



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

May 29th, 2022 A.D.

Ascension Sunday

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the psalm and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

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

Amen.

Introit

From Psalms 47 and 110

P God has gone up with a shout,
C the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool.”
The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind,
“You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”
The Lord is at your right hand;
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today’s worship video, located on Bethany’s website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Apostles’ Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(Luke 24:44-53)

⁴⁴Then [Jesus] said to 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 and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Sermon – † *Think “Ascension”* † (*A copy is included at the end of this service.*)

Athanasian Creed

Whoever desires to be saved must, above all, hold the catholic faith.

Whoever does not keep it whole and undefiled will without doubt perish eternally.

And the catholic faith is this,

that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance.

For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Holy Spirit is another.

But the Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit:

the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, the Holy Spirit uncreated;

the Father infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite;

the Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal.

And yet there are not three Eternals, but one Eternal,

just as there are not three Uncreated or three Infinites, but one Uncreated and one Infinite.

In the same way, the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Spirit almighty;

and yet there are not three Almighty, but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God;

and yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord;

and yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord.

Just as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge each distinct person as God and Lord, so also are we prohibited by the catholic religion to say that there are three Gods or Lords.

The Father is not made nor created nor begotten by anyone.

The Son is neither made nor created, but begotten of the Father alone.

The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.

Thus, there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another; but the whole three persons are coeternal with each other and coequal, so that in all things, as has been stated above, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity is to be worshiped.

Therefore, whoever desires to be saved must think thus about the Trinity.

But it is also necessary for everlasting salvation that one faithfully believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, it is the right faith that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the same time both God and man.

He is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages; and He is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age:

perfect God and perfect man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh;
equal to the Father with respect to His divinity, less than the Father with respect to His humanity.

Although He is God and man, He is not two, but one Christ:
one, however, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God;

one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ,
who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead,
ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence
He will come to judge the living and the dead.

At His coming all people will rise again with their bodies and give an account concerning their own deeds.

And those who have done good will enter into eternal life, and those who have done evil into eternal fire.

This is the catholic faith; whoever does not believe it faithfully and firmly cannot be saved.

The 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.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Thanksgiving

- For those who sacrificed for our nation
- Joel Knutson - recovering after surgery

Entrusting into God's Care

- Wayne Schilling - hospice care
- The Kroemer family as they help a friend
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Lynn Madsen - upcoming surgery
- Bridget Rinderknecht - job changes
- Victoria (mother of Janet Hoech) - health issues
- LaVonne (mother of Dave Karsten) - recovering after fall
- NancyLee Siebenmann - recovering after hospitalization
- Dan (father of Michelle Wiersig) - recovering after surgery
- Faye Sieck - recovering after surgery
- Betty Hein - recovering after hospitalization
- Natalie Heller - recovering after surgery
- Erin Wilson - health issues
- Doug Knutson - cancer treatment
- John Siebenmann - health issues
- Lee Rathje - recovering after surgery
- Cindy Broadwater - relief of foot pain
- Lynn Madsen - broken wrist
- Carol Grimminger - recovering after hospitalization
- Sharon Ramsey - recovering after surgery
- Dave Christian - recovering at home after cardiac surgery

Homebound

- Shirley Kellogg - at home

Mourning

- Mechele (friend of Linda Patten) - died 5/14

Serving Our Country

- Ben - serving in the Iowa National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Rob & Faye Sieck) - US Army

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, as Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so may we also ascend in heart and mind and continually dwell there with Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



✠ *Think "Ascension"* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

This weekend we celebrate the Ascension of Christ into Heaven. Most Christians are familiar with the idea of Christ ascending into heaven. We learn about it in Sunday School and in Confirmation. Sometimes we sing about it during our church services. And we confess this fact in all three ecumenical creeds: the Apostles', Nicene, and the Athanasian – saying that Christ has ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father. Therefore it should be obvious that the Ascension of Jesus is an important, albeit an often overlooked, part of our faith. Which is great news for the disciples of Christ. Because just as we are familiar with the Ascension of Christ, this weekend we are also, unfortunately, familiar with an amazing amount of trouble and strife.

Of course, it goes without saying that every generation and every culture has its' fair share of trouble. In Mark 13 our Lord Himself says that there will be earthquakes and famines and wars and rumors of war. And in John 16:33 Jesus says, "...*In the world you will have tribulation...*" But just because we will always face trouble until the day of our Lord's glorious return, doesn't mean that Christians suffer any less or are to just sit around and take things on the chin. We can't use our Lord's teaching about the certainty of suffering as an excuse to do nothing about the problems we face or as a source of comfort when we do face them.

After all, do you think our Lord is happy when His Church does nothing when nearly 53 people are killed by a gun *everyday* in our country? (Compared to 10 people every year in Japan). Or, does our Lord just want His people to remind the 1 in 7 kids in Linn County who aren't really sure where their next meal is coming from, that there will always be trouble in the world? Or would our God want the Church to share God's love in Word and deed?!?! If you're not sure, then remember that James writes in chapter 2 of his epistle, "*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that*" (James 2:14-16)? If children are being killed in schools and we say, "Our thoughts and prayers are with you" without doing anything, what good is that?

Now, I believe that most of you know I try not to use the pulpit for anything other than preaching Christ crucified (I Corinthians 1:23). And you also know that our Lutheran understanding of the Christian faith leaves little room for liberation theology or a social gospel. And yet, do we not talk about sin in the church, so that the cross of Christ will mean something?

Does the Church not proclaim the law and show people their sin, so that people might be led to repentance and hear the Church proclaim the Gospel - showing people their Savior? And what are mass shootings and unprovoked wars other than the sin of murder? And what is income inequality, other than the sins of stealing and greed? *Luther's Small Catechism* addresses abortion, racism, domestic and substance abuse all under the 5th Commandment (You shall not murder). And so much of what people like to call "environmental issues" fall under our teachings on stewardship in the First Article of the Apostles' Creed.

So, when we become discouraged because of what we see going on around us in this world, we must remember our faith in Christ as our risen Lord and Savior. If we let the world and its' wisdom take the lead in addressing these issues; or if we look to the world for a source of hope, we are bound to fail and be disappointed. I was reminded of this reading an opinion essay by John McWhorter, a linguist from Columbia University. In his essay, he argues that many people believe that if we change how people say things, you'll change how people think about things, and that will inevitably lead to the world changing. So, we can make the world a better place by changing how people talk.

The problem with this line of thinking is that it doesn't seem to work. As an example, McWhorter points out the progression in our culture from saying a person is "crippled" to "handicapped" to "disabled" to "differently abled". All of these are well intentioned changes, but how we talk about a situation doesn't really change it for the people effected by it. Yet we see this happening all around us. We've gone from "bums", to "homeless", to "unhoused". People don't "commit" suicide anymore because that sounds like a crime. Instead, people "die" by suicide. Of course, we do not want to add to anyone's pain by what we say or do. But does just changing the way we talk, changing the pronouns we use for people, really improve the painful situations people find themselves in? It seems that trying to change the way people talk about others, instead of changing the lives of those who are being talked about for the better, is a cheap cop-out undertaken by far too many in our society today. John McWhorter concludes his essay by writing, "...broadly speaking, thought leaders and activists of past eras put their emphasis on what people did and said - not on the ever-finer gradations of how they might have said it. Far better to teach people what you think they should think about something, and why..."

As disciples of Christ, trying to improve our lives or others, trying to find hope and peace for ourselves or others by changing the way people talk or by any other means that the world believes to be wise is a cop out and bound to fail. Instead, we need to show people, and remember ourselves, what we all need to think about. And this Ascension Day we remember that we all need to think about Jesus Christ, ascended into heaven and seated at the right hand of the God the Father.

In Luke 24:50-51 we read, "*And He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven.*" Luke would later record in Acts that Peter quoted Psalm 110 in speaking of Jesus' ascension saying, "*The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool*" (Acts 2:34-34). Peter also wrote in his first epistle, "[Jesus Christ] *has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to Him*" (I Peter 3:22).

This is what Christians think about and proclaim, because the right hand of God to which our Lord ascended is not a place of rest, nor a mere seat of honor or prestige. It is a position of divine power. Paul writes to the Ephesians, "[God] *seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,* ²¹ *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 one to come. ²² *And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church...* [Ephesians 1:20-22].

The One who gave His life so that our sins, and the sins of the world, would be forgiven, is the same One who reigns over all of creation for our good. Knowing that God has forgiven us in Jesus' name for all of our hatred; all of our greed, indifference, bad stewardship, and all of the times when we've looked for solutions to our problems or peace in any other place than the cross of Christ – knowing He has forgiven us these things not only changes how we think, but also how we act. We're now compelled to see every person as someone for whom the Ruler of all things has died. We now are free to live generously towards others, knowing that the One who controls all things in heaven and on earth loves and cares for us. When awful events happen, be them in our own lives, in our own nation, or somewhere around the world, we can have peace in this world because our sins have been forgiven by Christ's blood. Now, not even death can separate us from God's love, because of the love He had for us in Jesus. And it is this love that motivates Christians to walk according to God's ways. It is the love of Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God, that gives us peace and drives us to actually do something in this world to make it better. We're not saved because we do these things. We do them because we are saved. We live as Christ's disciples because Christ lives, reigns, and will come again in glory. And this love for us and all people is truly worth celebrating and proclaiming. Amen.

