

Ever Closer

As We Gather

The most forgotten Thursday of the Church Year often is Ascension. So, we celebrate that Festival on a Sunday. Coming forty days after Easter, Ascension recalls not merely how our Lord went off with His disciples and disappeared into the clouds, but also the promise that remains with them. He will be present always, and in the End of Days He will return from the clouds in even greater glory, and will take all of His people home.

493 A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing

LSB 493



1 A hymn of glo - ry let us sing! New
2 The ho - ly ap - os - tol - ic band Up -
3 To them the shin - ing an - gels cry, "Why
4 "You see Him now, as - cend - ing high Up



hymns through - out the world shall ring: Al - le - lu - ia,
on the Mount of Ol - ives stand. Al - le - lu - ia,
stand and gaze up - on the sky?" Al - le - lu - ia,
to the por - tals of the sky." Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia! Christ, by a road be - fore un -
al - le - lu - ia! And with His faith - ful fol - l'wers
al - le - lu - ia! "This is the Sav - ior," thus they
al - le - lu - ia! "Here - af - ter Je - sus you shall



trod, As - cends un - to the throne of
see Their Lord as - cend in maj - es -
say; "This is His glo - rious tri - umph
see Re - turn - ing in great maj - es -



God. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
ty. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
day!" Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
ty." Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
 lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

5 Be now our joy on earth, O Lord,
 And be our future great reward.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Then, throned with You forever, we
 Shall praise Your name eternally.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

△ 6 O risen Christ, ascended Lord,
 All praise to You let earth accord:
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 You are, while endless ages run,
 With Father and with Spirit one.
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Text: Bede, 673–735; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt.

Tune: Geistliche Kirchengesäng, 1623, Köln

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Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and examination

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father.
C Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

The Pax

P The peace of the Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Kyrie

LSB 152

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C Amen.

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

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.

C Amen.

First Reading

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.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm

P ¹Clap your hands, all peoples!
Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Epistle

Ephesians 1:15–23

¹⁵For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far 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. ²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

P Christ has risen from the dead.

C **God the Father has crowned Him with glory and honor.**

P He has given Him dominion over the works of His hands;

C **He has put all things under His feet.**

Verse

Romans 6:9; Matthew 28:20b

P Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

C **Alleluia. Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Alleluia.**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

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.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

491 Up through Endless Ranks of Angels

LSB 491



1 Up through end - less ranks of an - gels, Cries of tri - umph
 2 Death - de - stroy - ing, life - re - stor - ing, Prov - en e - qual
 3 To our lives of wan - ton wan - d'ring Send Your Spir - it,
 △ 4 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Oh, to breathe the



in His ears, To His heav'n - ly throne as - cend - ing,
 to our need, Now for us be - fore the Fa - ther
 prom - ised guide; Through our lives of fear and fail - ure
 Spir - it's grace! Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Hav - ing van - quished all their fears, Christ looks down up -
 As our broth - er in - ter - cede; Flesh that for our
 With Your pow'r and love a - bide; Wel - come us, as
 Oh, to see the Fa - ther's face! Al - le - lu - ia,



on His faith - ful, Leav - ing them in hap - py tears.
world was wound - ed, Liv - ing, for the wound - ed plead!
You were wel - comed, To an end - less Eas - ter - tide.
al - le - lu - ia! Oh, to feel the Son's em - brace!

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008

Tune: Henry V. Gerike, 1948

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Sermon - So He Can Be Closer

Nicene Creed

C 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.**

Prayer of the Church

- P** Risen, ascended, and glorified Lord, hear the prayers of Your people and grant us grace that we may recognize Your presence in Word and Sacrament and receive there the fruits of Your redeeming work until You come again to deliver us into Your presence on high. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Sustain Your church, O Lord, that she may be faithful in all that You have given her to do and be kept in unity of doctrine and life through the days of trial until at last the church in heaven and the church on earth are one in Your presence on high. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Order all things on earth by Your Word that those entrusted with the leadership of the nations may fulfill Your purpose in the pursuit of peace, justice, and godliness on behalf of all people. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Supply to the sick and those who suffer the grace to sustain them in the day of their trouble and give comfort to the dying and those who mourn, [*especially. . .*]. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** By Your Spirit bring us to repentance and to faith in Your Word and promise, that we may approach Your altar with confidence and receive for our benefit Your body and blood given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Help us by Your grace to lead a holy and godly life, worthy of our calling as Your own people by Baptism and faith, and help us to give witness to the hope that is within us before a world in darkness. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**

P Accept the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving we bring with our lips and the tithes and offerings of our hands as the worship acceptable in Your sight. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

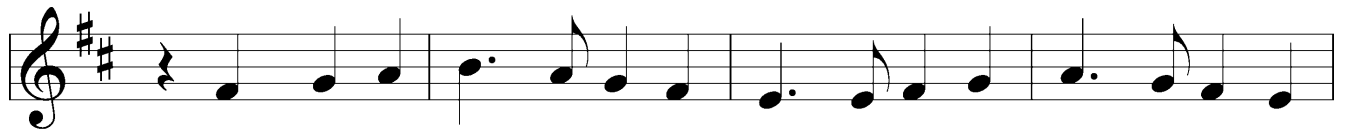
P Having in remembrance all those who have loved Your appearing and who now rest in Your mercy, we pray for that day when we shall join with them in the marriage feast of the Lamb in Your kingdom without end.

C Glory, honor, blessing, and praise to You, O risen and ascended Lord. Amen.

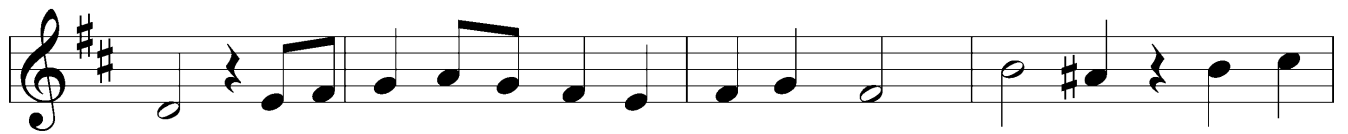
Offering - Let us thank the Lord with the Offering

Offertory

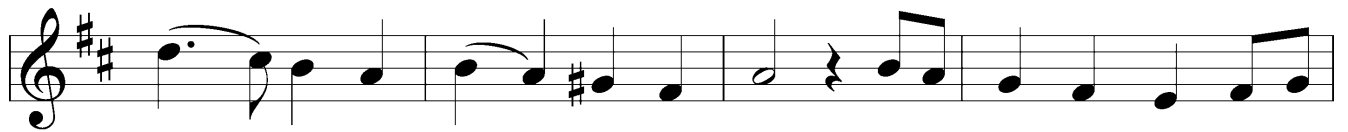
LSB 176



C What shall I ren - der to the Lord for all His ben - e-fits to



me? I will of-fer the sac-ri - fice of thanks - giv - ing and will



call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-



va-tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my



vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo - ple, in the

courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je-ru - sa - lem.

Preface

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** We lift them to the Lord.

- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

- P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who after His resurrection appeared openly to all His disciples and in their sight was taken up into heaven that He might make us partakers of His divine life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 161

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
 Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in My remembrance."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✝ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in My remembrance."

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

LSB 163

C Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Organ Music during the Distribution

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199

C Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-
cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,

which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy
peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Dismissal

- P** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!
- C** Thanks be to God.

495 Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious

LSB 495



1 Look, ye saints, the sight is glo - rious; See the Man of
2 Crown the Sav - ior! An - gels, crown Him! Rich the tro - phies
3 Sin - ners in de - ri - sion crowned Him, Mock - ing thus the
4 Hark, those bursts of ac - cla - ma - tion! Hark, those loud tri -



Sor - rows now! From the fight re - turned vic - to - rious,
Je - sus brings; On the seat of pow'r en - throne Him
Sav - ior's claim; Saints and an - gels crowd a - round Him,
um - phant chords! Je - sus takes the high - est sta - tion;



Ev - 'ry knee to Him shall bow. Crown Him! Crown Him!
While the vault of heav - en rings. Crown Him! Crown Him!
Own His ti - tle, praise His name. Crown Him! Crown Him!
Oh, what joy the sight af - fords! Crown Him! Crown Him!



Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crowns be - come the
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown the Sav - ior
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Spread a - broad the
Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! King of kings and



vic - tor's brow. Crowns be - come the vic - tor's brow.
King of kings. Crown the Sav - ior King of kings.
vic - tor's fame. Spread a - broad the vic - tor's fame.
Lord of lords! King of kings and Lord of lords!

Text: Thomas Kelly, 1769–1855

Tune: William Owen, 1813–93

Text and tune: Public domain

Acknowledgments

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