



The Liturgy of Ascension Day



Thursday 29th May 2025, 12:00pm

Welcome to Coventry Cathedral

Welcome to this Eucharist for Ascension Day, when we remember the moment when Jesus ascended into heaven, to his Father. Jesus has spent the forty days following his resurrection helping his friends believe that he has risen from the dead and that life for them, and for us who have followed them, is now transformed; that as we share in Jesus' death, so we will share in his resurrection.

Now, his work on earth completed, Jesus takes up his place in heaven at the right hand of the Father. There, we believe, he prays for us as we continue the work he has entrusted to us. And so, even as we worship our risen, ascended King, we pray for the renewal of our calling to grow Christ's kingdom here on earth, and wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will enable all that we are called to be.

Presiding at this service is the Reverend Canon Nitano Muller, Canon for Worship and Welcome. The Reverend Gillian Roberts is deacon. The Reverend Su McClellan is sub-deacon. Our preacher today is the Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry. The organist is Rachel Mahon, Director of Music.

In this service, we say the words in **bold** together, and invite you to stand and sit as indicated. However, please stay seated if you prefer.

If you have brought small children, thank you! Feel free to explore the space with them, and to use the toys and books provided.

The artwork on the cover is 'Ascension of Christ' part of the 'San Pietro Polyptych' by Pietro Perugino (1448–1523). Museum of Fine Arts of Lyon.

The Gathering

The Very Reverend John Witcombe, Dean of Coventry, welcomes the congregation.

Hymn

The Peace Bell is rung and then we STAND to sing the opening hymn:

**Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour,
first-begotten from the dead,
thou alone, our strong defender,
liftest up thy people's head.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Jesu, true and living bread.**

**Here our humblest homage pay we,
here in loving reverence bow;
here for faith's discernment pray we,
lest we fail to know thee now.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
thou art here, we ask not how.**

**Though the lowliest form doth veil thee
as of old in Bethlehem,
here as there thine angels hail thee,
Branch and Flower of Jesse's Stem.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
we in worship join with them.**

**Paschal Lamb, thine offering, finished
once for all when thou wast slain,
in its fullness undiminished
shall for evermore remain,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
cleansing souls from every stain.**

**Life-imparting heavenly Manna,
stricken Rock with streaming side,
heaven and earth with loud hosanna
worship thee, the Lamb who died,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
risen, ascended, glorified.**

*Words by G.H. Bourne (1840-1925)
Tune CP 311 St Helen G.C. Martin (1844-1916)*

The Greeting

Canon Nitano Muller, presiding, greets the people.

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you
and also with you.

Introduction

The president introduces the service, saying,

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.

Prayers of Penitence

The Reverend Gillian Roberts, deacon, introduces the Prayers of Penitence saying;

Christ has gone up on high, leading captivity captive and bringing gifts for men. As we prepare ourselves to meet him here in the courts of heaven let us call to mind our many failures and sins.

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class,

Father forgive.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own,

Father, forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth,

Father, forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others,

Father, forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee,

Father, forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

Father, forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God,

Father, forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

The president says;

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Ascension Reading

Read by the Reverend Su McClellan, sub-deacon.

A reading from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

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.'

Acts 1:4 – 11

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Gloria in Excelsis

The president says,

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

We sing:

**Glory be to God in heaven,
And to all his people, peace.
Heav'nly King, almighty Father,
May our worship never cease;
May our voices ever thank you,
Songs of blessing ever send,
May we always live to praise you,
For your glory without end.**

**Jesus, Son of God the Father,
Merciful beyond compare,
All our sin, by you forgiven;
Lamb of God, receive our prayer.
Jesus, you alone are holy,
Jesus, you alone are Lord,
With the Holy Spirit reigning,
And the Father—glorious God!**

Tune CP 435 Abbot's Leigh by Cyril Taylor (1907-1991)

The Collect

The president introduces a period of silent prayer with these words:

Let us pray that our risen and ascended Lord will lead us to eternal life.

Silence is kept.

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we in heart and mind may also ascend and with him continually dwell; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Reading

We SIT to hear the second reading, read by Tim Burnett, Cathedral Verger.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel.

As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousand served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgement, and the books were opened. I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.

Daniel 7:9 – 14

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

We STAND to hear the Gospel reading.

The deacon says;

Alleluia, Alleluia. Go and make disciples of all nations, says the Lord. Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. **Alleluia.**

cf Matthew 28:19-20

The deacon says,

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

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then he said to them, ‘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.

Luke 24:44 – end

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The president prays and then we SIT to hear the sermon. The sermon is followed by a time of silent prayer and reflection.

The Creed

We STAND to affirm our faith. The president begins:

**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,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and 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 worshipped 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 Intercession

We KNEEL or SIT for the prayers of intercession.

The president says,

Let us join our prayers with those
of our Saviour Christ,
seeking the Father's blessing
and the gifts of the Spirit.

The deacon continues,

Jesus Christ, great high priest,
living for ever to intercede for us,
pray for the Church,
your broken body in the world.
Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, king of righteousness,
enthroned at the right hand
of the majesty on high,
pray for the world,
and make it subject to your gentle rule.
Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, Son of Man,
drawing humanity into the life of God,
pray for your brothers and sisters in need,
distress or sorrow.
Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, pioneer of our salvation,
bringing us to glory
through your death and resurrection,
surround with your saints and angels
those who have died trusting your promises.
Lord, hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Jesus Christ, Lord over all things,
ascended far above the heavens
and filling the universe,
pray for us who receive the gifts
you give us for work in your service.
Lord, hear us.
Lord, graciously hear us.

The president concludes,
Jesus Christ,
keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit
and in the bond of peace,
and bring the whole created order
to worship at your feet;
for you are alive and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The Peace

We *STAND* and the president says,
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.

John 14:27, 28

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

The deacon says,
Let us offer one another a sign of peace.
All may exchange a sign of peace.

Hymn

We remain STANDING to sing.

Alleluia, sing to Jesus!
his the sceptre, his the throne;
Alleluia, his the triumph,
his the victory alone:
hark, the songs of peaceful Sion
thunder like a mighty flood;
Jesus out of every nation
hath redeemed us by his blood.

Alleluia, not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia, he is near us,
faith believes, nor questions how:
though the cloud from sight received him,
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise,
"I am with you evermore"?

Alleluia, bread of angels,
thou on earth our food, our stay;
Alleluia, here the sinful
flee to thee from day to day:
Intercessor, Friend of sinners,
earth's Redeemer, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia, King eternal,
thee the Lord of lords we own;
Alleluia, born of Mary,
earth thy footstool, heaven thy throne:
thou within the veil hast entered,
robed in flesh, our great High Priest;
thou on earth both Priest and Victim
in the eucharistic feast.

Words by William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

Tune CP 278 Hyfrydol melody by R.H. Pritchard (1811-1887)

Prayers at the Preparation of the Table

The president says,

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this bread to set before you,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:
through your goodness we have this wine to set before you,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become for us the cup of salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The president continues,

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 thanks and praise.

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:

**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.**

The president continues,

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, 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.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice
made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

The deacon says;

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

The president continues;

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Mary, Michael, and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

The president says,

Looking for the coming of his kingdom,
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

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.
**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Agnus Dei

We say together;

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Giving of Communion

The president says,

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

Communion Hymn

During the distribution the we sing:

**Let all mortal flesh keep silence
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
our full homage to demand.**

**King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture -
in the body and the blood -
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heavenly food.**

**Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth
from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish
as the darkness clears away.**

**At his feet the six-winged seraph;
cherubim with sleepless eye
veil their faces to the Presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry,
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia, Lord most high.**

*Words from the Liturgy of St James, translated by G. Moultrie (1829-1885)
Tune CP 309 Picardy harmonised by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)*

Prayer after Communion

Silence is kept.

**God our Father,
you have raised our humanity in Christ
and have fed us 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.**

**Almighty God,
We thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of
your Son Jesus Christ. Through him we offer you our souls
and bodies to be a living sacrifice. Send us out in the power
of Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.
Amen.**

The Dismissal

Reading

We STAND and the sub-deacon says,

A reading from the Book of 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.

Acts 1:12 – 14

Silence is kept.

The Blessing

The president says,

God the Father,
who has given to his Son the name above every name,
strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord.

Amen.

God the Son,
who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,
plead for you at the right hand of the Father.

Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
who pours out his abundant gifts upon the Church,
make you faithful servants of Christ our King.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Hymn

**Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own:
awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless king
through all eternity.**

**Crown him the Virgin's Son,
the God incarnate born,
whose arm those crimson trophies won
which now his brow adorn:
Fruit of the mystic Rose,
as of that rose the Stem;
the Root whence mercy ever flows,
the Babe of Bethlehem.**

**Crown him the Lord of love;
behold his hands and side,
those wounds yet visible above
in beauty glorified:
no angel in the sky
can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends his burning eye
at mysteries so bright.**

**Crown him the Lord of peace,
whose power a sceptre sways
from pole to pole, that wars may cease,
and all be prayer and praise:
his reign shall know no end,
and round his piercèd feet
fair flowers of paradise extend
their fragrance ever sweet.**

**Crown him the Lord of years,
the Potentate of time,
Creator of the rolling spheres,
ineffably sublime:
all hail, Redeemer, hail!
for thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail
throughout eternity.**

*Words by Matthew Bridges (1800-1894)
Tune CP 166 Diademata G.J. Elvey (1816-1893)*

The Dismissal

The deacon says,

Waiting expectantly for the promised Holy Spirit,
go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Voluntary

*Please do stay for the organ voluntary, performed today by Rachel Mahon,
Director of Music.*

*Transports de joie d'une âme devant la gloire du Christ qui est la sienna
from L'Ascension by Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992).*

If you would like to make a one-off donation to the Cathedral via your phone, or set up a recurring donation, please use the QR code below. There are also contactless donation points and collection boxes near the entrance.

Thank you for your support.



Daily Services at the Cathedral:

Regular services at the Cathedral follow this pattern. For special services and up-to-date information about one-off cancellations of the services below, please check the calendar on the Cathedral website:

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/full-calendar>

Monday - Friday

8:30 – 9:00am: *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

(followed on Thursdays by BCP Holy Communion)

4 – 4:30pm: *Evening Prayer*

(or Wednesday and Thursday during school terms: Choral Evensong, 5:15 - 6pm)

Saturday

12 – 12:10pm: *The Litany of Reconciliation*

Sunday

10:30 – 11:45am: *The Cathedral Eucharist*

4 – 5pm: *Choral Evensong*

SAFEGUARDING AT COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

We are committed to the safeguarding of all people. For details, please visit www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding

You can report a concern using the same link or by contacting Jane Williams, Cathedral Safeguarding Officer at 024 7650 2349 or via email: JaneMLWill@aol.com.

Alternatively, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team led by Sarah Price: 024 7652 1345 or safeguarding@coventry.anglican.org

JOINING OUR CHOIRS

Do you know a child who loves to sing? Boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 10 are welcome to audition for the Cathedral Boys' and Girls' Choirs. They sing an average of four times per week during term time in recordings, services and concerts. Children receive a world-class music education completely free and even receive scholarship payments. Please get in touch with the Director of Music to learn more:

rachel.mahon@coventrycathedral.org.uk

