

# St. Christopher's Church, Hinchley Wood

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023 – Feast of the Ascension

Welcome to our "Hybrid" Sunday Service. In whatever way you are joining us, via Zoom or in-person we pray that you may be able to experience the presence of God and the joy of the resurrection this morning.

On this feast of the Ascension we come before the risen Christ to receive his blessing and worship him with joy.

Please join in with the words in **bold** print.

## Gathering

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

*All* **and also with you.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for forty days we have been celebrating with joyful hearts the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the power of sin and death. He appeared to his disciples many times and told them about the kingdom of God.

Today we recall how he left this earth and returned to his Father, ascending into heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. Trusting in his reign over all creation, and submitting to his kingly yet loving rule, let us hear the story of his parting.

## Hymn: Alleluia, Alleluia Give Thanks to the Risen Lord (8)

### Confession

We come to the risen Lord, knowing that he forgives the sins of all who truly repent. We call to mind those times when we have fallen short.

For the times we have failed to pay attention to your word, or trust in your promises.

In your mercy, forgive us. *All* **Lord, hear us and help us.**

For the times we have failed to help those in need, or stand up for those who are oppressed.

In your mercy, forgive us. *All* **Lord, hear us and help us.**

For the times we have failed to work for the growth of your kingdom in our community.

In your mercy, forgive us. *All* **Lord, hear us and help us.**

## Absolution

May the God of love and power forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by his Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord.

*All* Amen.

## Gloria

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.**

**Amen.**

## Collect

Let us pray that we may walk the risen life of Christ in glory.

Risen Christ, you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven: help us to seek and serve you, that we may join you at the Father's side, where you reign with the Spirit in glory, now and for ever.

*All* Amen.

## Reading: (Acts 1:1-11)

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Dear Theophilus: In my first book I wrote about all the things that Jesus did and taught from the time he began his work until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before he was taken up, he gave instructions by the power of the Holy Spirit to the men he had chosen as his apostles. For forty days after his death he appeared to them many times in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive. They saw him, and he talked with them about the Kingdom of God. And when they came together, he gave them this order: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift I told you about, the gift my Father promised. John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

When the apostles met together with Jesus, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?" Jesus said to them, "The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them and said, “Galileans, why are you standing there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven.”

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

### **Psalm 47**

Clap your hands for joy, all peoples! Praise God with loud songs!  
The Lord, the Most High, is to be feared; he is a great king, ruling over all the world.

**He gave us victory over the peoples; he made us rule over the nations.  
He chose for us the land where we live,  
the proud possession of his people, whom he loves.**

God goes up to his throne.

There are shouts of joy and the blast of trumpets, as the Lord goes up.  
Sing praise to God; sing praise to our king!

**God is king over all the world; praise him with songs!  
God sits on his sacred throne; he rules over the nations.**

The rulers of the nations assemble with the people of the God of Abraham.  
More powerful than all armies is he; he rules supreme.

### **Hymn: I the Lord of Sea and Sky (332)**

#### **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia.

Go, make disciples of all the nations;  
I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.

*All* **Alleluia.**

#### **Gospel: (Luke 24:44-53)**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to his disciples: “These are the very things I told you about while I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the Psalms had to come true.”

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “This is what is written: the Messiah must suffer and must rise from death three days later, and in his name the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these

things. And I myself will send upon you what my Father has promised. But you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you.”

Then he led them out of the city as far as Bethany, where he raised his hands and blessed them. As he was blessing them, he departed from them and was taken up into heaven. They worshiped him and went back into Jerusalem, filled with great joy, and spent all their time in the Temple giving thanks to God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord      **Praise to you, O Christ**

## Talk

### Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,

**All maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,

**All 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,

**All was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

**All he suffered death and was buried.**

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;

**All 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,

**All the Lord, the giver of life,**

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

**All 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.**

## Intercessions

*Between the prayers we say*

Lord, in your mercy  
**All hear our prayer.**

*At the end of the prayers we say*

Merciful God, accept our prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
**Amen**

## The Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.  
If you love me, rejoice because I am going to the Father'.

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**All and also with you**

*We offer a sign of peace to one another*

## Hymn: An Upper Room (38)

### Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here.  
**All His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Father, we give you thanks and praise  
through your beloved Son Jesus Christ, your living Word,  
through whom you have created all things;  
who was sent by you in your great goodness to be our Saviour.

And now we give you thanks because, after his most glorious resurrection,  
he appeared to his disciples,  
and in their sight ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us;  
that where he is, towards that place we might also ascend,  
and reign with him in glory.

Therefore with angels and archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven,  
we proclaim your great and glorious name,  
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will, these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;  
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, 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.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died:  
Christ is risen:  
Christ will come again.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;  
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people  
and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one cup,  
so that we, in the company of St. Christopher and all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;  
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**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 for ever.**

**Amen.**

## Distribution of Communion

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ

**All    Though we are many, we are one body,  
         because we all share in one bread.**

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**All    Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
         but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

*Holy Communion is distributed to those in the Church.*

## Prayer of Spiritual Communion (for private prayer)

**Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me,  
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now  
receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most  
merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you  
more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.**

## Chant: In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful (929)

## Closing Prayer

God our Father,  
you have raised our humanity in Christ  
and have fed us with the bread of heaven:  
mercifully grant that, nourished with such spiritual blessings,  
we may set our hearts in the heavenly places;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All    Amen**

## Notices

### Hymn: I Danced in the Morning (305)

#### Blessing

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*All* **He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

May the risen Lord send his Holy Spirit  
to empower you to work for the coming of his kingdom.

*All* **Amen.**

And may the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

#### The Dismissal

With the risen life of Christ within you,  
go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

*All* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

*Refreshments are served following the service*

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