



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

May 21, 2023 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 other parts of the service 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.

Psalm

Psalm 47

Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

²For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.

³He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.

⁴He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves.

⁵God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

⁶Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

⁷For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm!

⁸God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

⁹The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted!

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 Nicene Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson – Acts 1:1-11

¹In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ²until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³To them he presented himself alive after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Sermon – ✠ *Ascension* ✠ *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven
and earth and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of
God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**



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

- Elizabeth Sue Frampton - Baptism today
- Karen Schmidt - recovering after surgery
- Colton Keldgord - recovering after surgery

Entrusting into God's Care

- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after storms and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Mark (brother of Anne Railsback) - tumor
- Chuck (friend of Linda Patten) - health issues
- Elaine Cook - recovering after surgery
- Ethel Doehrmann - recovering after hospitalization
- Larry Easler - recovering after fall at Hiawatha Care Center
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Margaret (relative of Karl Hoech) - recovering after fall
- Lee Rathje - recovering after surgery
- Dave Johnson - recovering after surgery
- Stephen Stepanek - brain cancer treatment
- Mickie Sjullie - recovering after broken ankle
- Janelle Dunbar - recovering after surgery
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Bonnie Bubke - personal issues
- Chuck Stoelting - recovering at Garnet Place
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Wayne Schilling - Hospice care at Mercy Hallmar

Mourning, friends and family of

- Larry (relative of Karstens and Sturtzes) - died 5/3
- Marj (sister of Luci Stoelting) - died 5/1

Serving Our Country

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - serving IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - serving IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison - (son of Siecks) - US Army, deployed to Poland

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

Heavenly Father, into whose keeping we entrust our loved ones, help us to look to You in our times of sorrow, remembering the could of faithful witnesses with which we are surrounded. And grant that we may one day share in the joys of those who now rest in Your presence.; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

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.



✠ *Ascension* ✠

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

Perhaps the greatest day for the Church is Easter, the resurrection of Christ, where He conquered sin and death for all of humanity. But interestingly, the actual event of the resurrection had no direct witnesses. People saw the risen Lord, but no one actually saw Him rise from the dead – which is OK. Because as we are told, the Risen Savior “*presented Himself alive after His*

suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during 40 days and speaking about the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). But this weekend, when we celebrate the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of God The Father (Ascension Day was May 18th this year), we note that the ascended Savior no longer shows Himself in a visible form to His believers on Earth, and we cannot expect Him to do so until the Last Day. Therefore, His ascension took place visibly before the eyes of the disciples. Because of the importance of the ascension, Jesus rose into the sky publicly, as the disciples were looking on, so that the truth and the comfort of this event might be established in history for the disciples and indeed, for the whole Christian Church throughout the ages.

For the Ascension of Jesus provides us poor, fallen creatures with comfort in two ways. Right now my son is old enough so that when he is alone or goes to a new place, I don’t worry too much about him. But when he was younger, like all parents, I would go through great lengths to ensure that he was taken care of when his mother and I were not around. If we were leaving him at home while we went out for dinner, we would only have the most experienced babysitters watch him – one of our favorites raised four boys of her own and another of our favorite babysitters was a registered nurse who spent years working in labor and delivery (They were barely qualified to watch my son)! But in all honesty, with such credentials my wife and I always felt at ease knowing our son was in good hands when we couldn’t be around.

Now, many of you may not have to worry about finding a baby sitter for your beloved child or member of your family. But it is true that almost all of us have loved ones who “are on another shore”, so to speak. Most of us have family and friends who have departed this life into death and are not longer with us. For many these deaths are a time of inconsolable loss and grief. But for us as Christians, our grief is met with the comfort of the the Ascension of Jesus. The Ascension that tells us that our loved ones who have departed this life with faith in Christ are now with Jesus in Heaven.

When Jesus took upon Himself our human flesh and blood He became our brother, subject to all of the trials and temptation that we face. Dying on the cross and rising again to new life, He cleanses us from our sin and guarantees our eternal life as well. And what a comfort it is to know, that because Jesus has ascended into Heaven, that our loved ones who have died are there with our brother Jesus, right now – seeing and worshipping the King of Creation in a way that we cannot even imagine. Not only has their sin been washed away, but their tears are gone as well. Their suffering is over, and they now are with Jesus forever.

We find comfort knowing that this is where we are headed as well. The goal of our faith is not to live in heaven as spirits forever. We are looking forward to that day when Christ will come back and raise all of the dead. But before that time comes, we can be assured that when we die, we will go to be with God in the same place that our faithful loved ones are and where Jesus is. St. Paul says in Philippians that he desires to depart this life and be with Christ. St. Paul was confident that because God had forgiven him all of his sin, that when he died would be taken into the place that Jesus had prepared for him. And all of us may have the same confidence in the forgiveness of our sins and that there is place for us that Jesus has prepared because as St. Paul would surely tells you, we are saved by grace through faith. And this is a gift of God, not something that anyone, even St. Paul, has earned.

But for all of the comfort that the Ascension brings to us as we look into the grave, we find even more, and perhaps a greater comfort in that fact that Jesus ascended into Heaven as we go through life day to day. Paul writes in Ephesians that God raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at His right hand. Peter tells us in the book of Acts that Christ did not ascend to the right hand of God to take a break, or for a little R&R. But that Christ is seated at the right hand of God

the Father to reign over all of creation personally and actively for the benefit of those who love and trust Him.

Before His Ascension, Christ was indeed the King of All Creation, but in the form of a suffering servant for our benefit. However, ascending into Heaven, Jesus laid His servanthood aside and became our King in all power and glory. Now, not only do we have a brother in Heaven, but this brother who gave His life for us is ruling over the world for our benefit with all things under His feet. Whatever the troubles are that we face in life, whatever disappointments we might face from those around us, we can find comfort and peace that the one who gave His body and blood for us, is ruling over creation for us.

On Easter, the church often greets its own with the saying, “Christ has risen. He has risen indeed. Alleluia!” Along with this we as Christians should also rejoice that Christ has ascended. He has ascended in front of the disciples so that they may testify to this historical fact. He ascended to prepare a place for all of those who depart in the faith. He ascended to rule and protect us, His beloved Church from all danger and harm. All, because Christ has Ascended. He has ascended indeed. Alleluia!

