

Church at Home Ascension Day



Before the Service

A warm welcome to this special Church at Home Ascension Day Eucharist from the Diocese of Oxford.

It is an honour to have Bishop Alan, the Bishop of Buckingham, presiding at this evening Eucharist and also to hear the Revd Catharine Mabuza reflect from her garden in Warfield, accompanied by beautiful birdsong, on the Gospel according to St Luke.

Since around the late fourth century, on the fortieth day after Easter, Christians have celebrated the risen Christ's ascension into heaven to be with his Father. Although he could no longer be present with his disciples in the flesh, Christ blessed them and commissioned them to continue his earthly ministry. He gave them the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Christ's presence remains with his people.

We are deeply thankful for the wonderful contributions of so many from across the Diocese of Oxford, including those from Warfield, Reading, Oxford, Windsor. We have received exquisite music, readings and moving prayers which we hope will lead you through this service and help in your faith journey and religious life.

We hold in our hearts throughout this act of worship all those who are dear to us and suffering in mind, body or spirit. We pray particularly for all those affected by the coronavirus pandemic and give thanks for all working on the frontline, in the NHS, care homes and delivery services. Though Christ departed from the earth to take his seat at the right hand of the Father, his compassion and love is made present to us in the work and witness of those who care for us today.

Let us join together as faithful brothers and sisters in Christ to celebrate with joy and thanksgiving the Ascension of our Lord. This evening service opens with the uplifting trumpet call from the hymn 'Hail the Day that sees Him Rise'.

The direct link to this service is published at [oxford.anglican.org/livestream](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/livestream) about an hour before the service starts. You can also find it on our YouTube, Vimeo, and Facebook pages at 8.15pm.

The Gathering

Hymn

The hymn tune Llanfair (attr. Robert Williams, 1781-1821) is used for the Ascension hymn 'Hail the day that sees Him Rise', performed by Alannah Jeune, member of the Graduate Common Room, Christ Church.

God is gone up with a shout; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

The Greeting

President In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you.

Bishop Alan Wilson, the Bishop of Buckingham, welcomes the congregations from around the Diocese of Oxford for our Church at Home Ascension Day service.

We begin this service with a reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Reading

Acts 1.1-11

Read by Tom Bower, Assistant Education Officer, Christ Church

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have 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, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set 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, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

Gloria

Sung by Tony Phelan and Liz Dowler, St Michael and All Angels, New Marston

Gloria, Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo (x3).

The Collect

President Risen Christ,
you have raised our human nature to the throne of heaven:
help us to seek and serve you,
that we may join you at the Father's side,
where you reign with the Spirit in glory,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Gospel Alleluia (Gradual Hymn)

Sung by Tony Phelan and Liz Dowler, St Michael and All Angels, New Marston

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The Word of the Lord lasts for ever – what is the Word that is living?
It is brought to us through the Son, Jesus Christ.

Alleluia...

I call you friends, says the Lord, you who are my disciples,
I make known to you all I've learned from my Father.

Alleluia...

Stay awake, pray at all times, praying that you may be strengthened,
that with confidence you can meet the Son of Man.

Alleluia...

Gospel Reading

Luke 24: 44–53

Read by Revd Vusi Mabuza, Assistant Priest in the Windsor Team Ministry.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord;
All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Reflection

Revd Catharine Mabuza, Vicar, Warfield Church.

Creed

President Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All **Christ died for our sins
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he was buried,
he was raised to life on the third day in accordance with the
Scriptures;
afterwards he appeared to his followers, and to all the
apostles;
this we have received,
and this we believe.
Amen**

Intercessions

Led by Revd Philippa White, Succentor, and Revd Canon Sarah Foot, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Christ Church.

President Let us lay all that weighs upon us
at the feet of our risen and ascended Lord Jesus.

Revd White Jesus Christ, great High Priest,
pray for the Church, your broken body in the world...
Lord, hear us.

Revd Foot Jesus Christ, King of Righteousness,
pray for the world, and guide all its leaders...
Lord, hear us.

Revd White Jesus Christ, Son of Man,
pray for your brothers and sisters in pain, distress or sorrow...
Lord, hear us.

Revd Foot Jesus Christ, pioneer of our salvation,
bringing us to glory through your death and resurrection,
receive those who have died trusting your promises...
Lord, hear us.

Revd White Jesus Christ, Lord over all things,
pray for us who serve you in one another...
Lord, hear us.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

President Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
If you love me, rejoice because I am going to the Father.'
Alleluia.

President The peace of the Lord be always with you.
All **and also with you.**

Preparation of the Table

President Blessed be God,
by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.
All **Blessed be God forever.**

The Eucharistic Prayer

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

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

President Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

President It is indeed right and good,
our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ the King of Glory.
Born of a woman,
he came to the rescue of our human race.

Dying for us,
he trampled death and conquered sin.
By the glory of his resurrection
he opened the way to life eternal
and by his ascension
gave us the sure hope
that where he is we may also be.
Therefore the universe resounds with Easter joy
and with choirs of angels we sing for ever to your praise:

Sanctus

Sung by Elizabeth Nurse, Christ Church Lay Clerk

*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty
who was, and is, and is to come.
Lift up his name with the sound of singing,
lift up his name in all the earth,
lift up your voice and give him glory
for he is worthy to be praised.*

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source of all holiness;
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,
and according to your holy will,
these gifts of bread and wine
may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,
took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,

which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

President Great is the mystery of faith:
All **Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

President And so, Father, calling to mind his death on the cross,
his perfect sacrifice made once for the sins of the whole world;
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming in glory,
we celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
As we offer you this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,
we bring before you this bread and this cup
and we thank you for counting us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people
and gather into one in your kingdom
all who share this one bread and one cup,
so that we, in the company of all the saints,
may praise and glorify you for ever,
through Jesus Christ our Lord;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.
Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Led by the Lyne family from Greyfriars Church, Reading

President With joy and faith let us pray as Christ our risen Saviour has taught us:

All **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is 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**

Breaking of the Bread

President Lord, we died with you on the cross;
now we are raised to new life.
We were buried in your tomb;
now we share in your resurrection.
Live in us, that we may live in you.

Giving of Communion

President I heard the voice of a great multitude crying, Alleluia.
The Lord our God has entered into his kingdom.

All **Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the lamb.
Alleluia.**

Hymn

*We are invited to join in singing 'King of Kings' sung by Paul and Rosie
Crowhurst, Warfield Church.*

In the darkness, we were waiting
Without hope, without light
'Til from heaven you came running
There was mercy in your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets
To a virgin came the Word
From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt

Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings

To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross

For even in your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus, for our sake you died

Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings

And the morning that you rose
All of heaven held its breath
'Til that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored

And the Church of Christ was born.
Then the Spirit lit the flame.
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel, shall not faint

By his blood and in his name
In his freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me

Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
Praise forever to the King of Kings

Prayer after Communion

President God our Father,
you have raised our humanity in Christ
and you feed us day by day with the bread of heaven:
mercifully grant that, nourished with such spiritual blessings,
we may set our hearts in the heavenly places;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Reading

Acts 1: 2–13a,14

Read by Sarah Meyrick, Lay Canon of Christ Church Cathedral

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying. They were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Silence

Responsory

Led by the Lyne family from Greyfriars Church, Reading.

As we wait in the bleakness
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we hear your promises
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we long for your renewing,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

As we long for your empowering,
make us ready for your coming Spirit.

Hymn

Recorded by the Choristers of Christ Church, Worcester and Pembroke Colleges at Christ Church Cathedral School in March 2020, accompanied by Sophie Biddell.

Praise the Lord! Ye heav'ns, adore him;
Praise him, angels, in the height;
Sun and moon, rejoice before him;
Praise him, all ye stars of light.
Praise the Lord, for he has spoken;
Worlds his mighty voice obeyed;
Laws which never shall be broken
For their guidance he has made.

Praise the Lord, for he is glorious;
Never shall his promise fail;
God has made his saints victorious;
Sin and death shall not prevail.
Praise the God of our salvation!
Hosts on high his pow'r proclaim;
Heav'n, and earth, and all creation,
Laud and magnify his name.

Worship, honour, glory, blessing,
Lord, we offer unto thee;
Young and old, thy praise expressing,
In glad homage bend the knee.
All the saints in heav'n adore thee,
We would bow before thy throne;
As thine angels serve before thee,
So on earth thy will be done.

The Dismissal

Blessing

President May the promised Spirit,
who pours out abundant gifts on God's people,
strengthen and sustain you
and make you the light of God's love in the world.
And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen**

President Waiting expectantly for the promised Holy Spirit,
go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

All **Thanks be to God, Alleluia, alleluia.**

A very warm thank you to all those who have contributed to this service including:

Bishop Alan Wilson, the Bishop of Buckingham; Revd Catherine Mabuza and Revd Vusi Mabuza from Warfield Church and the Windsor Team Ministry; Paul and Rosie Crowhurst, Warfield Church; Revd Canon Sarah Foot, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History; Revd Philippa White, Succentor; Alannah Jeune, member of Graduate Common Room; Tom Bower, Education Officer, Christ Church; Sarah Meyrick, Lay Canon, Christ Church; Tony Phelan and Liz Dowler, St Michael and All Angels, New Marston; the Lyne family, Greyfriars Church, Reading; and the Choristers of Christ Church Cathedral School.

This service was produced by Revd Charlotte Bannister-Parker, Associate Chaplain to the Bishop of Oxford; Revd Philippa White, Succentor, Christ Church; Steven Buckley, Diocesan Director of Communications; and Ruth Hamilton-Jones, Internal Communications Officer.

The reproduction and broadcast of the hymns in this service paper falls within the provisions of CCLI 535160 and Limited Online Music License E-0018115 both under the Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance. Images: Cover image: Shutterstock 89599684. Rear cover: Revd Philippa White, Christ Church Cathedral Design: GMGraphicDesign.co.uk Technical support: Mark Robinson, Digital Creative

