



**St. George's**  
Episcopal  
Church

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# Ascension Day

**May 21, 2020**

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You are welcome at  
St. George's Church:  
Regardless of race,  
nationality,  
sexual orientation,  
gender expression,  
or tradition.

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Ascension  
Day  
May 21, 2020

*From the Book of Common Prayer  
(BCP), as modified by the 2018  
General Convention Resolution on  
Expansive Language.*

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**Welcome to our online service! During the prelude, we invite you to prepare for worship by observing silence or taking time for private prayer. We are glad you are here!**

**Opening Welcome**

**Prelude**

**Call to Worship**

Officiant: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**People: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

*The Officiant continues*

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Hymn of Praise 423 (St. 1): "Immortal invisible"  
Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, your great Name we praise.**

*St. Denio*

Officiant: God be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

*The Officiant says the Collect of the Day*

**BCP 226**

Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abides with his Church on earth, even to the end of the ages; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

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**Acts 1:1 - 11**

*New Revised Standard Translation*

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 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 toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward 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."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

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*Read responsively, by whole verse*

- 1 Clap your hands, all you peoples; \*  
shout to God with a cry of joy.
- 2 For the LORD Most High is to be feared; \*  
he is the great King over all the earth.
- 3 He subdues the peoples under us, \*  
and the nations under our feet.
- 4 He chooses our inheritance for us, \*  
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.
- 5 God has gone up with a shout, \*  
the LORD with the sound of the ram's-horn.
- 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises; \*  
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
- 7 For God is King of all the earth; \*  
sing praises with all your skill.
- 8 God reigns over the nations; \*  
God sits upon his holy throne.
- 9 The nobles of the peoples have gathered together \*  
with the people of the God of Abraham.
- 10 The rulers of the earth belong to God,  
and he is highly exalted.

**Ephesians 1:15 - 23**

*NRSV Translation*

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

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

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Hymn 603: "When Christ was lifted from the earth"

St. Botolph

**1** When Christ was lifted from the earth,  
his arms stretched out above  
through every culture, every birth,  
to draw an answering love.

**2** Still east and west his love extends  
and always, near or far,  
he calls and claims us as his friends  
and loves us as we are.

**3** Where generation, class, or race  
divide us to our shame,  
he sees not labels but a face,  
a person, and a name.

**4** Thus freely loved, though fully known,  
may I in Christ be free  
to welcome and accept his own  
as Christ accepted me.

**The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke** Luke 24:44 - 53

**People: Glory to you, O Christ.**

*NRSV translation*

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

Reader: The Gospel of our Savior.

**People: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**The Homily**

The Rev. Joseph H. Hensley, Jr.

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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:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from 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.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He 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.

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow. We invite you to share your gifts in support of our ministry within and beyond our congregation, especially during this time when we cannot receive those offerings in person. Make your offering online (<http://bit.ly/stggive>) or by mail to the church.*

### **Announcements**

*For the latest updates and messages of encouragement, check our website ([StGeorgesEpiscopal.net](http://StGeorgesEpiscopal.net)) and subscribe to our email newsletter (<http://bit.ly/stggenews>)*

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## The Prayers

Officiant: And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

### Prayers of the People *(By the St. George's Prayer Guild)*

*The Leader and People pray responsively*

Leader: As you opened the minds of your disciples, O Christ, so open our hearts as we pray. We pray for the church that we may proclaim repentance and forgiveness in your Name and be witnesses of your power. We pray for all churches as they discern how and when to re-gather safely.

**People: May our prayers ascend with Christ.**

Leader: We pray for the nations, cities, and communities of the world and all in authority, that they may know your peace and the coming of your reign.

**People: May our prayers ascend with Christ.**

Leader: We pray for the health and welfare of the world and for the proper stewardship of your Creation, that all beings may know your blessing. We pray for all who lack the basic necessities of life and those who are struggling to make ends meet.

**People: May our prayers ascend with Christ.**

Leader: We pray for the concerns of this community, especially for those who are sick and suffering or in any need of mind, body, or spirit. We pray for all those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, those who are ill and those working to care for them. We pray for all those who work so that others may stay home.

**People: May our prayers ascend with Christ.**

Leader: We pray for all those blessings and concerns we name now, silently or aloud (*leader pauses for 10 seconds*). By your grace, O God...

**People: May our prayers ascend with Christ.**

Leader: We pray for all who have died. May they rise to new life.

**People: May our prayers ascend with Christ.**

### *The Officiant adds a concluding Collect*

Officiant: O Christ, so gloriously ascended into heaven, shine in our hearts as we celebrate our redemption, that we may see the way to our eternal home, where you reign among the one holy and undivided Trinity, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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## **The Blessing**

May Almighty God whose son, our savior, Jesus Christ, ascended into heaven, bless, preserve and keep us as we await the coming of the Holy Spirit.

## **The Peace**

Officiant: The peace of Christ be always with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## **Postlude**

## **The Dismissal**

Officiant: Let us go forth in the name of Christ, Alleluia, Alleluia.

**People: Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Officiant: The service is ended. Thank you for participating.

*In this time of uncertainty and dynamic change, please know that although we cannot physically gather, God is ever-present. We are here too. If you would like someone to chat and pray with you, please submit a request online ([bit.ly/stgprayer](http://bit.ly/stgprayer)) and if it is an emergency (for e.g. sudden illness, death), please contact the pastoral emergency phone (540.361.8573) where you will reach a clergy person on call. Know that we are holding you in our prayers and look forward to a time when we will be able to gather again. God's peace be with you.*

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## **St. George's Episcopal Church**

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