



Church at Home 11
For Abridge
Sunday 24th May 2020
7th Sunday of Easter: Sunday after Ascension Day.
Following the Ascension (Last Thursday)



On the seventh Sunday of Easter, we always read from the 17th chapter of John's Gospel. This chapter of John's Gospel comes at the conclusion of Jesus' Farewell Discourse delivered to the disciples at the Last Supper. The whole of this chapter is a prayer of Jesus, commending himself to the Father and expressing his care and concern for his disciples. At the end of this prayer, Jesus and his disciples depart for the garden, and Jesus is arrested.

John 17:1-3

This past Thursday, according to the Church's liturgical calendar, marked the Ascension of our risen Lord, his return to the right hand of his heavenly Father. It is an important aspect of our Christian faith for many reasons, two of which I would like to briefly mention.

For forty days, beginning on Easter morning, our risen Lord appeared to his disciples, and then vanished – appeared and then vanished again. And I'm sure that each time the disciples experienced the presence of the risen Christ, their hearts and spirits were lifted, as they grew to understand the significance of his death and resurrection for their redemption, giving praise to God for Jesus' victory over sin and death.

But after our risen Lord had revealed himself on numerous occasions to his disciples, and they came to understand the gift of God's redeeming grace, his mission on earth had been accomplished. It was time for the risen Son of God to return to his heavenly Father, to receive the glory, which he truly deserves. And as the disciples witnessed his ascension, it left little doubt, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
(Ronald Harbaugh)

1. To calm our minds so that we can totally dedicate this time to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Just sit in the peace and quiet of your "Church at Home" and listen to ["Come now is the time to worship"](#). As the words say "now is the time to give your heart". Just give your heart to Jesus.

2. As we reflect on the past week since we were last together, let us say:

In the silence of this moment, I express my deep gratitude for the Church. (pause for a while)

Father, thank you for Your beautiful, multicultural, intergenerational family, gathering online or in person today in person today in so many countries.

Revive and sanctify us, I pray. Make us a house of prayer for all nations. And set our hearts on fire again with the good news of Your Gospel. (Lectio 365)

Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins. Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you feed us with the living bread. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

3. A special prayer for today:

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Saviour Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

4. The Bible readings today are:

Psalms 68: 1-10;

John 17: 1-11;

Acts 1:6-14;

1 Peter 4:12-14:

Last Thursday we celebrated the ascension of the Lord. In this week we shall be preparing for the manifestation of the great promise of Jesus. The disciples watched him as he pierced the skies and vanished from their sight. Two angels appeared to them and asked them not to keep looking at the sky. This does not mean they should not pay attention to things above where Jesus had ascended. It means that they should keep their minds above and their eyes around to see the work waiting for them; to carry out the missionary mandate to go out to the whole world and make disciples of all nations. They had to leave the Mount of Olives and continue what Jesus has started.

They went to the Upper Room and stayed together in prayer. In that air of uncertainty, they did not know what the future had for them. (Acts 1:13-14)

To help you explore the story further, there is a **reflection sheet** and also some **all-age activities** that you might like to use. You can find these resources on the churches' websites and here are the links:

www.lambournechurch.com

www.abridgeevangelicalchurch.org

5. Prayers and Hymns.

Let us pray in the name of our risen and ascended Saviour for the Church, the world, and for all people according to their needs.

A brief silence

Heavenly Father, your Church worships and blesses you for the triumph of your Son over the powers of sin, evil and death. We praise you for his ascension to your right hand; and we pray that you would give your Church steadfastness, joy, and boldness to proclaim his rule to all the world, until he comes in glory.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift before you the sacrifices made by all who risk their lives on behalf of others, especially those who are working for the NHS; are supporting Care Home and those people in need of care and comfort...

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift before you the needs of all whose lives are shadowed by suffering or sorrow— especially those known personally to us. Fill them with the grace and comfort of your Holy Spirit.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, as Christ has ascended to heaven to reign in glory forever, we await the coming of that day when we, too, shall live with you and with all of your people in joy and glory everlasting.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear and graciously answer our prayers in accordance with your will, dear Father, for the sake of your beloved Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Add any particular people and situations that the Lord brings to your mind as you have been praying. End with our family prayer, **The Lord's Prayer.**

Suggested Hymns in different traditions: [I Know that my Redeemer Lives](#), [All Creatures of our God and King](#), [Crown Him with Many Crowns](#), [How Great is Our God \(Hillsong\)](#)

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