

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Acts 1:1-11

Psalm 47

God has gone up with a shout. (v5)

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:44-53

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised, he abides with us on earth to the end of time, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Acts 1:1-11

[St. Luke writes:] ¹In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did & taught from the beginning ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days & speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While 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." ⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; & you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea & Samaria, & to the ends of the earth." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, & a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going & they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward 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."

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. Theologians speak of different modes of Jesus' real presence: historical (his annunciation to his ascension); sacramental (i.e. Holy Communion); & mystical (baptized Body of Christ). How does his ascension help explain each one? *Hints:* Where did his resurrected historical body go? Is "the right hand of the Father" an actual physical place limited to the laws our universe of time & space?
See Formula of Concord: Epitome VIII available <bookofconcord.org>
2. How do Sts. Matthew & John account for the Ascension in their gospels? *See Matthew 18:20, 28:16-20, esp. v20; John 16:5-11, 28, 21:22-23; Revelation 12:1-5*

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. How does Jesus' promised return (v10) connect with his historical past, his present with the Father, and his future for the sake of your faithfulness in everyday life? *See Colossians 1:3-29; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12*
4. The time from David to Jesus' birth was 1000 years; the time from his ascension to now is 2000 years; how do you stay balanced between end times excitement (v6) & apathy (v11) as we wait & anticipate (v7)?
See 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Review your congregation's instructions for relaunching in-person worship. *St. Peter's available <stpeterhallettsville.org/covid19>* Even if you think the rules, boundaries, & limitations are silly, stupid, or "socialist/communist," how does acting like part of the crew & doing these things help create a mutual space that accommodates folks who have different concerns than you? In other words, "it's not about you."
See Romans 14:1-6, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
6. Relaunching from *Corona Virus* Keep it your goal to reach out to one other person in the congregation (not in your home/family) each day during these restrictions- **it's a long way back to how we lived back in March 2020**. As your congregation returns to 50+ in-person worship who can you invite to come with you? Who may need a ride? Who might enjoy a *little* extra company before or after worship? How can your congregations new online resources help break the ice?

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Festival of Our Lord's Ascension

05.24.20

Series: Easter II the Sequel

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Episode II-The Ascension Into Heaven

What makes his Ascension a big deal? It connects the historical experience of Jesus with our living experience of Jesus

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days & speaking about the kingdom of God. (v3)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Go & make disciples of all nations, says the Lord;
I am with you always, to the end of the age. (*Matthew 28:19, 20*)

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- Theologians speak of different modes of Jesus' real presence: historical (his annunciation to his ascension); sacramental (i.e. Holy Communion); & mystical (baptized Body of Christ). How does his ascension help explain each one? *Hints:* Where did his resurrected historical body go? Is "the right hand of the Father" an actual physical place limited to the laws our universe of time & space?
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