



A thought about worship...

“If Jesus ascended into heaven, has he left any signs of his presence among us? . . . If we wish to form congregational and personal spirituality, we will call attention to the ascended Lord who eternally intercedes for us and is always with us through the church and the signs of our identity with him (water) and of his continual nourishment (bread and wine).” (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 160-161).



Ascensione, William Congdon, 1961



Epiclesis

An Ancient-Future Faith Community

Liturgy

May 16, 2010 (Ascension)

GATHERING

The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty
and girded with strength.

His throne is established from of old;

He is from everlasting.

O clap your hands, all peoples;

Shout to God with loud songs of joy.

**For the Lord Most High is awesome,
a great King over all the earth.**

He sits on His holy throne.

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

Sing praises to God, sing praises;

Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

– from Psalm 47 and 93



The Ascension, John Singleton Copley, c. 1800



Sing to the Lord

Eternal, Immortal God of all glory,
Fearful in wonders and worthy of praise;
The Alpha, Omega, Lord God Almighty,
Wonderful, Beautiful Ancient of Days.

Chorus:

And I sing praise, I give You my heart,
I sing praise, I give You my all,
I sing praise –
Sing to the Lord.

Redeemer, Messiah, Rock of the ages,
A help in trouble, a tower of strength;
Emmanuel, Jehovah, God of Creation,
Wonderful, Beautiful, King of all kings.

Bridge:

God of compassion and God of all gladness and
Your tender mercies are new every morning, and
God of compassion and God of all gladness and
You dance around me,
You dance around me.

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INVOCATION

Spontaneous prayers of welcome and praise
Testimonies of the Lord's faithfulness



Before the Throne of God Above

When Satan tempts me to despair,
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end to all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me.

Before Him there, the risen Lamb,
My perfect spotless righteousness,
The great unchangeable I Am,
The King of glory and of grace:
One in Himself I cannot die;
My soul is purchased by His Blood.
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ my Savior and my God.

Public Domain. Words by Charitie Lees Bancroft (1863); Gaelic hymn tune

Jesus Christ, this man who is God, participated in our humanity to die
for us and to be resurrected for us, and He now has ascended to the
very throne of God to continually represent us to the Father.
**Therefore He is able to save completely those who come to God
through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them.**

We have a High Priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of
the Majesty in heaven;

**and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the
Lord, not by man.**

He who did everything that ever needed to be done to save us now
continually stands before the Father interceding for us!
Thanks be to God: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Adapted from Hebrews 7 and 8, and Robert Webber,
*Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the
Christian Year*



THE TABLE

Blessing – Remembering – Taking – Reflecting

The Lord's Prayer (spoken)

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 our debts as we forgive our debtors
 And lead us not into temptation,
 But deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
 Forever. Amen

Before the Throne of God Above

Before the Throne of God above
 I have a strong and perfect plea,
 A great High Priest whose Name is Love,
 Who ever lives and pleads for me.
 My name is graven on His hands;
 My name is written on His heart.
 I know that while in Heav'n He stands,
 No tongue can bid me thence depart.

Public Domain. Words by Charitie Lees Bancroft (1863); Gaelic hymn tune

SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body



PROFESSION OF FAITH

This saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance:
that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
 There is one God; there is one mediator
 between God and humankind, Christ Jesus,
who gave himself as a ransom for all, to whom we testify.
 Great indeed is the mystery of our religion:
**He was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit,
 seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations,
 believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.**

—based on 1 Timothy 1:15; 2:5-6; 3:16, NRSV

Alleluia!, Sing to Jesus

Alleluia! sing to Jesus! His the scepter, His the throne.
 Alleluia! His the triumph, His the victory alone.
 Hark! the songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood.
 Jesus out of every nation has redeemed us by His blood.

Alleluia! not as orphans are we left in sorrow now;
 Alleluia! He is near us, faith believes, nor questions how;
 Though the cloud from sight received Him
 When the forty days were o'er
 Shall our hearts forget His promise, "I am with you evermore?"

Alleluia! bread of angels, Thou on earth our food, our stay;
 Alleluia! here the sinful flee to Thee from day to day:
 Intercessor, Friend of sinners, Earth's Redeemer, plead for me,
 Where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia! King eternal, Thee the Lord of lords we own;
 Alleluia! born of Mary, Earth Thy footstool, heav'n Thy throne:
 Thou within the veil hast entered, robed in flesh our great High Priest;
 Thou on earth both priest and victim in the Eucharistic feast.

Words: William C. Dix, 1866. Music: Rowland H. Pritchard, Hymn tune Hyfrydol, 1830.



TIME OF OFFERING

Sovereign and gracious Lord, through Your goodness and mercies You have blessed us with all we have, and all we are. With gratitude we lift willingly give back to You what is Yours. As covenant people we lift our lives up to You, bringing our humble offering of worship and honor and praise.

We Humbly Bow

Verse 1
We humbly bow before You now,
We lift our lives up to You.
On our knees we bring our humble offering
Of worship and honor and praise

Chorus

Boldly we come to Your throne, O Father,
But only by grace can we come.
We've been bought by the precious blood of the Lamb.
We lay down our lives before You,
Jesus, we willingly give You all,
As humbly at Your feet we fall.
For it's the highest place of all, O Lord.

Verse 2

On this holy ground our hearts bow down,
Your awesome splendor overwhelms.
But there is no fear, for Jesus You are here;
Your shed blood has made us a way.

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THE WORD

Acts 1:1-11



PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Agnus Dei

Lord Jesus Christ, Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world:
Have mercy on us.
Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:
Receive our prayer.

For You alone are Lord Most High,
The Holy One, our heavenly King.
We worship You, we give You thanks,
We praise You for Your glory.

You alone are Lord Most High,
The Holy One, our heavenly King.
We worship You, we give You thanks,
We praise You for Your glory.
Almighty God and Father. Amen.

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READING: from Luke 24:44-53 and Acts 1:8b-11

ASSURANCE OF PARDON