

M: In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

C: but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

M: The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

C: After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 1:1-3

M: Dear friends, let us approach our God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our ascended Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: By nature we are dead in our transgressions and sins, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts.

Eph 2:1 adapted

The acts of our sinful flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and disobedience; putting myself and things above God; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, and the like. Lord forgive me for my sins.

Gal 2:1-3 adapted

M: Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: God has ascended amid shouts of joy!

C: Let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

Psalms 47:5-6

Glory Be To God *Gloria in Excelsis* (sung)

Luke 2:14



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, Who has our
2 We praise, we wor - ship you, we trust; We give you
3 O Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son Of God, your
4 O Ho - ly Spir - it, pre - cious Gift, Our Com - fort -



race be - friend - ed! To us no harm shall
thanks for - ev - er, O Fa - ther, that your
heav'n - ly Fa - ther, You did for all our
er from heav - en, Our wea - ry hearts and



now come nigh; The strife at last is end - ed. The
rule is just And wise and chang - es nev - er. In
sins a - tone, And your lost sheep you gath - er. O
souls up - lift; For this our praise is giv - en. De -



Fa - ther's love, the Sav - ior's birth, Bring peace, good will, to
bound - less pow'r, with might - y reign, Done is what - ev - er
Lamb of God, to you on high From depths of woe we
liv - er us from doubt and fear; When Sa - tan trou - bles



all the earth; Oh, thank him for his good - ness!
you or - dain; Your rule brings count - less bless - ings!
sin - ners cry, Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus!
us, be near; We trust your love and pow - er.

Text: Nikolaus Decius, c. 1485–after 1546, abr., st. 1-3; Mark A. Jeske, b. 1952, st. 4; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, st. 1-3, alt.

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Tune: ALLEIN GOTT IN DER HÖH SEI EHR (87 87 887) attr. Nikolaus Decius, c. 1485–after 1546, alt.

Prayer of the Day

M: 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.

C: Amen.

THE WORD

First Lesson

Exodus 14:21-31

The Lord King rises before his people to lead them against the enemy. Even Egypt knew that the LORD was fighting for them against Egypt. How great is the victory God won! Not a single enemy survived. On this day of Ascension we remember that God in Christ joined the battle for salvation. And when Christ mounted his throne, he had completed a total victory for us. The Word of his mouth and his protecting hand returns again and again to assure of eternal victory.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, ²² and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

²³ The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. ²⁴ During the last watch of the night the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. ²⁵ He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen." ²⁷ Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the LORD swept them into the sea. ²⁸ The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived.

²⁹ But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. ³⁰ That day the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. ³¹ And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant. (NIV)

Psalm 47

Clap your Hands, All You People Junior Choir

Second Lesson

Revelation 19:11-16

John was blessed to see a spectacular vision of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He rides to battle, the only one with blood, because he went to battle alone. There are no blood-stained armies of heaven...just a blood-stained King. But this King won the victory of victories for he is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

¹¹ I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (NIV)

Stand

Gospel

Luke 24:44-53

The Scriptures had been fulfilled. Humankind had been redeemed. Death had been conquered and the King was going home. Now, begins the work of carrying the message of Christ's victory to the ends of the earth. We are witnesses, clothed with the Spirit and filled with resurrection joy.

⁴⁴ 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."

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ 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."

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God. (NIV)

Recession of the Paschal Candle

M: At the Festival of the Ascension the Paschal Candle is carried from the chancel to symbolize that Jesus did not remain with his Church in bodily form but returned to his heavenly Father's right hand in glory. The recession of the Paschal Candle does not imply that Jesus is no longer present among us, for he promised, "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I among them" (Mt 18:20). Wherever his Word and Sacraments are, there Jesus is truly present. The recession of the Paschal candle helps us to remember that Jesus does not himself carry the gospel in Word and Sacraments to the world, but has appointed us to "go and make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:20). With Jesus' power and presence, we are indeed witnesses of grace.

Be Seated

Hymn

On Christ's Ascension I Now Build CW 173



1 On Christ's as - cen - sion I now build The hope of
2 Since Christ re - turned to claim his throne, Great gifts for
3 Oh, grant, dear Lord, this grace to me, Re - call - ing



my as - cen - sion. This hope a - lone has al - ways stilled
me ob - tain - ing, My heart shall rest in him a - lone,
your as - cen - sion, That I may serve you faith - ful - ly,



All doubt and ap - pre - hen - sion; For where the
No oth - er rest re - main - ing, For where my
A - dorn - ing your re - demp - tion; And then, when



head is, there as well I know his mem - bers
treasure went be - fore, There all my thoughts shall
all my days will cease, Let me de - part in



are to dwell When Christ shall come and call them.
ev - er soar To still their deep - est yearn - ing.
joy and peace In an - swer to my plead - ing.

Text: Josua Wegelin, 1604–40; tr. William M. Czamanske, 1873–1964, alt.

Tune: NUN FREUT EUCH, LIEBEN CHRISTEN (87 87 887) *Eitlich Cristlich liden*, Wittenberg, 1524.

Sermon

What A Parting Gift!

Luke 24:44-53

Offering

Stand

Prayer of the Church

M: 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.

C: As the devil, the world, and our sinful nature seek to silence our witness to the truth, grant us courage to believe in our hearts and confess with our lips that Jesus is Lord.

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

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

M: 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,
to single parents who raise their children alone grant wisdom and strength.

C: Pour out your blessings to all who depend on your power and grace.

M: 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.

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

M: O Lord, heavenly Father, we here 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 ever stands 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.

C: Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us.

M: As we contemplate the difficult days in the life of the church, hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

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

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Benediction

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you and give your peace.

C: Amen.

Be Seated

Hymn

A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing (by the Venerable Bede) CW 171:5-6

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| 5. Be now our joy on earth, O Lord,
And be our future great reward.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Then throned with you forever, we
Shall praise your name eternally,
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! | 6. O risen Christ, ascended Lord,
All praise to you let earth accord.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
You are while endless ages run,
With Father and with Spirit one.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! |
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Text: The Venerable Bede, 673–735, abr.; tr. composite.

Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN (888 888 with Alleluias) *Ausserlesene, Catholische, Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, Köln, 1623, alt.

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