

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church



Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

ASCENSION DAY

9:30 am Wednesday, 28 May 2025

[From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia](#)

[The Feast of the Ascension of Jesus Christ](#)^[1] (also called the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, Ascension Day, Ascension Thursday, or sometimes Holy Thursday)^{[2][3]} commemorates the Christian belief of the bodily Ascension of Jesus into Heaven. It is one of the ecumenical (shared by multiple denominations) feasts of Christian churches, ranking with the feasts of the Passion and Pentecost. Following the account of Acts 1:3 that the risen Jesus appeared for 40 days prior to his Ascension, Ascension Day is traditionally celebrated on a Thursday, the fortieth day of Easter according to inclusive counting, although some Christian denominations have moved the observance to the following Sunday, sometimes called Ascension Sunday. The day of observance varies by ecclesiastical province in many Christian denominations, as with Methodists and Catholics, for example.



[Continued Pg 11](#)

SALUTATION:

Presider: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

People: **The Lord is risen, indeed! Alleluia!**

Presider: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify you Holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GLORIA —

#S-278

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY:

Presider: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray

All: Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into heaven, so we may also in heart and mind there ascend, and with him continually dwell; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD: *(Please be seated for the lessons)*

First Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Acts (1:1-11):

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While 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; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They 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."

Reader The Word of the Lord **People** **Thanks be to God**

The PSALM:

Psalm 47 (read in unison)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Clap your hands, all you peoples; *
shout to God with a cry of joy. | 6 Sing praises to God, sing praises; *
sing praises to our King, sing
praises. |
| 2 For the Lord Most High is to be
feared; *
he is the great King over all the
earth. | 7 For God is King of all the earth; *
sing praises with all your skill. |
| 3 He subdues the peoples under us, *
and the nations under our feet. | 8 God reigns over the nations; *
God sits upon his holy throne. |
| 4 He chooses our inheritance for us, *
the pride of Jacob whom he loves. | 9 The nobles of the peoples have
gathered together *
with the people of the God of
Abraham. |
| 5 God has gone up with a shout, *
the Lord with the sound of the
ram's-horn. | 10 The rulers of the earth belong to
God, *
and he is highly exalted. |

Second Lesson: A Reading from the Book of Ephesians (1:15-23):

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Reader The Word of the Lord People Thanks be to God

Gospel Lesson: *(Please stand as you are able)*

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
Luke (24:44–53):

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

Jesus said to his disciples, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-- that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he 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. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Deacon: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

Homily (Dottie Gutwein)

Nicene Creed: *Traditional Version (Said aloud by all, in unison)*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and

his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - in the beauty of the earth:

**People: in the rhythm of the seasons, in the mystery of time and space,
Alleluia**

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - in the tenderness of touch

People: in the heartbeat of intimacy, in the insights of solitude, Alleluia

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - in the creative possibility

People: of the hardest conversation, of the dreariest task, of the most threatening event, Alleluia

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive - to offer re-creation

People: to every unhealed hurt, to every deadened place, to every damaged Heart, Alleluia.

Leader: Christ our life, You are alive – to give us encouragement

People: to face our fears, to wrestle with our doubts, to overcome our disappointments, Alleluia.

Leader: You set before us a great choice, death in our souls without you or Life abundantly and eternally with you.

People: Therefore, we choose life.

Leader: The dance of resurrection soars and surges through the whole creation,

People: This is your grace through which we live. So let us live fully and thankfully. Alleluia.

The Peace:

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you The Offertory:

Presider Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself as an offering and sacrifice to God.

Doxology #380 vs. 3

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

The Holy Communion - *The Great Thanksgiving BCP Rite 2A*

Presider: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you

Presider: Lift up your hearts

People: We lift them to the Lord

Presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Presider:

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Pascal Lamb, who was sacrificed for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has won for us everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus -

#S-128

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Presider continues:

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit (+) to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also (+) that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

Presider: As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

**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, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread (*Presider breaks the consecrated bread*)

Fraction Anthem : Hymnal 1982 #S-155

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is
sac - ri - ficed for us; there - fore let us keep the feast.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died and rose again for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving.

(All are invited and welcome to come forward and receive communion in this church. The bread is gluten free and we use real wine. To receive by intincting/dipping your bread into the wine, please use the left altar rail. To receive by eating the bread and taking a sip of wine from the cup, please use the right altar rail. You may receive only the bread if you prefer. If you are not ready to take communion with us today, you may also come forward, cross your arms over your chest and receive a blessing instead.)

Post Communion Prayer *(The people stand as they are able.)*

Presider: Let us pray.

All: Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom.

And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

Presider: May Almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Deacon: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in God's Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, (Alleluia!)

[Continued from front:](#)

Ascensiontide refers to the ten-day period between the Feast of the Ascension and the Feast of Pentecost.[4] The Sunday within that period may be referred to as the Seventh Sunday of Easter or the Sunday in Ascensiontide.[5]

History

The observance of this feast is of great antiquity. Eusebius seems to hint at the celebration of it in the 4th century.[6] At the beginning of the 5th century, Augustine of Hippo says that it is of Apostolic origin, and he speaks of it in a way that shows it was the universal observance of the Catholic Church long before his time. Frequent mention of it is made in the writings of John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, and in the Constitution of the Apostles. The Pilgrimage of Aetheria speaks of the vigil of this feast and of the feast itself, as they were kept in the church built over the grotto in Bethlehem in which Christ is traditionally regarded as having been born. [7] It may be that prior to the 5th century the event narrated in the Gospels was commemorated in conjunction with the feast of Easter or Pentecost. Some[who?] believe that the much-disputed forty-third decree of the Synod of Elvira (c. 300) condemning the practice of observing a feast on the fortieth day after Easter and neglecting to keep Pentecost on the fiftieth day, implies that the proper usage of the time was to commemorate the Ascension along with Pentecost.[citation needed] Representations of the mystery are found in diptychs and frescoes dating as early as the 5th century.[citation needed] Hymns for this feast are found in the Georgian Chantbook of Jerusalem,[8] which contains material composed during the 5th century.[9]

In Western Christianity

The Latin terms used for the feast, *ascensio* and, occasionally, *ascensa*, signify that Christ was raised up by his own powers, and it is from these terms that the holy day gets its name. In the Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican Communion, "Holy Thursday" is listed as another name for Ascension Day.[2][3][10] William Blake's poem "Holy Thursday" refers to Ascension Day; Thomas Pruen used the term to refer to Ascension Day in his *Illustration of the Liturgy of the Church of England*, published in 1820;[11][12] however use of the term "Holy Thursday" to mean Ascension Day is rare,[13] and the term is more generally applied by most Christian denominations to Maundy Thursday in Holy Week.

In Western Christianity, the earliest possible date is April 30 (as in 1818 and 2285), the latest possible date is June 3 (as in 1943 and 2038). In the Catholic Church, the Ascension of the Lord is ranked as a Solemnity and is a Holy Day of Obligation. In the Anglican Communion, Ascension Day is a Principal Feast.[citation needed]

The three days before Ascension Thursday are sometimes referred to as the Rogation days, and the previous Sunday—the Sixth Sunday of Easter (or the Fifth Sunday after Easter)—as Rogation Sunday.[citation needed]

Ascension has a vigil and, since the 15th century, an octave, which is set apart for a novena of preparation for Pentecost.[14]

In traditional Methodist usage, *The Book of Worship for Church and Home* (1965) provides the following Collect for Ascension Day, commonly called Holy Thursday:[15]

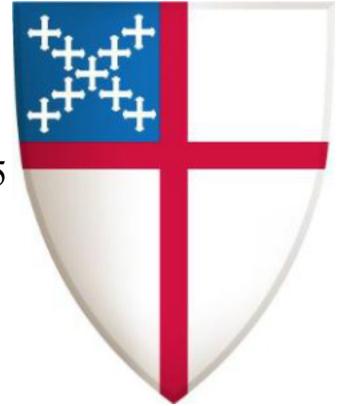
Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things: Mercifully give us faith to perceive that according to his promise he abideth with his Church on earth, even unto the end of the world;

[Continued online](#)

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2750 Cardinal Dr. Sierra Vista, AZ 85635
<https://ststephensaz.org>
520-458-4432



ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Rector: Allison Cornell
Off. Phone: 520-458-4432
Mobile: 562-743-3784

RevAllison@ststephensaz.org

Parish Administrator
Mark Sowards
Off. Phone 520-458-4432
Mobile: 408-892-1062

Mark.sowards@ststephensaz.org

Office Fax: 520-458-8237

Rev. Deacons:
Dorothy Gutwein
Hm: 520-515-9183

dottie85635@gmail.com

Sherry Simon
sherrytsimon@gmail.com
(520)-210-2026

Church Accompanist :
Doreen Oberg
doreenoberg@hotmail.com

Vestry Staff

Senior Warden:

Jeff Speer
jeffrey5454speer@gmail.com
Cell:(520) 678-5688

Please leave voicemail message

Junior wardens:

Pete Criscuolo
petesacct2014@gmail.com

Cell: 520-234-7687

& Timothy Holsonback
holsonback@cox.net
520/459-1937

Treasurer:

Anne Roth
Cell:303/917-8151
avd.roth@comcast.net

Welcome Visitor!!!

Please leave your name and contact info below. If you'd like to speak with someone, please check here

Or you can also use the QRC here to fill this out online.



Info Update Giving Envelopes Mail News Letter

Name _____ (first) _____ (Mid.) _____ (Last)

Hm: _____ Cell _____

Email: _____ Anv. Date _____

BrthDate _____

Adrs: _____

City, St., Zip: _____, _____, _____