

ASCENSIONTIDE

We bring the great season of Easter to a close as we approach the moment of Christ's ascension into heaven, and the releasing of the promise of the Spirit. Whilst there is theological debate as to when any concept of 'ascension' may have taken place, its position in most traditions – some forty or so days after Easter – allows us to have enjoyed the richness of all the post-Easter 'resurrection' stories, and seen – through the writings of Acts – the formation of this new and vibrant faith. A faith that is now our responsibility to manage, encourage, and formulate. Christ's work on earth is done. We have received all but the last link in the chain of faith's initial evolution. Now Christ will, as promised, release the overwhelming power of His Spirit through the imagery of Pentecost. It is now up to us! It is our job. It is our faith, born out of God's ultimate expression of love, his Son Jesus Christ, and planted firmly into the hearts and minds of each of us. Ascensiontide provides a time to activate those minds, and feel strength in those hearts ... and be reflections of that Son.

This short liturgy is designed to be used in your own homes – and we hope that it will be of use to you at this time. You can share it as a family around your kitchen-table as it is perfectly shaped to include a cup of coffee and your PJs! You can sit quietly by yourself, and ponder its words. However you use it, pause and remember the rest of our Church community at this time – and look forward to a time of celebration when we will indeed be together again ...

A LITURGY FOR ASCENSIONTIDE follows ...

... leading us, as it does, to the great FEAST OF PENTECOST

A LITURGY FOR ASCENSIONTIDE



Ascension tableau at the
High Altar in St. Mark's

*Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your people
and kindle in us the fire of your love*

Blessed are you, creator God,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
Your Spirit moved over the face of the waters
to bring light and life to your creation.
Pour out your Spirit on us this day
that we may walk as children of light
and by your grace reveal your presence.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

A Song of God's Righteousness

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.

Who forgives all your sins
and heals all your infirmities;
Who redeems your life from the Pit
and crowns you with faithful love and compassion;
Who satisfies you with good things,
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

The Lord executes righteousness
and judgement for all who are oppressed.
He made his ways known to Moses
and his works to the children of Israel.
The Lord has established his throne in heaven,
and his kingdom has dominion over all.

Bless the Lord, you angels of his,
you mighty ones who do his bidding
and hearken to the voice of his word.
Bless the Lord, all you his hosts,
you ministers of his who do his will.
Bless the Lord, all you works of his,
in all places of his dominion;
bless the Lord, O my soul.

A Word of Scripture

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 over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he order 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 baptised with water, but you will be baptised 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 towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards 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."

A Song of the New Creation

'I am the Lord, your Holy One,
the Creator of Israel, your King.'

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,

'Remember not the former things,
nor consider the things of old.

Behold, I am doing a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people.

The people whom I formed for myself,
that they might declare my praise.'

A Quiet Moment ...

*... as you offer your own thoughts and prayers.
You may wish to focus upon our daily e-Prayer
or use the List version as a sort-of Litany
followed by ...*

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people

All who are led by the Spirit of God
are children of God and fellow-heirs with Christ.
Renew the face of your creation, Lord,
pouring on us the gifts of your Spirit;
for the creation waits with eager longing
for the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your people
and kindle in us the fire of your love

Alternatively, you may wish to use this short Responsory ...

As we wait in silence
make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we listen to your word
make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we worship you in majesty
make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your refreshing
make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your renewing
make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your equipping
make us ready for your coming Spirit

As we long for your empowering
make us ready for your coming Spirit

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen

A Prayer for Ascension

O God the King of glory,
you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

May the Spirit kindle in us the fire of God's love
Thanks be to God
ALLELUIA!

~~~



*And, the promise of the Spirit of God will indeed be part of your life ...*

*As Pentecost arrives, so does that inner strength of service and purpose ...*

The Spirit of God fills the whole world  
Alleluia!

A Song of Ezekiel

I will take you from the nations,  
and gather you from all the countries.  
I will sprinkle clean water upon you,  
and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses.

A new heart I will give you,  
and put a new spirit within you.

And I will remove from your body the heart of stone  
and give you a heart of flesh,  
You shall be my people,  
**AND I WILL BE YOUR GOD**

