Holy Communion Service – Ascension Day

Welcome to our Communion Service.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for forty days we have been celebrating with joyful hearts the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the power of sin and death. He appeared to his disciples many times and told them about the kingdom of God.

Today we recall how he left this earth and returned to his Father, ascending into heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. Trusting in his reign over all creation, and submitting to his kingly yet loving rule, let us hear the story of his parting:

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.

**All He is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Seeing we have a great high priest who has passed through the heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us offer him the praise worthy of his name.

**Collect**

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 Reading**

Luke 24:44-53

**Sermon**

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Though he was divine, he did not cling to equality with God, but made himself nothing.

Taking the form of a slave, he was born in human likeness.

He humbled himself and was obedient to death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore God has raised him on high, and given him the name above every name:

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Lord is here.   
**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation;

in your love you made us for yourself.

When we turned away you did not reject us,

but came to meet us in your Son.

*All* **You embraced us as your children**

**and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life

that we might live in him and he in us.

*Al*l **He opened his arms of love upon the cross**

**and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed,

at supper with his friends he took bread,

and gave you thanks;

he broke it and gave it to them, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body with is given for you;

do this in remembrance of me.

*All* **Father, we do this in remembrance of him.**

**His body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,

he gave you thanks, and said: Drink this, all of you;

this is my blood of the new covenant,

which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins;

do this in remembrance of me.

*All* **Father, we do this in remembrance of him:**

**his blood is shed for all.**

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory,

send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine

may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

*All* **As we eat and drink these holy gifts**

**make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

With your whole Church throughout the world

we offer you this sacrifice of praise

and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

*All* **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**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 for ever. Amen.**

**Breaking of the Bread**

Lord, we died with you on the cross.

*All*    **Now we are raised to new life.**

We were buried in your tomb.

*All*    **Now we share in your resurrection.**

Live in us, that we may live in you.

**Reading**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (1.12,13a,14)

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.

**Responsory**

As we wait in silence,

*All*    **make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your refreshing,

*All*    **make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your renewing,

*All*    **make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your equipping,

*All*    **make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

As we long for your empowering,

*All*    **make us ready for your coming Spirit.**

united in prayer and the breaking of bread,

and one in joy and simplicity of heart,

in Jesus Christ our Lord.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be among you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

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