

Order of Worship for June 1, 2025

Prelude:

P: Jesus Christ is risen.

C: He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Reading of the Ascension Story: Acts 1:1–11

R: In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen. To them He presented Himself alive after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. And 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; 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, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed 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 and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and 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.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Opening Hymn: “A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing” - Hymn #493, vs. 1-4

Confession of Sins:

P: O Christ, who ascended to heaven:

C: Hear us as we pray, and have mercy on us.

P: Jesus, You are seated at the right hand of the Father.

C: Forgive us, Lord, for the many times when we feel the need to be noticed in special places and seen as extremely important in certain circles of society.

P: O Christ, to You all power has been given in heaven and on earth, Your Kingdom has no end.

C: Forgive us, Lord, for those times when we see our kingdoms, our country, our wealth and security as the only real answer for our worries and our fears.

P: Jesus, at Your Ascension the entire company of heaven burst into song at the mention of Your Holy Name.

C: Forgive us, Lord, for the many other names that have a stronger influence on our lives than Your name.

P: Christ Jesus was put to death for our trespasses

C: and raised for our justification.

P: In the name of our Ascended Lord, you are forgiven.

C: Amen.

Service of the Word

Entrance Psalm: Psalm 110

P: God has gone up with a shout,

C: the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

P: The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand,

C: until I make your enemies your footstool."

P: The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind,

C: "You are a priest forever

P: after the order of Melchizidek". The LORD is at your right hand;

C: He will shatter kings on the day of His wrath.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: God has gone up with a shout,

C: the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

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.**

Epistle: Ephesians 1:15–23

R: For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that 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, having 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, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked 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 one to come. And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn of Praise: *On Christ's Ascension Now I Build* - **Hymn #492**

Holy Gospel: Luke 24:44-53

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 24th chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Then [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 and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And 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.” Then Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple blessing God.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon Hymn: “*Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious*” - **Hymn #495**

Sermon: “*Walking with God*” Genesis 5:18-24

“When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died. When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God for 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.”

(Genesis 5:18-24)



When you come up for communion you may notice the kneelers here that were needlepointed 45 years ago by women who are now all with the Lord. I remember being told here when I got here in 1984 to never get dirt or wax on them or else I should take the first bus out of town. They depict the life of Jesus. One of them which looks like this, which is for Jesus’ Ascension. It shows the chariot of fire which took Elijah into heaven, a story that is often used as the Old Testament lesson for Ascension. According to 2 Kings Elijah did not die, but was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire as witnessed by his successor, Elisha. In the whole of Scriptures there is only

one other person who did not die—Enoch. Unlike the story of Elijah’s ascension, Genesis simply tells us. “Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.” There is no description of how it happened.

Wouldn’t it be great to avoid death like Elijah and Enoch? People have often stated that it is not so much death that they fear, but dying. Even if we try to keep our lives busy to not think about death, it still hits us, not just thinking about our own, but about loved ones who have died or those who seem likely to. There would be no life insurance, no estate court, no undertakers, much less concern about medical problems. But would it be great?

Romans 6:23 tells us, “The wages of sin is death.” We see this as a punishment, but it is also the result of sin. Sin ultimately means separation from God. Death, in Scriptures, does not mean so much the heart stopping pumping and the lungs ceasing to breathe, but separation from God. That is what happened when Adam and Eve broke from God. All humanity at that point was dead, willingly separating ourselves from God. God then allowed Adam and Eve to later die physically. Later in Genesis 6 we read:

When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

God shortened the length of how long people would live. We know that the decade of age 100-110 is one of the fastest growing in the world, but no one lives past 120. Before God said that we hear of those like Adam, Methuselah and Noah living over 900 years. This was punishment against sinners, but it also did something else.

Imagine our world if people did not die. I am not thinking of the issue of overpopulation. Think of what would happen in our sinful condition. It is bad enough what we do wrong and fail to do right in at most 100 plus years, imagine what it would be like in eternity. There is a word that describes that. It is hell.

Instead in His love God puts a check on sin by allowing us to die. It does not turn our hearts to God. But it definitely puts a check on it. People are held back from doing wrong by the fear of punishment, a fear that goes back to the primal fear

of death, the desire to survive. But it also shows how desperate our situation is. It's the law that turns us to receive the Gospel, the good news from God.

Enoch and Elijah did not die. We hear about Enoch that, "He walked faithfully with God." It doesn't mean he was perfect. Scripture makes it clear that Jesus is the only human who can claim that. But "walking with God" meant he was in communication with God. The same was true for Elijah as the prophet who spoke God's Word and who had that wondrous experience of having God talk to him not in the earthquake, fire, or wind, but in "a still small voice." How great that would be!

But what about us? The hymn, "In the Garden" speaks about how God "Walks with me and talks with me," but He doesn't. At least I can't be sure of that. But instead, as Hebrews tells us, "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son." As close as Enoch and Elijah were to God, there is no way to get closer to Him than through Christ Jesus. In Jesus we see God stripped down to what He really is—the God who loves! There is no clearer view of Him than Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead!

So why the story of Enoch not dying? At least with Elijah we can say that his ascension helps to put a rubber stamp on the truth of his prophecy. But what about Enoch?

I would like to show a parallel in the events surrounding Jesus' death and resurrection. When Jesus went to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He told His disciples to get a donkey and its colt for Him. They do it. This would be like going into someone's car and driving off with it. When the owner of the animals asked the disciples what they were doing, they said as Jesus commanded them, "The master has need of it." The owner let them go on. That week when Jesus saw a fig tree with no fruit, He cursed it. Later the disciples saw that it was withered. When Jesus told the disciples to prepare for the Passover, He told them to follow a man carrying a pitcher to a place where they would have the meal. That may not seem like a big deal to us, but in those days normally only women carried water. The disciples did find such a man and did prepare the meal there. As Jesus was arrested, Peter cut off the ear of a servant. Jesus stopped Peter and restored the ear to the man. Just as Jesus predicted Peter denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed and Judas betrayed Him. As Jesus died the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the curtain in the temple was ripped in half, and dead people came out of

their tombs. All these individually may not seem like much, but added together they show that God was at work. They are “little signs” that point to the big one—Jesus rising from the dead.

“Enoch walked faithfully with God.” He got to converse with Him. If you look at the Bible it begins with the story of creation. That story is not so much about how the world began, but about God and His Word. What God says happens. Jesus is God’s Word, God is making this happen. We have that Word, the Word that tells us God made us, He condemns our sin, He forgives us, we have eternal life with Him, and above all that, He loves us. That is walking with God.

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

Sharing Our Ministry:

Offering & Voluntary:

The Call to Holy Communion

P: Jesus, who rose and ascended to sit at the Father’s right hand, bids us to come to His table to receive His true body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine of His Holy Supper. Therefore, we partake of His Sacrament, confessing our faith in Him:

All: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin; from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

The Words of Our Lord:

Lord’s Prayer:

Distribution: Hymns-- “*See, the Lord Ascends in Triumph*” - **Hymn #494**,
“*Up Through Endless Ranks of Angels*” - **Hymn #491 vs. 1-3.**

Hymn After Communion: *Up Through Endless Ranks of Angels*” - **Hymn #491 vs. 4**

Prayer after Communion:

P: Almighty God, Your only Son was taken up into heaven and in power intercedes for

us. May we also come into Your presence and live forever in Your glory; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing: (Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: “*A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing*” – **Hymn #493, vs. 5-6**

Postlude