

THE HAVEN CHURCH
SUNDAY WORSHIP SHEET. MAY 24th 2020
ASCENSION DAY.

“Come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving;
Let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!
For the Lord is a great God,”. Psalm 95 v1-3

Song: Hallelujah! Sing to Jesus

<https://youtu.be/-ajdmCclCc8?t=6>

Song: Creation sings the Father's song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xc9sWYKvs4>

Opening Prayer:

I arise today with the power of God to guide me
The might of God to uphold me,
The wisdom of God to teach me,
The eye of God to look over me,
The ear of God to hear me,
The word of God to give me speech,
The hand of God to protect me,
The path of God to lie before me,
The shield of God to shelter me,
The host of God to defend me against the snares of the devil
And the temptations of the world,
Against everyone who meditates injury to me,
Whether far or near.
I arise today.

The Readings.

Luke 24:45-53

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

The Ascension of Jesus

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

Acts1:1-11, Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵For John baptized with^[a] water, but in a few days you will be baptized with^[b] the Holy Spirit."

⁶Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Prayer of confession.

Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord

We come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength and not by the power of your resurrection

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless, and not believing

We have lived for this world alone and doubted our home in heaven

We have seen the ill treatment of others and have not gone to their aid

We have wilfully misused your gifts of creation

We have heard the good news of Christ but have failed to share it with others

We have not loved you with all our heart, nor our neighbours as ourselves.

Lord be merciful:

Forgive us our sin

Lord hear us and help us, and grant us your pardon and peace, and strengthen us in our desire to draw closer to You. Amen.

The Lords Prayer.

Our Father in heaven

Hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come

Your will be done

On earth as in heaven

Give us today our daily bread

Forgive us our sins

As we forgive those who sin against us

Lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

Now and forever. Amen.

Song: O my soul

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPQsOwJrRZU>

(Sorry there are no lyrics on this clip - please refer to the song sheet for words)

Song: There is a Redeemer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldRcFz7rK7w>

The Sermon.

(contributed by Rev Ingrid Munro)

The Acts of the Apostles is the second book written by Luke. The first an account of all the things Jesus did, and taught, right up to the Ascension.

The appearances of Jesus to his disciples over a period of forty days, the eating, the conversations, the invitation to touch him to verify his 'body' gave confirmation to the apostles of his validity as the Son of God. We should consider too, that his ability to simply disappear, must have given some disturbing validity to his Divinity. This man can cross two worlds.

In the same surprising way that Jesus enters the world, He leaves it! His work beginning in Bethlehem in human birth, is finished, and his ascension to His father a mighty statement of closure. However, his promise is to be with them always. His instruction is left with them to stay and wait for what His Father is to give them. He will equip them to take out the Gospel message from there in Jerusalem to the far ends of the earth! Until they have been "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24v 49)

Acts builds on what Jesus has already spoken of, it's a book which begins with the work of the early disciples, but this book is special because there is in a sense no ending, because all Jesus began was carried on by the disciples, throughout the early Christian Church, to our world today, and if you like, Jesus has the book and the accounts of the witness to him, which are so vast that there is, and can be no ending till the 'last day'.

We remember people in history that have made their mark on the world, like Martin Luther King, Einstein, Florence Nightingale and many more. How they lived their lives is recorded and lives on. But they don't!

Jesus is not the one who was! He is the one who IS and still His life goes on !!!

The Jews always knew they were special. They took that to mean that one day their specialness and supremacy would be restored, and their supremacy would be worldwide. The thing is their misunderstanding of the Kingdom of which Jesus spoke of. They were looking for earthly honours and power. Jesus spoke of a power which is nothing to with this world, nor with politics. It belongs to God. If only we could get this message out to the world now!

Christianity is not a religion of the West, or East, North or South. It is a power in the whole world that has been there since the beginning of the world. Jesus is the key to help us understand that, and to those who follow him, being given access to that power in His name to fulfill His Mission in the world today! Only the Son of the Living God has authority to do this. No false prophets or authorities can stand against the power that He will give to his

disciples! By our deeds we will be seen and known when we follow the path He sets for us. Love is the one thing that can defeat the evil in our world. It is the unbroken link between Heaven and earth. Jesus is the link, and we can see that through the Ascension. His restoration to His Father in the Kingdom.

The angels' appearance at the Ascension tells us too that He will return in the same way that He left. The second coming is the essential story of an event still to happen. It's a summons to prepare ourselves for what will happen. It is part of God's plan that this will happen and that our world is heading for it.

In Luke 24,v52 we hear of the disciples returning to Jerusalem with "great joy" following the Ascension! Not as they were after the Crucifixion. A jubilant bunch, knowing that Jesus was not lost to them, but that He was with them forever.!

Can you feel that optimism in his Holy Word too?

The apostles were told to wait on the coming of the Spirit. In the business of life we need to learn to be still.

" They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength"(Isaiah 40: 31.

Amidst all the striving there must be a time to receive! Amen!

Reflections.

a) We have listened to the fact that Jesus was able to appear in a human way, and disappear in a very Divine way. How do you feel about that? Does it take you beyond your comfort zone, and challenge you to accept that with Jesus there is a new 'reality'!

b) Have you ever joined in with a group of people watching something in the sky? Were your eyes so fixed that you never thought to look at who you were standing next to?

c) The disciples were undoubtedly shocked to see two angels who spoke with them. It's an amusing scene when you think about it, the angels ask them why they are looking up to heaven, watching Jesus go, rather as if they are saying 'this is normal.. get used to it!?' Don't waste time standing here...off you go!!! Is that message spoken to us too?

Intercessions

[Psalm 23:1-6](#)

A Psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me... At the moment when many are feeling rudderless and isolated, let us all take time to rest in in His presence and let it seep into our souls. The Lord wants to be ever closer to us and this is the ideal time to seek Him.

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank you for your promise that you are with us always. The assurance that you want our ways to be in green pastures, beside the still waters is such a comfort when everything is in turmoil around us. We claim your restoration Lord for those who are lonely, worried or living in fear. Particularly those who are walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

We pray for Julie, Garth and all the family, who are mourning for Garth's cousin Harlean. Please may they be aware that your rod and your staff are there to comfort them. We pray for Joy whose Dad has returned to Manchester after her mum's funeral and is now feeling very tired. There are others who are awaiting funerals of friends or family, may they be aware of your sustaining love.

We pray for those who are waiting for hospital appointments or treatment, especially those anxious of the outcomes or about attending hospital at this time. We remember Moira who had to attend A &E with more nosebleeds, and for all who are ill. Ann's brother Eric has had to be readmitted to hospital with a suspected infection after making good progress previously. We also bring to you others who have had routine procedures deferred and are finding life difficult to cope with because of it.

We thank you, Lord for your healing in Martin and ask that he may continue to be fully restored. Thank you that Angela has had relief from the pain in her legs after new medication. Also, in the midst of so much bad news we thank you for the birth of Alison's new grandchild .and ask for continued good health for mother and baby.

There are many who are worried about their finances as a consequence of the long suspension of the economy, and also those who are concerned that they may be made redundant because of this pandemic. We pray particularly for all those we know who work at Rolls Royce. There are those who are family members, members of our fellowship and lots of others in our city who are employed there and are equally anxious. Please Lord, give them your strength and patience to bear with the uncertainty and help them to deal with the daily issues they are facing. This affects our whole city and we pray for it Father. There are already many disadvantaged folk who are struggling, have mercy on them, Lord and may our compassion reach out to them in practical ways.

Father this country needs you now more than ever, help us to encourage people to turn to you and take comfort for their fear and anxiety. We lift our leaders to you, Father as they work to deal with the medical and financial issues arising from this disease; give them wisdom and help them to make the right decisions. We thank you Lord, for all the scientists who are working on treatment and prevention of Covid 19 and we ask you to bless their endeavours, so the world may start to move forward.

There are countries in Africa and Asia who are suffering from violence, famine and natural disasters as well as the coronavirus. We pray for those who are bringing aid to them, for protection and the equipment to deal with the situations they find. Father we ask your mercy for all those affected by Cyclone Amphan that has swept across The Bay of Bengal, causing devastation. We pray for those who have lost family members, homes and are now dealing with homelessness and possible flooding. There is also an increased risk of Covid 19 infection spreading as a consequence.

We thank you lord for those members of our fellowship who have worked so hard to keep us connected through these difficult times, and the love we share, because we are your children. Amen

Closing Song. Hear the call of the kingdom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsAhvB2CHj4>

Promise and Blessing

Jesus said, "I am with you always"

May God the Creator bless you

May God the Son walk with you.

May God the Spirit lead your lives with love.