

**Order of Teaching and Prayers for May 21, 2020
Zion Lutheran Church, Ridgeville Corners, Ohio**

This Order of Teaching and Prayers (adapted from Matins) is part of Zion Lutheran's ministry during the time of the COVID-19. Orders for festival days and Sundays will continue to be made available as long as normal worship opportunities are not available. I will post audio recordings of these orders on the appointed day on www.zionrco.org. You are invited to listen and pray with me and my wife at that time, or any time after. Thank you to Zion's musicians and choir for the music on these recordings! Pastor Carl Rockrohr

The Ascension of Our Lord

Opening Hymn *On Christ's Ascension I Now Build* *The Lutheran Hymnal 216*

1. On Christ's ascension I now build The hope of mine ascension;
This hope alone has ever stilled All doubt and apprehension;
For where the Head is, there full well I know His members are to dwell
When Christ shall come and call them.

2. Since He returned to claim His throne, Great gifts for men obtaining,
My heart shall rest in Him alone, No other rest remaining;
For where my Treasure went before, There all my tho'ts shall ever soar
To still their deepest yearning.

3. Oh, grant, dear Lord, this grace to me, Recalling Thine ascension.
That I may ever walk with Thee, Adorning Thy redemption;
And then, when all my days shall cease, Let me depart in joy and peace
In answer to my pleading. Amen.

Invocation and Opening Verses

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.

Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
make haste to help me, O Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.

Scripture Reading Acts 1:1-11 ESV

1 In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the

apostles whom he had chosen. 3 He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; 5 for 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, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed 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 and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” 9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, 11 and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

O Lord, have mercy on us. **Thanks be to God.**

Scripture Reading Romans 8:31-39 ESV

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.* 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

O Lord, have mercy on us. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsory

Sing to the Lord and bless His name, proclaim His salvation from day to day.

Give to the Lord all glory and strength, give Him the honor due His name. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep.

Give to the Lord all glory and strength, give Him the honor due His name. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Give to the Lord all glory and strength, give Him the honor due His name. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Apostles' Creed

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

And 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Teaching

Romans 8:34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.

Several months ago, Zion Lutheran planned to have worship services today at 1pm and 7 pm for the Festival of the Ascension of Our Lord. But we know what has happened since that first plan, the COVID 19 pandemic has changed plans all over the world. Millions of people are infected with the disease. 100,000s of people have died from the disease. Governments have given “Stay at Home” orders. Millions of people have been laid off from work. National economies have taken downturns because of all the people not working. The U.S. government has authorized trillions of dollars to help workers and businesses. Schools are finishing their academic year not in the classroom. People are agitating in protests to get back to life outside of their homes. And now toward the end of May many are going back to work and resuming other regular activities... yet with question marks. Will the disease make a comeback? How many precautions should I take? Do I still have a job? Will I get sick? Or perhaps, will I get better? And many people have lost family and loved ones.

None of us thought our lives would take all these sudden twists and turns several months ago.

The ascension of Jesus Christ is a comfort exactly for our times. There have been many heroes in human history, some who really have helped people for a time. But when great leaders die, they can no longer lead or help anymore, except maybe through teachings or philosophies left behind.

Jesus Christ is different. Jesus' help and leadership for His people did not end when He died, but He rose again. Yet, something more happened. Jesus ascended bodily into heaven and rules with all power and authority as the Son of God. Yet, there is more than that. Scripture teaches that Jesus knows and intercedes for His people.

Jesus is not far away from us right now, even though He is at the right hand of God the Father. Jesus is not far away from us, hiding out in a bunker somewhere far away, uncaring of all the human suffering that is happening. Jesus knows and cares.

The passage from Romans 8:31-39 is often read at funerals because it gives the great comfort that Jesus is in control and His love is with us even in times of death. This passage also comforts us to know that Jesus is with us no matter what our situation is right now in life.

Jesus has not forgotten us. He promises to be with us in the midst of any suffering and strife. He knows exactly how our situation is going to turn out and He is not going to let go of us. Even in the middle of our deepest illness and pain, and the anguish of death, Jesus is with us.

Paul wrote:

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37-39)

Jesus said:

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30)

Prayer:

(Lord Jesus, Think on Me Lutheran Service Book #610)

**1 Lord Jesus, think on me
And purge away my sin;
From worldly passions set me free
And make me pure within.**

**3 Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery,
O be my health and life!**

**2 Lord Jesus, think on me,
By anxious thoughts oppressed;
Let me Your loving servant be
And taste Your promised rest.**

**4 Lord Jesus, think on me
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point out Your chosen way.**

**5 Lord Jesus, think on me
That, when this life is past,
I may the eternal brightness see
And share Your joy at last. Amen.**

Now may the peace of God that passes all understanding guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

1 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds,
And drives away our fear.

4 O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.

2 It makes the wounded spirit whole
And calms the heart's unrest;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul
And to the weary, rest.

5 How weak the effort of my heart,
How cold my warmest thought!
But when I see Thee as Thou art,
I'll praise Thee as I ought.

3 Dear name! The rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place;
My never-failing treasury filled
With boundless stores of grace.

6 Till then I would Thy love proclaim
With ev'ry fleeting breath;
And may the music of Thy name
Refresh my soul in death!

Prayers

Ascended Lord, hear the prayers of Your people and grant our supplication. *Brief silence*

That the Lord may grant us all things in Christ so we may be sustained in trial, strengthened in weakness and delivered from trouble, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the Church of Christ may flourish and the good news of Christ crucified, risen and ascended would be proclaimed to all the ends of the earth, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the nations of the earth may seek peace; and that the leaders of our country may pursue justice, righteousness and peace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the pandemic may come to an end, and that livelihood and common life may resume, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That all who are afflicted may be strengthened in illness and comforted in adversity, [*especially _____*], let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

(In Zion Lutheran's prayers: Margaret; Norma; Lillian; Carolyn; Charlotte; Henry; Lincoln; Isaac; Julie; Loretta; Cathie; Karlyn; Mark; Dan; Kathy; Shirley; David; Carlton; daughter of Julie; Bill; Jason and Pastor Berlin.)

That the faithful may not fret what we do not know but rejoice in Christ, our Savior, and live in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the Lord may grant us joyful hearts and peace at the last, knowing that neither death nor life, nor any powers, can separate us from the love of God in Christ, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That we may be as generous in our tithes and offerings as the Lord is in giving us His gifts, and that we may support the poor and those in need, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

All these things and whatever else we need, we ask You to grant us for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Lord, have mercy; **Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.**

Lord's Prayer

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 forever and ever. Amen.

O Lord, hear my prayer. **And let my cry come to You.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **Amen.**

Closing Hymn *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* *Lutheran Service Book 733* (Public Domain)

1 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:

2 Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

3 Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

4 A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Soon bears us all away;
We fly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last
And our eternal home!

You are invited to listen to hymns and use other resources at www.zionrco.org.

Order of Prayer adapted from "Matins," *Lutheran Service Book*, Concordia Publishing House. Prayer adapted from LC-MS Three-Year Series Prayers for May 21, 2020. <https://www.lcms.org/worship/three-year-series-prayers>