



SOLEMN EUCHARIST

ON

ASCENSION DAY

**Thursday 18 May 2023
at 5.30pm**

Welcome to York Minster for this Eucharist on Ascension Day.

Ascension Day, which falls 40 days after Easter, marks the end of the 'greater days' of Eastertide and forms a watershed from which we can look back to Jesus' Resurrection and forward to the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

By the fourth century in Asia Minor, the Ascension had become separated from the feast of Pentecost, following the chronology found in Luke's account in Acts, and was celebrated on the fortieth day after the Resurrection. It was seen as an enthronement festival, celebrating Christ as Lord of heaven and earth, themes which were subsequently developed in the Festival of Christ the King which now creates a climax to the whole Christian Year. One of the mysteries of the Ascension is that Christ's being taken into heaven does not imply his absence from the Church. That insight has perhaps led to the more recent emphasis during the latter 10 days of Eastertide on the preparation for the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. However, the earlier focus, as expounded in a sermon of St Augustine, is that Christ's entrance into heaven prepares a way for his followers: we 'are already in heaven with him, even though what is promised us has not yet been fulfilled in our bodies.' The Anglican Collect of Ascension Day, which is essentially that included in the *Book of Common Prayer*, is entirely consistent with this tradition.

Today's service will be sung by the Minster Choir to the MISSA BREVIS by Jonathan Dove.

The President and Preacher is the Revd Dr Victoria Johnson, Canon Precentor.

Please join in saying together the words printed in bold type.



Organ Voluntary

Alléluias sereins (from *L'Ascension*)

Olivier Messiaen

Serene Alleluias from a soul longing for heaven.

The Gathering

Please stand for the Processional Hymn.

Processional Hymn



1. Hail the day that sees him rise Alleluia!
Glorious to his native skies; Alleluia!
Christ, awhile to mortals given, Alleluia!
Enters now the highest heaven! Alleluia!
2. There the glorious triumph waits; Alleluia!
Lift your head, eternal gates! Alleluia!
Christ hath vanquished death and sin; Alleluia!
Take the King of glory in. Alleluia!
3. See! the heaven its Lord receives, Alleluia!
Yet he loves the earth he leaves; Alleluia!
Though returning to his throne, Alleluia!
Still he calls mankind his own. Alleluia!
4. Lord, though parted from our sight, Alleluia!
Far above yon azure height, Alleluia!
Grant our hearts may thither rise, Alleluia!
Seeking thee beyond the skies. Alleluia!
5. There we shall with thee remain, Alleluia!
Partners of thine endless reign; Alleluia!
There thy face unclouded see, Alleluia!
Find our heaven of heavens in thee. Alleluia!

Words Charles Wesley (1707–88) and Thomas Cotterill (1779–1823)

Tune LLANFAIR, NEH 130, melody by Robert Williams (1781–1821)

The Greeting

The President says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you
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.

Please remain standing.

The Ascension Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

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 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.’

ACTS I. 4–11

Alleluia! Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Please remain standing.

Gloria in Excelsis

The choir sings:

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax
hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te,
glorificamus te, gratias agimus tibi propter
magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus
Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite,
Jesu Christe: Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis, qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spiritu,
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Please remain standing.

*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.*

The Collect

Let us pray.

Silence is kept.

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,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please sit.

The Liturgy of the Word

New Testament Reading

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards 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.

EPHESIANS 1.15–end

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Motet

Coelos ascendit hodie
Jesus Christus Rex gloriae:
Sedet ad Patris dexteram,
Gubemat coelum et terram.

*God is gone up on high to-day,
Jesus the King of bliss for aye:
Set at the Father's own right hand,
Sovran of sky, and sea, and land.*

Jam finem habent omnia
Patris Davidis carmina.
Jam Dominus cum Domino
Sedet in Dei solio:

*The words of David, all and some,
In very sooth to pass are come.
My Lord now with the Lord doth sit,
High on his heavenly throne, to wit.*

In hoc triumpho maximo
Benedicamus Domino.
Laudetur Sancta Trinitas,
Deo dicamus gratias,
Alleluia. Amen.

*Now Christ hath vanquish'd every foe;
Benedicamus Domino.
To holy Trinity give praise
With Deo gracias always
Alleluia. Amen.*

Music Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924)

Please stand.

Gospel Reading

The choir begins the Alleluia; the congregation then joins in the response, which is sung before and after the verse:

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



I am the first and the last, says the Lord, and the living one;
I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

The Lord be with you
and also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.



Jesus said to the disciples, ‘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 worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

LUKE 24.44–53

After the Gospel the reader says:



The organist plays a musical response to the Gospel.

Please sit for the sermon.

Sermon

The Revd Dr Victoria Johnson, Canon Precentor

Please stand.

The Creed

Let us affirm our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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 from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
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 worshipped 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 Intercession

One of these responses may be used:

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

Lord, hear us.
Lord, graciously hear us.

The prayers may conclude:

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

Please stand.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

The President says:

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'. Alleluia.

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Members of the congregation are invited to exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn



1. Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
his the sceptre, his the throne;
Alleluia, his the triumph,
his the victory alone:
hark, the songs of peaceful Sion
thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation
hath redeemed us by his blood.

3. Alleluia, bread of angels,
thou on earth our food, our stay;
Alleluia, here the sinful
flee to thee from day to day:
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
earth's Redeemer, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

2. Alleluia, not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia, he is near us,
faith believes, nor questions how:
though the cloud from sight received him,
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise,
'I am with you evermore'?

4. Alleluia, King eternal,
thee the Lord of lords we own;
Alleluia, born of Mary,
earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne:
thou within the veil hast entered,
robed in flesh, our great High Priest;
thou on earth both Priest and Victim
in the Eucharistic Feast.

Words W Chatterton Dix (1837–98)

Tune HYFRYDOL, NEH 271, Richard Huw Pritchard (1811–87)

Taking of the Bread and Wine

This prayer is said as the gifts are presented:

Blessed be God, by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The following dialogue is said or sung:

The Lord be with you and also with you.

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

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

It is indeed right and good,
our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ the King of glory.
Born of a woman,
he came to the rescue of our human race.
Dying for us,
he trampled death and conquered sin.
By the glory of his resurrection he opened the way to life eternal
and by his ascension,
gave us the sure hope that where he is we may also be.
Therefore the universe resounds with Easter joy
and with choirs of angels we sing for ever to your praise:

The choir sings:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth,
pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

You are invited to remain standing.

*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.



Christ has died: Christ is ris - en: Christ will come__ a - gain.

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 the Blessed Virgin Mary 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.

Organ **All**

A - men. _____

A short silence is kept.

Please remain standing.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has 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,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The President breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Alleluia! Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The body and blood of Christ keep you in eternal life.

Please kneel or sit while making your preparation to receive communion and for prayerful reflection afterwards.

During the distribution of Communion the choir sings:

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: *Lamb of God, you take away the sin of
miserere nobis. the world, have mercy on us.*

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: *Lamb of God, you take away the sin of
dona nobis pacem. the world, grant us peace.*

Communion is administered at a number of places. You will be guided by the Stewards.

Prayer after Communion

The congregation stands.

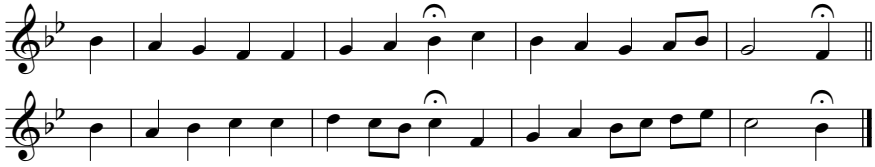
The President says

Let us pray.

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.

Amen.

Hymn



1. O King most high of earth and sky
on prostrate death thou treadest,
and with thy blood dost mark the road
whereby to heaven thou leadest.
2. O Christ, behold thine orphaned fold,
which thou hast borne with anguish,
steeped in the tide from thy rent side;
O leave us not to languish!
3. The glorious gain of all thy pain
henceforth dost thou inherit;
now comes the hour—then gently shower
on us thy promised Spirit!

Words Latin Breviary hymn 17th century, tr. William Blew (1808–94)

Tune ACH GOTT UND HERR, NEH 131 *Neu-Leipziger Gesangbuch* (1682)

The Dismissal

Please remain standing.

The President says:


God the Father,
who has given to his Son the name above every name,
strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord. **Amen.**

God the Son,
who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,
plead for you at the right hand of the Father. **Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit,
who pours out his abundant gifts upon the Church,
make you faithful servants of Christ our king. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Deacon says or sings:



Go in the peace of Christ. Al-le-lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia!___

Everyone responds:



Thanks be to God. Al-le-lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia!___

Organ Voluntary

Transports de joie (from *L'Ascension*)

Olivier Messiaen

Outburst of joy from a soul before the Glory of Christ which is its own glory. Giving thanks unto the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light, and has raised us up to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

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