

Sunday Worship Service – May 17, 2026
Ascension Sunday
Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book – Holy Communion Setting 7

Words of Welcome by Pastor

Land Acknowledgement & Welcome Statement

Introduction to the Theme of the Bible Readings*

Today we celebrate Ascension Sunday. Ascension Day was actually on May 14, exactly 40 days after Easter Sunday, so we celebrate it today, the closest Sunday to May 14.

Joy flows through the Ascension Bible readings as the Easter season comes to a close – a reminder to us that the Easter season is a season of joy and celebration. Christ is risen, then Christ ascends to heaven. Even so, the risen Christ is in our very midst, for we are the body of Christ, the resurrection community, called to rejoice together in loving community.

Thanksgiving for Baptism ¹

Children of God, we claim again God's promises to us.

We recommit ourselves to service in Christ.

We place our hope and trust in God

and pray for the work of God's Spirit in our midst.

Baptism is a sign of God's faithful covenant promises,
under which we live each day, as the Family of God.

Let us remember now our baptism and be thankful.

We thank you, O God, for our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection.

In the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters,
and you created everything that is—seen and unseen.

In the time of Noah you destroyed evil in the water of the flood,
and by your saving ark you gave a new beginning.

In the night of trouble you led Israel through the sea,
out of slavery into the freedom of the promised land.

In the water of the Jordan

Jesus was baptized by John and anointed by your Spirit.

¹ Reprinted by permission from *The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition*, © 2013, Faith Alive Christian Resources (adapted).

In the baptism of Christ's death and resurrection,
 you have set us free from sin and death
 and opened up the way to eternal life.

**May Christ, who sank deep into death and was raised to new life,
 keep us and our loved ones safe in your loving embrace.**

**May your Spirit mark us with a faith
 that shines brightly in the light of day and endures the dark of night.**

To you be all honor and glory, now and forever,
 In the name of the + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

#526 Gathering Hymn "God is Here!"

1. **God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
 may we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.
 Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
 wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.**
2. **Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;
 here are table, font and pulpit; here the cross has central place.
 Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech,
 here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.**
3. **Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold;
 here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old.
 Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore
 what it means in daily living to believe and to adore.**
4. **Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt,
 keep us faithful to the gospel; help us work your purpose out.
 Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive;
 we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!**

p.175 **Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

p.175 **Kyrie**

**Lord, have mercy on us; O Lord, have mercy.
 Lord, have mercy on us; O Lord, have mercy.
 Christ, have mercy on us; O Christ, have mercy.
 Christ, have mercy on us; O Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy on us; O Lord, have mercy.
 Lord, have mercy on us; O Lord, have mercy.
 O Lord, have mercy.**

p.176 **Canticle of Praise “Gloria”**

**Gloria, gloria, gloria, glory to God on high!
 Gloria, gloria, gloria, glory to God on high!
 And on earth peace to God’s people. Glory to God.
 And on earth peace to God’s people. Glory to God.**

Prayer of the Day*

Almighty God, as we prepare to worship today, we ask that you will stretch our imaginations to sense the majesty and mystery of your ascension. Help us perceive how Jesus' presence in heaven can give us confidence in our praying and hope for the future. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

In today’s reading from the book of Acts, we hear that before he is lifted into heaven, Jesus promises that the missionary work of the disciples will spread out from Jerusalem to all the world. His words provide an outline of the book of Acts.

A reading from the Acts of the apostles’, chapter 1:

Theophilus, the first scroll I wrote concerned everything Jesus did and taught from the beginning, right up to the day when he was taken up into heaven. Before Jesus was taken up, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus instructed the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, Jesus showed them that he was alive with many convincing proofs. Jesus appeared to them over a period of forty days, speaking to them about God’s kingdom. While they were eating together, Jesus ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what God had promised. Jesus said, “This is what you heard from me: John baptized with water, but in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, “Lord, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?”

Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that God has set by God's own authority. Rather, 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 end of the earth."

After Jesus said these things, as they were watching, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight. While Jesus was going away and as they were staring toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood next to them. They said, "Galileans, why are you standing here, looking toward heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you saw him go into heaven." (CEB)

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

The risen and exalted Christ reigns over the entire universe. The author of Ephesians prays that we are given the wisdom to know the power of the risen Christ and the empowering hope that the knowledge of this inheritance provides.

A reading from Ephesians, chapter 1,

Since I heard about your faith in Jesus and your love for all God's people, this is the reason that I don't stop giving thanks to God for you when I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of glory, will give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation that makes God known to you. I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, and what is the overwhelming greatness of God's power that is working among us believers. This power is conferred by the energy of God's powerful strength. God's power was at work in Christ when God raised Jesus from the dead and sat him at God's right side in the heavens, far above every ruler and authority and power and angelic power, any power that might be named not only now but in the future. God put everything under Christ's feet and made him head of everything in the church, which is his body. His body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, who fills everything in every way.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

p.179 **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia!

Gospel Reading: Luke 24:44-53

On the day of his ascension, Jesus leaves his disciples with a commission, a blessing, and a promise of the Holy Spirit.

The holy gospel according to Luke, the 24th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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 from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. Jesus said to them, “This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in Jesus’ name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. Look, I’m sending to you what God promised, but you are to stay in the city until you have been furnished with heavenly power.” Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, where he lifted his hands and blessed them. As Jesus blessed them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. They worshipped Jesus and returned to Jerusalem overwhelmed with joy. And they were continuously in the temple praising God.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

#393 Hymn of the Day “A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!” (verses 1,2,5)

1. **A hymn of glory let us sing!**

New hymns throughout the world shall ring: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Christ, by a road before untrod, ascends unto the throne of God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2. **The holy apostolic band
upon the Mount of Olives stand, Alleluia! Alleluia!
and with his faithful foll'wers see their Lord ascend in majesty.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

5. **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!**

Affirmation of Faith

**I believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God,
who knows our names and recognizes our deepest needs.
I believe that Christ is the divine Child of the living God,
and that Jesus' grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted.
I believe in the bathing, refreshing, Spirit of God
who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.
I believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures,
and that hard times and disciplines are also loving gifts.
I believe that our journey does have a purpose and a destination,
and that our path leads to a final glory we cannot yet imagine.
I believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road,
and that we are called to refresh one another as God refreshes us. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession²

Rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you,
O God; through Jesus Christ. Prayer petitions will end with "Hear us, O God"
and the congregation responds by praying "your mercy is great."
A brief silence.

Gracious God, Jesus ascended to fill all time and space and is present with all
people. By your Holy Spirit, lead your church and its leaders in faith, hope,
and love, and in sharing the presence of Christ.
Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

² <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/DayTexts>

Majestic God, Jesus entrusts his ministry to his followers to care for all you have created. Instill in us a commitment to sustainable ecological practices. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Almighty God, Jesus sits at your right hand and rules the cosmos. Inspire national and local politicians to lead with equity and fairness, raise up advocates and activists for those seeking justice, and cultivate peace throughout the world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Merciful God, Jesus carries with him the scars of suffering as our wounded healer. Guide with your wisdom the work of surgeons, pharmacists, midwives, and all medical specialists, and bring your healing touch to all who are sick. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Caring God, Jesus reveals the depths of your love and gathers all people to himself. Accompany us in our work and play to make your presence known in all that we do. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the risen Christ be with you always! **And also with you!**

Offering and Offering Prayer*

Source of life, pour your blessing upon the gifts we bring before you. Bless our giving in your abundance for the restoration of all people. Through our offering, may those who are weary be energized; may those who feel forgotten find a home. With the joy of your grace filling our hearts, we pray. Amen.

p.180 **Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is a right, good and joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to you for the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ,

who in dying destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with your creatures on earth and all the heavenly chorus, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

p.181 **Holy, holy, holy Lord God, God of might and power; holy is the Lord.
 Holy, holy, holy Lord God, God of might and power; holy is the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest, hosanna here on earth.
 Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest, hosanna here on earth.
 Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

Eucharistic Prayer E: The Season of Easter³

Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth. We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending Jesus.

Holy are you, and holy is your son, Jesus Christ,
 who taught his disciples to listen for his voice and to follow him,
 even when all hope seemed lost.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 Our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat, this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, Jesus took the cup,
 Gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the covenant in my blood,
 Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

³ *With One Voice: Leaders Edition*, Eucharistic Prayer E – The Season of Easter, p.69 (adapted for inclusive language). © 1995 Augsburg Fortress Minneapolis.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in Christ.

Through him all honour is yours, almighty God, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Amen.

Communion Distribution

p.182 ***Lamb of God***

**O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.**

**O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.**

have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.

**O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
Grant us your peace, grant us your peace.**

#482 Communion Hymn "I Come with Joy"

- 1. I come with joy a child of God, forgiven, loved, and free,
the life of Jesus to recall in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.**
- 2. I come with Christians far and near to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.**
- 3. As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends,**

and strangers now are friends.

4. **The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known, alive among us here,
alive among us here.**
5. **Together met, together bound by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.**

Communion Blessing

Prayer after communion

Most gracious and generous God, you open your hand and feed those who hunger. Grant us faith to trust your wise providing, courage to share our bread, and grace to pour out our lives in service to others as Christ poured out himself to us. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing

May the Lord bless you and keep you

May the Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace.

#551 Sending Hymn *"The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve"*

1. **The Spirit sends us forth to serve; we go in Jesus' name
to bring glad tidings to the poor, God's favor to proclaim.**
2. **We go to comfort those who mourn and set the burdened free;
where hope is dim, to share a dream and help the blind to see.**
3. **We go to be the hands of Christ, to scatter joy like seed
and, all our days, to cherish life, to do the loving deed.**
4. **Then let us go to serve in peace, the gospel to proclaim.
God's Spirit has empowered us; we go in Jesus' name.**

Sending

Go in peace, filled with the joy of the risen Christ
to love and serve God through word and deed. **Thanks be to God!**