



**An Act of Spiritual Communion**  
for the Sunday after Ascension Day

# ¶ *The Gathering*

## **The Greeting**

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord is here.

**His Spirit is with us.**

## **Introduction**

On Thursday the church celebrated the Ascension of Jesus into heaven. This was the time when he stopped being simply present to his followers in a local, physical way, as he was in his earthly life and after he rose from the dead, but entered the heavens. There he is present to everyone and all creation, throughout all time, and from there he reigns as Lord and King.

He is not less present with us than he was at Christmas or Easter, but more. And even more, he asked his disciples to pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit, the very presence of God, to live in us and empower the church until he comes again. We mark the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon us on the great party and feast of Pentecost or Whit Sunday, often called the “birthday” of the church!

Across the world, Christians of all traditions are marking the time between Ascension and Pentecost by praying *Thy Kingdom Come*. These words come from the Lord’s Prayer, the prayer Jesus taught his disciples.

We are asking God to pour out his Spirit on us afresh so that we can evangelise the world, so that we can let other people know the good news of Jesus. And we are praying that God will bring in his reign of justice, peace and holiness. So, in today’s service we will join in that global prayer for evangelism, and I encourage you to look online and pray *Thy Kingdom Come* daily, even if for just a short time in our busy lives.

## **Prayer of Preparation**

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
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.**

Seeing we have a great high priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, and make our confession to our heavenly Father.

**Most merciful God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
we confess that we have sinned  
in thought, word and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart.  
We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.  
In your mercy  
forgive what we have been,  
help us to amend what we are,  
and direct what we shall be;  
that we may do justly,  
love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.  
Amen.**

## **Prayers of Penitence**

Grant, we beseech you, merciful Lord,  
to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their  
sins and serve you with a quiet mind;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
**Amen.**

## **Hymn**

1 Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
does its successive journeys run,  
his kingdom stretch from shore to shore,  
till moons shall wax and wane no more.

2 To him shall endless prayer be made,  
and praises throng to crown his head.

His name like sweet perfume shall rise  
with every morning sacrifice.

3 People and realms of every tongue  
dwell on his love with sweetest song,  
and infant voices shall proclaim  
their early blessings on his name.

4 Blessings abound where'er he reigns:  
the prisoners leap to lose their chains,  
the weary find eternal rest,  
and all who suffer want are blest.

5 Let every creature rise and bring  
the highest honors to our King,  
angels descend with songs again,  
and earth repeat the loud amen.

*Led by the choirs of St Alphege*

## **The Collect**

for *Thy Kingdom Come*

Almighty God,  
your ascended Son has sent  
us into the world to preach the good news of your kingdom:  
inspire us with your Spirit  
and fill our hearts with the fire of your love,  
that all who hear your word may be drawn to you,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## ¶ *The Liturgy of the Word.*

**Our reading today is Acts 1:6-14**

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.”

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection for today**

by The Revd Helen Greenham, Team Vicar of St Helen's Church

### **Song for Reflection**

*“All Heaven Declares” performed by the music group of St Michael's Church*

# Prayers of Intercession

## *for Thy Kingdom Come*

led by Lizzie Kenchington

Leader: Let us pray to the Lord who is now lifted up from the earth, drawing all things to himself.

**All: You, Christ, are the king of glory.**

Leader: Lord Jesus, you offered one sacrifice for sin and then ascended in victory to the Father; – achieve the eternal perfection of those whom you are sanctifying.

**All: You, Christ, are the king of glory.**

Leader: Eternal priest, minister of the new covenant, you are alive and interceding for us; – save your people who turn to you in prayer. At this time of crisis, we especially pray for medical professionals, key workers, and all on whom we rely to keep us safe.

**All: You, Christ, are the king of glory.**

Leader: After your passion, you appeared to your disciples, and they knew you to be alive; – strengthen our belief that you are with us today. Be with all who are suffering, sick or in need; assure them of your love.

**All: You, Christ, are the king of glory.**

Leader: You promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles, for the spreading of your gospel to the ends of the earth. We pray for the people of Solihull; pour out your Spirit on this community and awaken in all of us a renewed passion for your gospel.

**All: You, Christ, are the king of glory.**

I invite you to join with me in the words of the closing prayer.

**Almighty God,  
fill us with a holy joy,  
teach us how to thank you with reverence and love  
on account of the ascension of your Son.  
You have raised us up with him:  
where he, the head, has preceded us in glory,  
there we, the body, are called in hope.  
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

# ¶ *The Liturgy of the Sacrament*

## **The Peace**

Peace to this house from God our heavenly Father. Peace to this house from his Son who is our peace. Peace to this house from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.

*Silence is kept.*

## **The Act of Spiritual Communion**

Almighty God,  
in union with the faithful at every altar of your Church,  
where your blessed body and blood are being offered to the Father, I desire to offer  
you praise and thanksgiving.

I present to you my soul and body,  
with the earnest wish that I may ever be united to you. And since I cannot now  
receive you sacramentally,

I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.

I unite myself to you,  
and embrace you with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate me  
from you.

Let me live and die in your love.

**Amen.**

*Anthem for reflection:*

*the choirs of St Alphege sing Phillips, Ascendit Deus – specially  
recorded online for Ascension Day 2020*

# ¶ *The Dismissal*

## **The Blessing**

Christ our ascended King pour upon you the abundance of his gifts and bring you to  
reign with him in glory; and the blessing of God almighty,

+ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you  
always. **Amen.**

## **Daily Prayer for *Thy Kingdom Come***

Pray for new disciples and the coming of God's Kingdom each day from your home:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/common-worship-daily-prayer-thy-kingdom-come>

