

The Seventh Sunday of



EASTER



May 16th, 2021
Ascension Sunday



St. Stephen's

Episcopal Church † Lakeland, Florida

To Love and Serve God and Neighbor

Opening Hymn

“Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies” verses 1&2

*Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise!
Triumph over shades of night;
Dayspring from on high, be near;
Day-star, in my heart appear!*

*Dark and cheerless is the morn
unaccompanied by thee;
joyless is the day’s return
till thy mercy’s beams I see;
as they inward light impart,
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.*

Opening Acclamation

+ Alleluia, Christ is risen!

The Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia!

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Pascha Nostrum

Alleluia. Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.

Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death that he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So also consider yourselves dead to sin, and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia.

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia.

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abides with his Church on earth, even to the end of the ages; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The First Reading

A Reading from Ephesians.

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

(Ephesians 1:15-23)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Psalm

47

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with a cry of joy.

For the Lord Most High is to be feared; he is the great King over all the earth.

He subdues the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet.

He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves.

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the ram's-horn.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

For God is King of all the earth; sing praises with all your skill.

God reigns over the nations; God sits upon his holy throne.

The nobles of the peoples have gathered together with the people of the God of Abraham.

The rulers of the earth belong to God, and he is highly exalted.

+ Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Holy Gospel

+++ The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke. Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “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.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. 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.”

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

(Luke 24:44-53)

The Gospel of The Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were

made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

For all people in their daily life and work;
For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who
are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble; especially those on our prayer list and the suffering people of the world.

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For those serving in the armed forces, those wounded or recovering in veterans' hospitals, those serving in combat and those serving in safety.

For the peace and protection of God.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, Greg our Bishop, David, Rob, and Doug our clergy, and for all bishops and other ministers;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For blessings upon Akeythia and Joshua, and Sereck and Missy.

For healthy babies and safe deliveries.

For our schools, scouts, and all of the children and youth of our parish.

For your grace and their ever growing knowledge and love of you.

For our parish family.

Bind us together and draw us always closer to you.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life;

(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

We will exalt you, O God our King;

And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

Who put their trust in you.

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with repentance and faith turn to him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you.

The Announcements

The last week of Adult Sunday School before a summer break is this morning at 10am. Wednesday morning services continue at 9am. ***Summer Sunday Service Schedule starts next week with 10am Inside/Outside!***

VERSE OF THE WEEK

Ephesians 1:17

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

The Offertory

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *(Ephesians 5:2)*

“How Great Thou Art” verse 1

Oh Lord, my God

When I, in awesome wonder

Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made

I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder

Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee

*How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art.*

The Presentation

All things come of thee, O Lord,
And of thine own have we given thee.

(1 Chronicles 29:14)

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, through your dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord. After his glorious resurrection he openly appeared to his disciples, and in their sight ascended into heaven, to prepare a place for us; that where he is, there we might also be, and reign with him in glory.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

+ On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

+ After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "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. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

+Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

+Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

*Here we are, gathered together as a family;
Bound as one, lifting up our voices to the King of kings.*

*We sing, “Abba, Father, holy is Your name.
Abba, Father, holy is Your name.”*

The Invitation

These are the Gifts of God for you, the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Please stay at your seat. The clergy will come to you with the consecrated Bread.

“How Great Thou Art” verses 2-3

*And when I think that God, His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art*

*When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow, in humble adoration
And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art*

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers, Intercessions, and Thanksgiving

Anniversaries This Week:

Brian and Erica Brink, Bob and Pat Martin

Birthdays This Week:

Ed Knox, Carla Sauve, Jim Schmidt, Betty Calhoun, Marcia Heath, Tom Rittenour, Sierra Steadman-Jones, Rick Rahn

Birthday Prayer

Watch over thy children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may thy peace which passeth understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

+ May the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of

God, and his son Jesus Christ and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

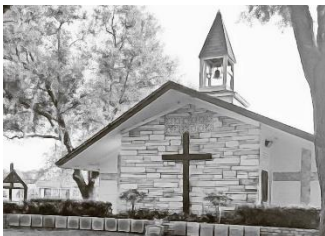
Closing Hymn
“Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies” verse 3

*Visit then this soul of mine!
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief!
Fill me, radiancy divine;
scatter all my unbelief;
more and more thyself display,
shining to the perfect day.*

The Dismissal

Let us go forth in the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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