



Welcome to St Alban's
Ascension Day Service

OPENING HYMN: *Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

**1. Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
to his throne above the skies; Alleluia!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given, Alleluia!
enters now the highest heaven! Alleluia!**

**2. There for him high triumph waits; Alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates! Alleluia!
he hath conquered death and sin; Alleluia!
take the King of glory in! Alleluia!**

**3. See! he lifts his hands above; Alleluia!
See! he shows the prints of love: Alleluia!
Hark! his gracious lips bestow, Alleluia!
blessings on his Church below. Alleluia!**

**4. Still for us He intercedes, Alleluia!
His prevailing death he pleads; Alleluia!
Near himself prepares a place, Alleluia!
He the first-fruit of our race. Alleluia!**

**5. Ever upward let us move, Alleluia!
Wafted on the wings of love; Alleluia!
Looking when our Lord shall come, Alleluia!
Longing, sighing after home. Alleluia!**

God has gone up with a shout
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet

† In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**
The Lord be with you. **And also with you**

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

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles - Acts 1.1-11

1 In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.³ 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.⁴ 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; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?'⁷ He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.⁸ 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.'⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them.¹¹ 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

After the reading...Alleluia. Christ is risen:

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.

THE GLORIA

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

THE COLLECT

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

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 GOSPEL – Luke 24.44-end

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

Glory to you O God

44 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.’⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures,⁴⁶ 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,⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ 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.’

50 Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them.⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.⁵² And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;⁵³ and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

At the end of the reading: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

THE APOSTLE’S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;**

he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

RESPONSE: May your Kingdom come in us – **As it is in Heaven.**

At the end of the prayers we say together:

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers, for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen**

THE PEACE

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

THE EUCHARIST

Blessed be God, by whose grace creation is renewed, by whose love heaven is opened, by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.
Blessed be God for ever.

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.**

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.

Great is the mystery of faith
Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.

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 the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Alban, 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.**

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

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.

**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

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.
Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father

*The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members.
In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.*

An Act of Spiritual Communion

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and for ever. Amen.**

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**

**We thank you, Lord, that you have fed us in this sacrament, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all peoples.
Amen.**

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

May the Spirit, who set the Church on fire upon the day of Pentecost, bring the world alive with the love of the risen Christ. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

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

CLOSING HYMN:

1 Lord, enthroned in heav'nly splendor,
first-begotten from the dead,
Thou alone, our strong Defender,
liftest up Thy people's head.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Jesus, true and living Bread!

Prince of Life, for us Thou livest,
by Thy body souls are healed;
Prince of Peace, Thy peace Thou livest,
by Thy blood is pardon sealed.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Word of God in flesh revealed.

Paschal Lamb! Thine offering finished
Once for all when thou wast slain,
In its fullness undiminished
Shall for evermore remain.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Cleansing souls from every stain.

Great high priest of our profession,
Through the veil thou enteredest in;
By thy mighty intercession
Grace and mercy thou canst win:
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Only sacrifice for sin.

Life-imparting heav'nly Manna,
stricken Rock, with streaming side,
heav'n and earth with loud hosanna
worship Thee, the Lamb who died.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Ris'n, ascended, glorified!

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