



"The Ascension" by Copley, John Singleton, 1738-1815.

Christ Church UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev. Dan Stark, pastor
and Matthew Lawrenz, musician
www.uccmke.org

Christ is risen! Christ has really, really, risen, indeed! This final Sunday of Easter, sometimes called Ascension Sunday, marks Jesus' departure from the disciples after 40 days of dwelling with them in community. Today we find ourselves like the disciples after Jesus' ascent into the heavens. All they could do was stand, looking up toward heaven, despite Jesus' call for them to go into the world for the love of the world. During the pandemic, it is easy for us to say, "Ah, into the world – but that's on hold for us right now. We must stay home, maintain distance, and wait for everything to pass before we go into the world. We have to stand, looking up toward heaven." Our scriptures are a reminder that we are truly called "into the world" at this time – even during a pandemic. Next week we celebrate Pentecost – the birth of the Church! This week and next are a perfect time to reflect upon what it means to be "the Church." We are not just a community that follows Jesus' commandments – we are also a community that follows him by succeeding him. Into the world for the love of the world!

Words of Welcome

A Song for Today

Amazing Grace

**arr. Stamm
soloist, Matthew Lawrenz**

Opening Litany

One: We shout for joy to God who rides upon the clouds!

**All: We sing praises to our awe-inspiring God,
before whom the earth quakes,
and whose abundant blessings provide for all in need!**

One: God is Sovereign over the earth,
Defender of the defenseless, and Parent to orphans;
God creates families for those who are alone.

**All: God leads captives to freedom
and breaks the yoke of oppression.**

One: God goes forth before the people,
marching through the wilderness of their lives,
bringing forth restoration and justice.

**All: Sing praise to God,
Rider of the ancient skies,
who dwells in holiness.**

One: Proclaim the power of God!

**All: O God, how awesome you are in your sanctuary!
You give power and strength to your people.**

One: Let us worship God! Amen!

A Time for the Child in Us

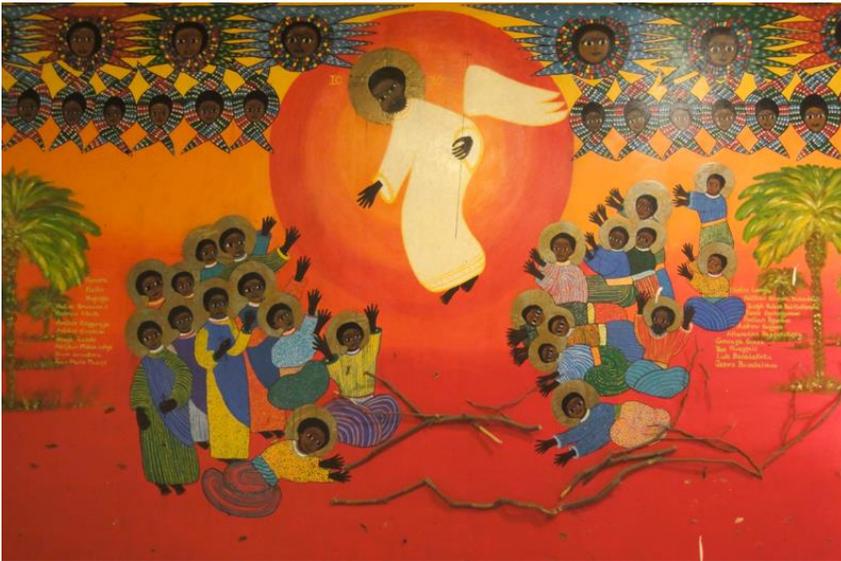
[The Ascension](#)

Spark Family Sunday School

Old Testament

[Psalm 47](#)

Psalm 47 is a song of praise to God. The psalmist lifts God as the true king. God rules over all the nations. God rules over the world. God has brought the nations under the feet of Israel, but God is the one who reigns over all earthly rulers, nations. As such, *all people* are children of Abraham.



"Martyrs of Uganda" from Emmaus House, Kampala, Uganda.

New Testament

[Acts 1:1-11](#)

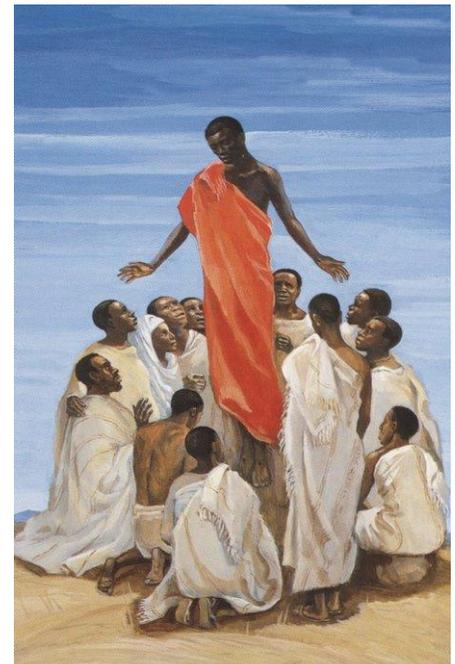
The Acts of the Apostles portrays Jesus' followers from their days with the risen Jesus in Jerusalem to Paul's mission in Rome. Acts has the same author as Luke's Gospel. In this reading, "Luke," expresses that Jesus has "presented himself alive" from the dead in various ways as evidence for new believers. Luke tells his audience that that they ought to remain where they are in Jerusalem for the arrival of God's Holy Spirit. The disciples wonder if this is the time when Jesus will restore the kingdom of Israel, which highlights their focus on a worldly kingdom. Jesus

ascends to heaven in a cloud. While the disciples watch, two messengers of God stand by them and ask, "why do you stand looking up to heaven?"

The Gospel

[Luke 24:44-53](#)

Luke's Gospel gives a somewhat different account of Jesus' ascent into heaven than the book of Acts. At Bethany, Jesus blesses his followers and is "carried up into heaven." Jesus' final words to his disciples are that they are witnesses to his death and resurrection – which is the fulfilment of scripture. The disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy and worship God in the temple.



"The Ascension" by Jesus Mafa, Cameroon.

Homily

Risen: Into the World!

Rev. Dan Stark

A Song of Response

Elegy

**arr. Thalben-Ball
soloist, Matthew Lawrenz**

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Passing the Peace

One: Although we cannot be physically close to one another at this time, we can be relationally close. This Sunday morning, you are invited to pass the peace with your church family and loved ones by taking a moment to text, write, call, or message the people in your church family to let them know you are thinking of them. May the peace of Christ be with you.

A Song for Sending

Blessings

**arr. Laura Story
soloist, Erin Schoemann**

Sending

saltproject.org

One: Friends, how good and pleasant it is to be together, in person or in spirit, encouraging and consoling, provoking and inspiring. But now the service is ended...Why do you stand looking up toward heaven? Go in peace - into the world, for the love of the world!

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If you should need to contact Pastor Stark, please email pastor@uccmke.org.
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You can make your offering to Christ Church through [PayPal](#) or by mailing a check to Christ Church,
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