

MAY 18, 2023  
ASCENSION OF  
OUR LORD



*Empowered to forgive in Jesus' name.*

### ASCENSION DAY BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Ascension Day observances.

Thursday	Luke 24:44-53	The ascension of Jesus
	Acts 1:1-11	Jesus is taken up to heaven
	Psalms 47	God rules the nations
	Ephesians 1:15-23	Paul's prayer for the church

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR ASCENSION DAY

*And he [Jesus] said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem." Luke 24:46-47 (NRSV)*

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for Ascension Day:**

God of power and might, free us to turn away from selfishness and to love you and others in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, with this food, strengthen us to be witnesses of your love in the world through Christ Jesus, our ascended Savior and Lord. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May God give you wisdom to be a witness of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.



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### HYMN FOR ASCENSION DAY

*A Hymn of Glory  
Let Us Sing!*



### ASCENSION DAY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How do you see people using power in the world around you?
- How does Jesus' power free us to care for others and God's creation?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Luke 24:44-53.

The books of Luke and Acts are written by the same author (Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1). Acts 1 begins where Luke 24 ends, with the ascension. Although the ascension of Jesus can seem like Jesus is leaving his followers behind, he is actually elevating the ministry of the church by connecting the power of God to Jesus' followers. Jesus' ascension empowers all disciples to be witnesses to Jesus. That witness will be understood through the story of Jesus passed down through the ages and interpreted through the scriptures. It is Jesus who "opened their minds to understand the scriptures" (v. 45), and it is through Jesus that the scriptures are understood. The Bible interpreted through the life of Jesus gives us the fundamental message of repentance and forgiveness. We witness to Jesus by speaking of life as a movement of repentance that is away from ourselves and toward God. This new life empowers us to forgive in the name of Jesus, the one whose death, resurrection, and ascension sends us out to care for a world in need.

*Discuss:* How do you give witness to Jesus in the community and the world?

*Pray:* **Almighty God, give us courage and strength to be your witnesses of repentance and forgiveness through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this day, how might you serve others with the power of forgiveness in the name of Jesus?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Jesus spent the last days of his appearance on earth walking and talking with the disciples. On this Ascension Day, invite others to take a walk outside with you. While you are walking, think about Jesus ascending into the clouds to heaven. Find a place to sit and take time to gaze at the sky. Look for clouds and name the shapes you can see. Ask others to explain how they would have felt if they witnessed Jesus' ascension. Then say: **Alleluia! Jesus has ascended! Alleluia!**



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