

the Ascension of Christ (a)

the beginning of a week of prayer for Christian Unity

Introduction

*leader: Greet the people and name the Sunday of the Year (see above)
Acknowledge visitors and welcome them.
Remind everyone that there will be refreshments ? ? ? ?
Announce the theme of the liturgy (see next)*

Theme – the Ascension of the Christ

*leader: The Ascension has always been a part
of the joyful celebration of the fifty days
from Easter Sunday to Pentecost,
but was singled out for commemoration
on the fortieth day (see Acts 1:3)
toward the end of the fourth century.
The feast develops the glory of the resurrection
by acclaiming the exaltation of Christ
as LORD of heaven and Earth.
It serves to prepare the Church,
toward the end of the season of Easter,
for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.*

(Announce the opening hymn:)

Greeting

*presider: Ki te ingoa o te Matua, ✠ o te Tamaiti, o te Wairua Tapu:
The grace of our LORD Jesus Christ, whose table we share,
be with us:*

*all: **And with your spirit.***

Penitential Rite *Invitation to Repentance* *either*

*leader: Gathered together in Christ, let us ask forgiveness with
confidence, for GOD is gentle and compassionate.*

*all: **I confess: . . .**
*or**

*leader: Jesus' absence causes the disciples to reel in fear, anxiety and bewilder-
ment. The Christian community even today seems to have no power to act
of it's own initiative! We too are often adrift and unable to generate the
momentum to change. Jesus, raised in glory: - (pause) - LORD, have mercy:*

*all: **LORD, have mercy.***

*leader: Jesus, remaining with us until the end of the age: - (pause) - CHRIST, have
mercy:*

*all: **CHRIST, have mercy.***

leader: Jesus the most High One, acclaimed by angels: - (pause) - LORD, have mercy:

*all: **LORD, have mercy:***

leader: May almighty GOD, cleanse us of our sins and through the celebration

of this Eucharist make us worthy to sit at the table of the kingdom.

all: **Amen**

GLORIA *invitation*

either

leader: *With all the voices of heaven, let us sing praise, honour and glory to GOD.*

or

leader: *With peoples everywhere, let us glorify our GOD in joyful song.*

Opening Prayer

leader: *(Kia inoi tatou: ... / let us pray, ...)* *GOD of Majesty and Power,
Yours is the power that raised Christ from death,
Yours the glory that exalted him to Your right hand.
By the mystery of the ascension, sustain our hope
as we bear witness to our baptism.
By the perpetual outpouring of your Spirit,
confirm Your Church in its mission of salvation.
Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,
who lives and reigns with You now and always
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, GOD, for ever and ever:*

all: **Amen.**

Introduction to the first reading: *(Acts 1:1 – 11)*

leader: *A summary of the life of Jesus, providing a smooth transition from Luke's earlier Gospel to this second work of reporting the "good news" to be found in the activities of Jesus' apostles.
The ascending of Jesus is mentioned. The same narrative that completes the account of Jesus' ministry in the Gospel, now serves to launch an account of the new stage of the community's life.*

The response: Psalm 47 : 5

all: ***GOD mounts the throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the holy GOD!***

Introduction to the second reading: *(Ephesians 1:17 – 23)*

leader: *The brief reference to the ascending of Jesus in the Letter, functions as part of the author's general theme of praise about GOD's actions in Christ, on behalf of humankind.*

Gospel Acclamation:

all: ***Alleluia! Alleluia! Go and teach all people my Gospel.
I am with you always, until the end of the age. Alleluia!***

Introduction to the gospel reading: *(Matthew 28 : 16 – 20)*

leader: *This final appearance of Jesus, takes place on a mountain. This has theological significance for Matthew. The great sermon had been preached on a mountain. The Transfiguration took place on a mountain. . And now the great appearance also takes place on a mountain.*

Homily Notes (*presider*)

- *Jesus appears to the women and gives them the same message as the angel, "Go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there" (cf. Mt.28:10). The message, "Go to Galilee to find Jesus", must have been like an order to us to, "Go to our wider community; "you will see me there". Jesus is also here (in Auckland).*
- *The disciples could have been tempted to put Jesus resurrected 'in heaven' – that is – in 'the great blue beyond', so the Earth could go right on – without any change; continuing injustices, despair, hopelessness and poverty. But the Gospel affirms Jesus rose to be, 'here on earth'. "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee" (cf. Mt.28:7).*
- *At the pre-arranged meeting place on the mountain, Jesus came up and spoke to the disciples. He invites disciples into partnership in his own mission (vv.18-19). GOD had given Jesus, "all authority in heaven and Earth"(v.18b). Just as Jesus has been sent into the world with authority – the women are sent; now their brother disciples are sent: 'to go and tell the good news' by baptising into the name of the Trinity (v.19).*
- *This mission contradicts the prophets of doom, who lament that our world is past mending. The gospel affirms that Jesus came to mend the world (v.20). The disciples extend the task of mending. The politics of the Bible is: 'a communion' of all, with everything held in common, living in all our relationships, a partnership animated by the absolute equality of love that exists between Jesus and his Father.*
- *For this we need a new birthing. St.Paul exhorts us to throw off the old ways and clothe ourselves in the new (cf. Rm.13:14 & Col.3:10). According to Paul, there is to be no distinction between: Israelite and non-Israelite, master and slave, male and female (Ga.3:28). Where there is this 'spirit' – that's heaven! Where there's no division, selfishness or deceit – that's eternal life!!*
- *The GOD that Jesus presents isn't up-there-in-heaven but is in a creative, liberating and supporting partnership with people (v.20). If we want to find the Trinitarian GOD, that's where we have to look – in the creative, liberating and helping practise of people.*
- *Moses reminded the ancient Hebrews, that the invisible GOD was heard in the speech of command (cf. Dt.4:40). For us modern Christian disciples, the same link existing between hearing GOD's commandments and acting on them holds true. The presence of the living GOD is*

found in this expression of the command to love. Those who believe in Jesus are the ones who practise justice and love. Baptism, "in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit", can also mean baptism INTO the name of the Trinity. That means incorporation into partnership with the creative, liberative and advocacy work of the Trinity on Earth.

- *The whole human race becomes a complete organism, a single body, with an equality between all the parts; like the love existing within GOD. That's the unchanging message that the disciples are entrusted with, until the end of the age. It is no longer possible for the disciples to look to Jesus to do the liberating. They now had to take responsibility themselves. They extend Jesus' mission, "to all the nations of the Earth" (v.19a) with an assurance that the risen Jesus will remain with them throughout the period of the meantime (v.20).*
- *The Ascension Day liturgy is our point of entry into new sources of imagery by which we believe in order to understand our faith, worship, and practise in the world. The actions of GOD in the Eucharistic Liturgy, are the key to an enriched understanding of our world as the place where GOD reigns, of neighbour-love as the bond of the community of disciples, and our new selves as Jesus' disciples!*
- *We are missioned to world-building. Our task is to express, transform, and extend our world, in accord with the pattern revealed in the mystery of GOD. Jesus didn't talk about a GOD in heaven, who is remote from would-be disciples. He talks about a GOD who is love, and seeing GOD is a part of what we do! It is to see love. The GOD that Jesus presents is not in heaven, but in what people are doing! If we want to look for GOD this is where we must search - GOD in the liberating practice of disciples!*
- *The WORD of GOD has invited us, as steward-partners of creation, to join GOD's mission in the world! Our 'oikonomia' or 'stewardship', is closely linked to 'koinonia' or 'partnership/communion'! The community of Jesus disciples are sent to extend GOD's work of creating a more humane society. May the creative love, the liberating grace, and the empowering partnering of the Triune GOD be with us always!*

Creed / Statement of Faith

Intercessions – Ascension Week [Sun 17th – Sat 23rd May 2026]*invitation to pray:*

leader: We remember Jesus' words about a promise to be with us always: let us pray with confidence to GOD-with-us; for our world and its needs:

*1: For the Christian community. May the WORD of the Ascending Jesus, which instructs believers, continue to instruct those responsible for the formation of the young and those troubled in conscience: - (pause) - Ascending Jesus, hear us: all: **Ascending Jesus, hear us.***

2: For our world. May the vision of the Ascending Jesus, which promises an understanding of events in a universe that shows Your creative power, enable disciples to discern the future with confidence that we may treat the Earth with reverence and respect as the place where Your glory always endures: - (pause) - Ascending Jesus, hear us:

*all: **Ascending Jesus, hear us.***

*3: For those who spread the Gospel. May the empowering Spirit promised by the Ascending Jesus, be with us as we continue to proclaim, 'the good news': - (pause) - Ascending Jesus, hear us: all: **Ascending Jesus, hear us.***

*4: Let us pray, for unity among Christians: - (pause) - Ascending Jesus, hear us: all: **Ascending Jesus, hear us.***

*5: For the sick: we pray for: . . (see parish newsletter)
Bless them for they share in Christ's passion through their suffering:
- (pause) - Ascending Jesus, hear us: all: **Ascending Jesus, hear us.***

*6: For those who have died: . . . (see parish newsletter)
and those whose anniversaries occur about now: . . . (see parish newsletter)
Number them among your saints: - (pause) - Ascending Jesus, hear us:*

*all: **Ascending Jesus, hear us.***

Concluding Prayer:

*leader: Ever Faithful GOD, we believe that Jesus lives in You and in us. Strengthen our faith, hope and love, that Your reigning will be proclaimed in our lives and the presence of Your Spirit will be shown in our thoughts and actions. We ask this in Jesus' name: all: **Amen***

(If no priest, the leader: introduces Lord's Prayer.)

Prayer over the Gifts

presider: (Kia inoi tatou: ... / Let us pray, ...) We offer You this sacrifice, LORD GOD, on the feast of Your Son's ascension, begging that through this holy exchange of gifts we may rise with him to the joys of heaven. We make our prayer through Jesus Christ:

*all: **Amen***

Preface *(Christ taken up into glory)*

presider: GOD be with you.

*all: **And also with you.***

presider: Lift up your hearts.

*all: **We lift them up to the Lord.***

presider: Let us give thanks to our GOD.

*all: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

presider: It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, that we should always sing Your glory, LORD; but we praise You with greater joy than ever in this Easter season when Christ became our paschal sacrifice. In his risen body he plainly showed himself to his disciples and was taken up to heaven in their sight to claim for us a share in his divinity. Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy, and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of Your glory:

*all: **Holy holy holy!***

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER – II

Memorial Acclamation

(the Eucharistic Prayer ends with the great 'AMEN')

Introduction to the Lord's Prayer

either

presider: With trust in GOD, who nourishes us in the hour of need, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

or

presider: Let us pray for the coming of GOD's realm as Jesus taught us.

or

presider: The Father has forgiven us, let us forgive our neighbour from the heart as we say:

*all: **Our Father, . . .***

*presider: Deliver us, LORD, we pray, from every evil;
graciously grant peace in our days,
that by the help of Your mercy,
we may be always freed from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

*all: **For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours,
now and for ever. Amen.***

Sign of Peace

*presider: LORD Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles:
'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you'.
Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church
and grant us the peace and unity of your Realm,
where you live, now and always:*

*all: **Amen.***

presider: The peace of the LORD be with you:

*all: **And with your spirit.***

presider: Let us offer each other a sign of peace:

Lamb of God

*all: **Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us (x2)
Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.***

*presider: Jesus Christ, Son of the living GOD,
who by the will of the Father
and the work of the Holy Spirit,
through your death gave life to the world;
free us by this your most holy Body and Blood
from all our sins and from every evil:
keep us always faithful to your commandments
and never let us be parted from you.*

*all: **Amen***

either

*presider: Behold the Lamb of GOD. Behold him who takes away the sins of
the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.*

or

*presider: This is the bread come down from heaven;
whoever eats this bread will never die.
This is the cup of eternal life;
whoever drinks of it will live forever:*

*all: **LORD, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof,
but only say the WORD and my soul shall be healed.***

Holy Communion

*presider: Ko te Tinana o te Karaiti:
(Ko nga Toto o te Karaiti:)*

Prayer after Communion

*leader: (Kia inoi tatou: ... / Let us pray, ...) Almighty LORD GOD,
You have entrusted to us here on Earth
the mysteries that foreshadow heaven.
Draw our gaze upward where Christ,
who shares our human nature,
sits in glory at Your right hand
and lives and reigns with You, always:*

*all: **Amen.**
(an opportunity for announcements/notices etc. ...)*

Dismissal

*leader: We are sent; in the Love of the GOD;
we are sent In the grace of Jesus Christ;
we are sent in the in the fellowship of the holy Spirit;
to extend the triune GOD's creating,
redeeming and empowering work in our world;
to be honest witnesses to Jesus Christ
and through him may we continue,
to worship in Spirit and Truth, until we gather again:*

*all: **Amen***

The Blessing

*presider: Kia whakapaingia koutou e te Atua kaha rawa,
e te Matua, e te Tamaiti ✠ e te Wairua Tapu:*

*all: **Amene***

or

presider: The Blessing of GOD, Father ✠ Son and Holy Spirit be with us all:

*all: **Amen.***

leader: The Mass has ended, go in peace to love and serve our GOD:

*all: **Thanks be to GOD.***