

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 1:17-23)

A PRAYER FOR LIGHT

Lord Christ, in our embodied lives, and in your Body the Church, we glimpse the fullness of your presence everywhere. Be near to us in these times when we must be apart. Encourage and embolden us by your promises, that we may continue to witness to you, the one who has come to dwell among us even as you hold us in your eternal and heavenly light, the light of the world that no darkness has overcome. **Amen.**

The candles and lamps are now lighted.

HYMN

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!

(see next page)

PSALM 47

- 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.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was, is now,
and will be forever. Amen.**

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!

1 Al - le - lu - ia! sing to Je - sus! his the
 *2 Al - le - lu - ia! not as or - phans are we

1 scap - ter, his the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! his the
 2 left in sor - row now; Al - le - lu - ia! he is

1 tri - umph, his the vic - to - ry a - lone; Hark! the
 2 near us, faith be - lieves, nor ques - tions how: though the

1 songs of peace - ful Zi - on thun - der like a
 2 cloud from sight re - ceived him, when the for - ty

1 might - y flood; Je - sus out of ev - ery
 2 days were o'er, shall our hearts for - get his

1 na - tion hath re - deemed us by his blood.
 2 prom - ise, "I am with you ev - er - more"?

Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898) Music: *Hyfrydol*, Rowland Hugh Prichard (1811-1887)

THE READINGS

THE FIRST LESSON

ACTS 1:1-11

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."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL

LUKE 24:44-53

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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE HOMILY

The Rt. Rev. William H. Stokes

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

AN ASCENSION DAY LITANY FOR A TIME OF PANDEMIC

(adapted from Prayers for the Ascension from *Starters for Sunday*, The Church of Scotland)

At each bidding, you may type your particular petitions and intercessions in the comments so that those praying with you from home may join in your prayers. Please note, those on screen will not be able to see the comments.

You are free, Lord;
your Ascension has set you free:
free from the constraints of human existence,
outside limitations of time and space;
free to be with us now,
in worship and in prayer;
free to be with us always.

For in your freedom, gracious Lord,
you have bound yourself to us in love.
You have bound yourself to us with the promise:
“I am with you always, even to the very end of time.”

You have bound yourself to us, that we might also be free
to work and to pray for freedom for all
in the joys and the burdens of our embodied lives.

We pray, Lord, for all who are burdened by despair,
who need to feel the nearness of your presence,
who long for the assurance of your love,
who crave the encouragement of your Spirit.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who suffer in isolation and loneliness,
who long for human company,
who lack human touch,
who seek tenderness and compassion.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who are worn and weary,
for all medical workers who ease the burdens of others,
for essential workers who bear the weight of our communities' operations,
for leaders and decision-makers, entrusted with responsibility.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who are feeling fed up,
who are in discomfort,
who are in disease,
who are afraid,
because they are ill in body, mind or spirit.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray at this time of financial turmoil,
for those who face uncertainty,
those who have lost jobs,
those who struggle to pay bills,
and those who have the power to affect positive change.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who are persecuted,
who are discriminated against,
who are mocked,
who are victimized because of their culture or skin-color.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who are imprisoned,
who are tortured,
who are exiled.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those caught up in war,
or violence,
or hatred,
or abuse,
and for the innocent victims.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who are crushed by poverty,
who are destitute,
who are hungry,
who are refugees.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

We pray for those who are numbed,
who are angry,
who are desolate,
because they have been bereaved.

Lord, is this the time when you will restore us?

Be with us all, Lord:
in all our daily struggles as we seek to follow you.
Be with us in times of doubt and despair; and of happiness and health.
Be with us,
until that time
when, in your Kingdom of Love, our joy will know no end: **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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Collect for Ascension Day

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.**

HYMN

Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise

(Please sing along to the hymn recorded by voices around our consortium.)

1 Hail the day that sees him rise, Al - le - lu - ia!
 2 There the glo - rious tri - umph waits; Al - le - lu - ia!

glo - rious to his na - tive skies; Al - le - lu - ia!
 lift your heads, e - ter - nal gates! Al - le - lu - ia!

Christ, a - while to mor - tals given, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Wide un - fold the ra - diant scene; Al - le - lu - ia!

en - ters now the high - est heaven! Al - le - lu - ia!
 take the King of glo - ry in! Al - le - lu - ia!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt. Music: *Llanfair*, Robert Williams (1781-1821)

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The Bishop offers a Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen.**

The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you. **Amen.**

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace. **Amen.**

Alleluia, alleluia. Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thank you to everyone across the Cooper Episcopal Consortium for gathering in prayer
this evening, and for all leading worship tonight:

The Rev. Genevieve R. Bishop *St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Haddon Heights*
Diane Caruso *Grace Episcopal Church, Haddonfield*
Christina Crowthers *St. John's Episcopal Church, Maple Shade*
The Rev. Mark H. Chattin *Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Collingswood*
The Rev. Bob Fitzpatric..... *Grace Episcopal Church, Merchantville*
The Rev. James Gowland *Grace Episcopal Church, Haddonfield*
The Rev. Anna C. Noon *St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Cherry Hill*
The Rev. Jenni Ovenstone Smith *Grace Episcopal Church, Haddonfield*
The Rt. Rev. William H. Stokes *Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey*