

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda NY
May 21st, 2023**



AS WE GATHER

Ascension Day is an opportunity for God's people to celebrate Christ the King taking His throne in glory, honor, and authority at God the Father's right hand. Like the ancient believers, who clapped their hands and shouted praises to God at the coronation of their king, we rejoice in the victory King Jesus earned for us, His people, by means of His death and resurrection. Our praises keep rolling from our Easter celebration some forty days ago, all the way to today and even beyond, as we witness Jesus now seated in glory and majesty. Shout your praises to God! The same King who is exalted over all things in heaven and on earth is the King who stoops to serve us as we gather to worship Him!

✠ PREPARATION ✠

**LSB 676 Behold a Host, Arrayed in White
CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

In the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Let us come before our Lord and King in a time of confession so that we may receive assurance of His mercy and forgiveness.

We take a moment of silence for personal prayers and reflection.

Lord Jesus, You are the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

All things have been created by You: things in heaven and things on earth, visible and invisible.

All things are Yours, including us. We have been created by You and for Your glory.

Yet our sinfulness separates us from You and Your will for our lives. By what we do and what we fail to do, we fall apart without You holding us together.

Lord Jesus, in all things You reign supreme. You are the King of all, the Sovereign of our souls. God the Father dwells fully in You.

By Your blood, You have reconciled us to the Father. By Your cross, grant us Your forgiveness and peace. Amen.

Our merciful God is pleased to have all His fullness dwell in His crucified, risen, and ascended Son, Jesus Christ. He alone is the image of God, and in Him all things hold together. Through faith in Christ, you and I have been reconciled to God and stand renewed in His presence. As a called and ordained servant of Christ the King, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

✘ WORD ✘

Introit

God has gone up with a shout,
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.
The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool."
The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind,
"You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."
The Lord is at your right hand;
he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory be to God on High,
and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee. We glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

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.

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.” This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse

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

Holy Gospel *Luke 24:44–53*

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

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

⁴⁴Then he 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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

**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.**

LSB 493 A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing

Sermon

Offertory

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from
me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free
spirit. Amen.*

Offering

Prayer of the Church

The King invites His people to boldly pray and seek His will for our lives. Loving Father, You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to bear our sins and to be our Savior. By His death, He has destroyed death. By His rising to new life, He has given to us the guarantee of life forever with You. By His ascension to heaven's glorious throne, He has proven that He is King of kings and Lord of lords. Lord, in Your mercy,
reign in our hearts.

Sovereign of all, we thank You that nothing is hidden from Your sight. In mercy, You have redeemed Your fallen creation by reconciling sinners to their Creator through the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. Look with favor upon us and our families, our congregation and our community, guiding our steps in the way of peace. Grant boldness to all who bear Your name, raising

up faithful men and women who serve in positions of leadership among us, that we each may live out our callings under Your authority and care. Lord, in Your mercy,

reign in our hearts.

Restoring Redeemer, the brokenness of our lives bears witness to the fact that, without You holding us together, we are lost and hopeless. Rescue those who despair, and grant patience to those suffering in times of trial, anguish, and loss. Comfort those who are saddened by the death of those they love. Fill with perfect peace those who belong to You, [*including . . .*]. Let all who hunger and thirst for what You alone can give find their solace and rest in You. Lord, in Your mercy,

reign in our hearts.

Crucified, risen, and exalted King, our Lord Jesus, with the ancient worshipers who clapped their hands and shouted their praises at the coronation of their sovereign, we rejoice in Your exaltation to the Father's glory and in Your promise to come again. Preserve us in faith until that coming, glorious, and awesome Day! Instill in us an ever-deepening reliance upon Your Word and Spirit. Create in us hearts that are ready to receive Your presence as You draw near to us again this day in Your body and blood. Make us one, Lord, even as You are one. Lord, in Your mercy,

reign in our hearts.

With confidence in the King who reigns supreme and governs all things in heaven and on earth for the benefit of His people, we entrust our prayers into Your care, O gracious Father, for You live and reign with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Preface

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.

It is meet and right so to do.

It is truly meet, 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

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

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 forever and
ever. Amen.**

The Words of Our Lord

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 remembrance of Me.”

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 remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

Agnus Dei

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.

Distribution

LSB 570 Just as I Am, Without One Plea

Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Thanksgiving

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
and His mercy endureth forever.

Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Salutation and Benedicamus

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Bless we the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Benediction

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.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

LSB 701 Draw Us to Thee