Sermons based on the RCL by a team of Lutheran theologians/ pastors.

<http://www.predigten.uni-goettingen.de/archiv-7/050505-6-e.html>

["A Mission Accomplished; A Mission to Accomplish,"](#) Walter W. Harms, Goettinger Predigten: Every Sunday Sermons based on the RCL by a team of Lutheran theologians/ pastors.

<http://www.predigten.uni-goettingen.de/archiv-6/040520-3-e.html>

["Somebody Prayed for Me,"](#) The Reverend Jonathan Holston (United Methodist), Day 1

[http://day1.org/462-somebody\\_prayed\\_for\\_me](http://day1.org/462-somebody_prayed_for_me)

"Power Source," the Rev. Dr. Catherine Taylor, Day 1  
[http://day1.org/513-power\\_source](http://day1.org/513-power_source)

## CHILDREN

### Children's address - 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 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>

- Worshiping with Children, Easter 7A, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown
- <http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2014/04/year-the-ascension-of-lord-thursday-may.html>
- 
- Children's Sermon, *Faith Formation Journeys*
- <http://faithformationjourneys.blogspot.co.uk/2012/05/childrens-sermon-ascension-of-our-lord.html>
- 
- "He Is With Us Always," Frances Woodruff, *On the Chancel Steps*
- <http://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2012/05/06/always/>
-

- [Proclaiming Faith](#), discussion, prayer, activities for primary grades, activities
- <http://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2012/05/06/always/>
- 
- ["Bumper Stickers."](#) Children's Time, in Sermons and Liturgies. Richard J. Fairchild. (Scroll down in liturgies to find Children's Time.)
- <http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/a-ea07sm.php>
- 
- [Story for Children's Worship and Family Activity](#), Ascension, at *word-sunday.com: A Catholic Resource for the Lectionary* by Larry Broding.
- <http://www.word-sunday.com/index.html>
- 
- [Lectionary Puzzles](#), Ascension. Word search puzzles in RTF or plain text, by Reg McMillan, St.Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Peterborough, Ontario.
- <http://www.efree.mb.ca/lectionarypuzzles/in-awss.htm#top>

## **HYMN SUGGESTIONS**

[Be Thou My Vision](#)

[The Head That Once Was Crowned](#)

[Hail To The Lord's Anointed](#)

[At The Name Of Jesus](#)

[God Of The Moon And Stars](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Above All](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[How Great Is Our God](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Everlasting God](#) (*Link to YouTube video*)

[Now And Forever](#)

[The Lord Reigns](#)

[We Bow Down Before You](#)

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