



*Ascension*  
OF THE LORD

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Thursday, May 25, 2017

7:00 p.m.

St. Mark's is a member of the  
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod



Pastor Aaron Nitz  
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## **Welcome to God's House of Worship!**

We consider it a privilege to worship our living and ascended Lord with you this evening! If you have any questions regarding our congregation, please talk with the pastor. We look forward to meeting you. Please come again and worship with us very soon!

- The order of worship is found in this folder.
- Restrooms are located in the foyer.
- Our fellowship hall is equipped with a speaker and child-friendly toys.

## **Jesus' Ascension: Reassured, Refocused, and Rejoicing Because of our Ascended Lord Jesus**

What do you think it would have been like to see Jesus ascend into the sky before your very eyes? Imagine the picture that Jesus left for His disciples: His hands raised in the air to show them the nail marks, the very price of their salvation, His hands up in blessing—reminding them of His continual blessing on them, powerfully rising into the sky—reminding them of His infinite power, and the fact that a cloud hid Him from their sight—He didn't leave, they just couldn't see Him anymore! What an amazing sight to remember about the Lord! What an amazing sight for us! How comforting to know that right now Jesus sits at the right hand of God with all power and authority and rules all things in the best interests of His people—including you! Today we'll focus on 3 aspects of Jesus' ascension: reassured, refocused, and rejoicing.

## Prayer Before Worship

Lord Jesus, You are the Ruler of all things! Forgive me for doubting, questioning, worrying, wondering, and wandering. As I again see You ascending, fix my gaze on the clouds, that I might eagerly await Your coming again! Then direct my eyes also to this world, that I might eagerly serve You and spread Your kingdom here on earth. In Your powerful, saving name I pray. Amen.

## *The Order of Service*

### OPENING HYMN

**A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing**  
*Christian Worship 171 (v. 1-4)*

### GREETING

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**Congregation: And also with you.**

### DIALOGUE FOR THE ASCENSION

M: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

**C: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

M: Christ is ascended into heaven! Alleluia!

**C: And he will come again! Alleluia!**

M: Clap your hands, all you nations!

**C: Shout to God with cries of joy!**

M: How awesome is the Lord Most High!

**C: The great King over all the earth!**

M: God has ascended amid shouts of joy!

**C: The Lord amid the sounding of trumpets!**

M: Sing praises to God, sing praises!

**C: Sing praises to our King, sing praises!**

M: For God is the King of all the earth! God reigns over the nations!

**C: God is seated on his holy throne!**

M: Jesus says, "Whoever sins is a slave to sin." We confess before God, our Ruler, that we have sinned and gone astray:

**C: O Lord, "Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me... Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am faint; ... My soul is in anguish."**

M: People of God, because of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus, as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed your transgressions from you. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has had compassion on you – His child. Your sins are forgiven! You are at peace with God, the Almighty!

M: How awesome is the LORD, Most High, the great King over all the earth!

**C: He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet.**

M: God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets. Sing praises to God, sing praises.

**C: For God is the King of all the earth!**

M: God reigns over the nations;

**C: God is seated on his holy throne.**

M: The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to God!

**C: He is greatly exalted!**

M: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

**C: Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again! Alleluia!**

*After brief introduction, the congregation sings...*

**Be now our joy on earth, O Lord,  
And be our future great reward.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Then, throned with you forever, we  
Shall praise your name eternally.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**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!"**

#### **ASCENSION PRAYER OF THE DAY**

M: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, King of glory, on this day you ascended far above the heavens and at God's right hand you rule the nations. Leave us not alone, we pray, but grant us the Spirit of truth that at your command and by your power we may be your witnesses in all the world; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## The Word

### FIRST LESSON

Esther 6 (NIV2011)

#### Reassured by the Rule of Christ

That night the king could not sleep; so he ordered the book of the chronicles, the record of his reign, to be brought in and read to him. <sup>2</sup>It was found recorded there that Mordecai had exposed Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, who had conspired to assassinate King Xerxes.

<sup>3</sup>"What honor and recognition has Mordecai received for this?" the king asked.

"Nothing has been done for him," his attendants answered.

<sup>4</sup>The king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the palace to speak to the king about impaling Mordecai on the pole he had set up for him.

<sup>5</sup>His attendants answered, "Haman is standing in the court."

"Bring him in," the king ordered.

<sup>6</sup>When Haman entered, the king asked him, "What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?"

Now Haman thought to himself, "Who is there that the king would rather honor than me?" <sup>7</sup>So he answered the king, "For the man the king delights to honor, <sup>8</sup>have them bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king has ridden, one with a royal crest placed on its head.<sup>9</sup> Then let the robe and horse be entrusted to one of the king's most noble princes. Let them robe the man the king delights to honor, and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!"

<sup>10</sup>"Go at once," the king commanded Haman. "Get the robe and the horse and do just as you have suggested for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate. Do not neglect anything you have recommended."

<sup>11</sup>So Haman got the robe and the horse. He robed Mordecai, and led him on

horseback through the city streets, proclaiming before him, “This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!”

<sup>12</sup> Afterward Mordecai returned to the king’s gate. But Haman rushed home, with his head covered in grief, <sup>13</sup> and told Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him.

His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, “Since Mordecai, before whom your downfall has started, is of Jewish origin, you cannot stand against him—you will surely come to ruin!” <sup>14</sup> While they were still talking with him, the king’s eunuchs arrived and hurried Haman away to the banquet Esther had prepared.

## PSALM OF THE DAY

**Psalm 47A**

(printed on the insert)

*This is our final test psalm for the WELS Hymnal Project. Your feedback is welcome. Please give your survey to an usher as you leave church today. Thanks for participating!*

## SECOND LESSON

**Colossians 3:1-4** (NIV2011)

### **Refocused by Being Raised with Christ**

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup>For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

## HYMN

**On Christ’s Ascension I Now Build**

*Christian Worship 173*

## GOSPEL

Luke 24:44-53 (NIV2011)

### Rejoicing Because of Christ

<sup>44</sup> He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

<sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup> He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

<sup>50</sup> When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. <sup>53</sup> And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

## HYMN

**Draw Us to Thee**  
*Christian Worship 170*

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

*Luther's Explanation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Article of the Apostle's Creed*

**C: I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.**

M: What do you mean when you make this confession of your faith?

**C: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.**

**He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, 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.**

**All this He did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.**

**This is most certainly true.**

## **OFFERING**

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

M: Confident of our Lord's return, let us approach our Father's throne of mercy on behalf of the Church and of all people.

Gracious Lord God, amid shouts of joy we celebrate your Son's ascension into heaven where he is now seated in majesty at your right hand. Grant your Church steadfastness in these gray and latter days that she may hold to the truth and boldly confess the saving name of Jesus.

**C: As the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh seek to silence our witness to the truth, grant us courage to believe in our hearts and confess with our lips that Jesus is Lord.**

M: Even as your beloved Son intercedes on behalf of his Church, so has he commanded us, his kingdom of priests, to pray for others.

**C: Hear us, O Lord, as we implore you to show mercy to those in need:**

M: to the sick, the lonely, and the depressed grant relief;  
to the dying and those who mourn bring comfort;  
to the hungry, the homeless, and the unemployed send your help;  
to the elderly, give joy for living life to the full;  
to the young send patience to wait for the fuller life to come;  
to husbands and wives and their families, to single parents who raise their children alone grant wisdom and strength.

**C: Pour out your blessings to all who depend on your power and grace.**

M: Almighty Father, you are the good Giver of all that we have. In your mercy continue to grant us daily bread, supplying us with what we need before we even ask.

**C: Teach us to be thankful and content, whether we have plenty or are in need.**

M: O Lord, heavenly Father, we here remember the sufferings and death of your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Praising 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, we pray, 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.

**C: Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us.**

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

*Silent prayer.*

M: To you alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

M: O Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray...

**C: 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 forever. Amen.**

#### **CHOIR ANTHEM**

“Peace I Leave with You” by Jeffrey Blersch

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

**M:** Almighty God, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin and set our minds on things above. Grant that we who are reborn to new life in him may live in righteousness and holiness all our days, proclaiming his love to those who do not know him by faith, and longing for him to reappear in glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **THE BLESSING**

**M:** Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

## **CLOSING HYMN**

**Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise**

*Christian Worship 175*

## **GRADE SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**Silas Bitter**

**Ella Holderbecker**

**Noah Ricci**

## **SCHOOL CHILDREN SING**

**“Go Now in Peace” by Don Besig**

*Following the service there will be an ice cream social served in the fellowship hall.*

## **A Few Announcements**

### GARAGE SALE

On June 2 and 3, St. Mark's will host a Free Garage Sale at church. We will be accepting donated items from the congregation—including the 40 Days of Lent items—which can be **dropped off at church the week of the sale**. The Bemidji community, especially those in need, will be invited to come and take what they need free of charge. **We are looking for volunteers to help at the event; please check out the sign up sheets in the narthex!**

### WOMEN'S SHELTER

Joyful Hands for Jesus is collecting items for the battered women's shelter. There is a collection basket on the counter in the narthex which includes a wish list of items.

### OPEN HOUSES FOR OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

The members of St. Mark's are cordially invited to the following open houses in honor of our graduates from Bemidji High School:

#### **Lydia Bitter**

136 Circle Pines Drive NW

Saturday, May 27

2-4 p.m.

#### **Daniel Schnackenberg**

323 Jefferson Ave SW

Sunday, May 28

1-4 p.m.