



# Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

**May 12, 2024 A.D.**

**Ascension**

*On Sunday, May 12, Bethany will be observing the Seventh Sunday of the Easter Season when we gather for worship. However, as I write this, today is May 9 – Ascension Day. Therefore the theme of this devotion will focus on the Ascension of our Lord to the Father’s Right Hand.*

*The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

## Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## Psalm

*(From Psalm 27)*

Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud;  
**be gracious to me and answer me!**  
The LORD is my light and my salvation;  
**whom shall I fear?**

One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after:  
**that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.**

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;  
**he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock.**

For my father and my mother have forsaken me,  
**but the LORD will take me in.**

Wait for the LORD;  
**be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!**

*For those with access to the internet, you may now play today’s worship video located at [www.bethanycr.org/sermons](http://www.bethanycr.org/sermons) and then continue with the Apostles’ Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....*

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## Scripture Lesson

*(Acts 1:1-11)*

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, <sup>2</sup> until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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; <sup>5</sup> for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

<sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” <sup>7</sup> He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> 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.” <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, <sup>11</sup> 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.”

**Sermon**      *(A copy is included at the end of this service.)*

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### **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.**

### **The 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.**

### **Bethany's Prayer List**

#### **Thanksgiving**

- Christian mothers
- Hayden (infant daughter of Taylor & Stephanie Chittick) Baptism
- Tina Freese - recovered after surgery

#### **Entrusting into God's Care**

- Chuck Stoelting - hospice care
- Mickie Sjullie - employment search
- Nathan & Sarah Federwitz - Lutheran Bible Translators

- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

### **Healing**

- Sharon (Sue Kroemer's sister) - surgery
- Arlen Breiholz - recovering after surgery
- Deb (Phil Hedtke's sister) - upcoming cancer surgery 5/13
- Kristi Montague - recovering after biopsy
- Dick Hass - recovering after hospitalization
- Sharon Ramsey - recovering after surgery
- Bonnie Bubke - recovering after hospitalization
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Aaron Moffett - recovering after eye surgery
- Ron Prescott - health issues
- Kim Neuhaus - recovering after surgery
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment

### **Homebound**

- Nadine Wax - Hallmar

### **Mourning, friends and family of**

- Nick (relative of Goerdt & K. Frampton) - died 4/29
- Jeffrey Jasper - died 4/13

### **Serving Our Country**

- Mallory (friend of Abi Clark)- IA National Guard
- Amber (daughter of Ann Balvanz) - US Army, stationed in RI
- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - IA National Guard
- Devon (friend of Hedtkes and Chitticks) - deployed to Korea

### **Collect of the Day**

Let us pray... O King of glory, Lord of hosts, uplifted in triumph far above all heavens, leave us not without consolation but send us the Spirit of truth whom You promised from the Father; for You live and reign with Him and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **Concluding Prayers**

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through

Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



Grace, Mercy, and Peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, the Church all over the world celebrated Ascension Day and the events described to us in the book of Acts and the Gospel of Luke. This day in which we remember Jesus rising up into heaven really draws the first half of the church year to a close. So far this year we have been taken by the Holy Spirit through the Holy Gospels to Mary when she found out that she was with child. We were there with Joseph when the angel told him to name this child Jesus. We were there in the temple with this boy named Jesus as he taught the teachers of His day about the Word of God, as one who had authority. The Holy Spirit has taken us this year to the Jordan river where John the Baptist sees Jesus and says, “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”. After Jesus was baptized we heard the Father’s voice say, “This is my son whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.” Through the Gospel the Holy Spirit took us out into the wilderness where we say Jesus overcome Satan’s temptations again and again, and Jesus resisted the pleasures of this world so that He might achieve the higher goal of our salvation. In Lent we saw Jesus do what He had to do to obtain that salvation for us – Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday...Good Friday.

But we are not left at the cross. The Spirit takes us three days later to the tomb with the women and we hear the angel say, “He is not here! He has risen!” When Jesus cried out on the cross it is finished, He was right! His redeeming work was over and now we may bask in the glory of His victory knowing that we too shall rise one day with all of the saints in heaven and earth.

Now because no one saw Jesus rise from the dead, He was in that sealed tomb after all, He showed Himself to His disciples so that they would know of His victory over the grave. And here we are now at the Ascension, 40 days after Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus is once again correcting some of the disciples’ misunderstandings of the kingdom of God and telling them about what will happen on Pentecost. And then Luke writes almost matter-of-factly that the disciples saw Jesus rise up before their very eyes until a cloud hid Him. And thus, the first half of the church year draws to a close and the second half begins – the season of Pentecost or the time of the church. But as we move through Pentecost, we thank the Lord for all that He has done for us and we especially thank Him that He has ascended into Heaven, because knowing that He did this we are shown once again God’s great love for us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Now, I would like to say one thing that Jesus' ascension does not mean. It does not mean that He has gone away. Before Jesus ascended, He promised that wherever we may be - He is there with us. The difference is that after the ascension, Jesus does not show us Himself empirically, or with the visual senses anymore, or at least not until the next time, which will be the end of the world or when we die, whichever comes first. And it is a good thing, too, for suppose Jesus had gone on showing Himself as He did before His resurrection. Where would He be today? With me? With you? Would we be tempted to say, "If He is there, then He is not here"? But because Jesus has ascended, His people all over the world know that He is with them. He has promised it. How Jesus can manage to do this we'll never figure out, and what tells us that we can't, and that it is silly to try, is the cloud that Jesus rose into out of the disciples' sight.

This wasn't an ordinary cloud. We have seen this cloud before. We saw it at the transfiguration, and in the Old Testament where there was the bright cloud that stood above the two angels on the ark of the covenant, the bright cloud that led Israel on their journey to the Promised Land. That cloud was the guarantee of the presence of God. So, at the ascension, a cloud is used to mark Jesus' entry to the realm of God, which we can neither understand nor measure with our present minds and our limited experience with such things. For Jesus didn't travel miles up in the air like a plane or the space shuttle. He rose up a little way above the earth and a cloud received Him out of their sight. All that was gone was the sight of Jesus. The cloud means that He is no longer within our ordinary limits. Jesus is now present, and does things in the whole range of God's way of being present, and doing things while remaining a man, but a man fulfilled and glorified. We confess this when we say that "He sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." And it is here at the right hand of God that we find Jesus today, and we find strength and comfort for every day in our lives.

For I imagine that all of us derive some comfort knowing that Jesus is in Heaven now. It makes the death of loved ones bearable, and even joyous, to think that they are with Christ right now in Heaven. Most of us have parents, or spouses, or siblings, or even children who have died in the faith and are now in Heaven. And to think that they are there with Christ in the flesh, gazing upon His face and being in His presence as Moses was in at the burning bush or the disciples at the Last Supper...well could we be any happier for them? But God does not just bless the saints in heaven, but on earth as well. And He does this from where He ascended to...the right hand of God.

The right hand is not some particular place as we think of, but the exercise of the whole power of God, which is now in the hands of Jesus. The same Jesus who loves us, who died for us, who gave up everything so that we may be saved - is now in Heaven with unlimited power and glory to continue to care for us. Think of it, we have one of our own, a loving brother with our flesh and blood, our human nature, who was Himself tempted in everyway that we are, who has seen all that we have seen, suffered what we have and more, and this is the one who rules over all. Jesus who Himself was forsaken on the cross by His heavenly father did not forsake you there in the midst of His suffering, and now as He reigns with power and glory His promise is to be with you until the end of time.

And so, the Church, entering its' own time during the church year rejoices at the Ascension of Christ because His rising up into heaven does not mean that He has left us. Just the opposite! He is now with us even more powerfully than when men and woman saw Him. We live then in the presence of our ascended, ever-present Lord. Because He is with us, we cannot be destroyed, Jesus has cleared the path to victory for us. He leads us in that way, gives us strength and courage for it, and finally brings us to that bright cloud of heaven. Amen.