

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
May 17, 2026
The Ascension of Our Lord (Observed)**



AS WE GATHER

Ascension Day is not Jesus saying goodbye to His Church. It is His coronation as the crucified, risen, and reigning Lord. In Acts 1:1–11, Jesus ascends bodily into heaven, not to abandon His disciples, but to rule all things for His people and send them as witnesses by the power of the Holy Spirit. Like the disciples, we often want visible glory, immediate answers, and control over God’s timing. But Christ gives something better: His Word, His Spirit, His forgiveness, and His promise to return. Our ascended Lord is not absent. He is present with His Church through Word and Sacrament, interceding for sinners, strengthening faith, and sending His Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Welcome to all of our Members, Guests, and Visitors today, if you are a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoyed your time worshiping with us today.

Hymn of Invocation LSB 915 Today Your Mercy Calls Us

Stand

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

C *Amen.*

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C *who made heaven and earth.*

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C *and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Stand

SERVICE OF THE 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.
God has gone up with a shout,
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

C *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

LSB 186

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

Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 187

P Glory be to God on high:

C *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

P The Lord be with you.

C *And with thy spirit.*

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.*

Sit

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.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia

LSB 190

C *Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.*

Holy Gospel

Luke 24:44–53

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

C *Glory be to Thee, 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 be to Thee, O Christ.*

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.**

Sit

Hymn of the Day LSB 492 On Christ Ascension I Now Build

Sermon

Stand

Offertory

LSB 192

☐ *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.*

Sit

Offering

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord God, King over all the earth, reigning over the nations from on Your holy throne: Graciously receive our prayers and praises. Subdue the devil, the world and our sinful flesh under the feet of Your people, that we may share in the victory Christ has won for us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Merciful Lord, You have put all things under Jesus' feet and given Him as head to the Church. Have mercy on the congregations where You gather Your people. Give pastors wisdom and insight to hold fast to the message of repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Open the ears of all who hear, that we may rejoice to be Christ's Body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Father of glory, You raised Your only begotten Son from the dead and established Him at Your right hand so that we might be part of Your household forever. Bless our homes as we await our day of resurrection. Be the companion and consolation of those who live in solitude. Strengthen husbands and wives, that their love would exemplify the love between Christ and His Church. Bless parents and children as they gather around Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty God, You have raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at Your right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion. Guide all such authorities

on earth, that they may govern wisely, operate with integrity and maintain peace after Your good pleasure. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Heavenly Father, give patience and endurance to all who are sick or in any need, [*especially* _____,] and heal them according to Your will. Give comfort and hope to all who mourn [*especially* _____]. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Lord of hosts, You have instituted and given Your Sacrament for the faithful to receive the very body and blood of Your Son for their forgiveness, life and salvation. Grant us all pure hearts to receive this gift worthily. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together 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, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

Preface

LSB 194

P The Lord be with you.

C *And with thy spirit.*

P Lift up your hearts.

C *We lift them up unto the Lord.*

P Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

C *It is meet and right so to do.*

P 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

LSB 195

C *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

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

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

LSB 197

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 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

LSB 197

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C *Amen.*

Agnus Dei

LSB 198

C *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.

Sit

Distribution Hymn LSB 637 Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord

Stand

Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199

- C** *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

LSB 200

- A** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
C *and His mercy endureth forever.*
- A** 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 in 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.
- C** *Amen.*
- P** The Lord be with you.
C *And with thy spirit.*

Benedicamus

LSB 202

- A** Bless we the Lord.
- C** *Thanks be to God.*

Benediction

LSB 202

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.
- C** *Amen, amen, amen.*

Hymn to Depart LSB 918 Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book
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