

The Festival of the Ascension of our Lord
St. Mark 16:14-20
May 29th, 2025
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Go Ye into All the World

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“And He said unto them, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord + Jesus Christ, Thou Son of the Most High, Who no longer dwellest on Earth in lowliness and poverty, but art seated at the right hand of the Father, a mighty Lord over all things in Heaven and on Earth, filling and ruling all: we beseech Thee, send us Thy Holy Spirit, give us faithful ministers, endow them with Thy gifts and keep them in Thy Word, hinder Satan and all tyrants, and mightily protect Thy Kingdom on Earth, until all enemies are laid at Thy feet, and we overcome sin, death, and all things by Thee, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! It has been forty days since we celebrated that our Lord + Jesus, the Christ has risen from the dead. He lives and dies no more. In His crucifixion our Lord suffered for all the sins of the whole world. He paid the debt that our sins deserved. He suffered so that we do not have to. After completely fulfilling all that was required to atone for our sins, and the sins of the whole world, our Lord cried, “It is finished!” He gave up the ghost, and rested from His labors on the cross for three days in the grave. His death paid the penalty of our sins. It atoned for the sins of the whole world, so that all those who believe on Him might have everlasting life.

Then on the third day He rose again from the dead. This resurrection proves that the heavenly Father accepted the sacrifice of His Only-begotten and Beloved Son. It proves that just as He died and rose again, we too are dead to sin, and alive in the Christ, + Jesus. We can now cling in faith to both His sacrifice and His resurrection as the means that grant us an eternal life in Heaven. As a further testimony of this truth, we have been baptized into our Lord’s death and resurrection. The Old Adam in us has been drowned and killed, so that a new man now has risen and lives before our Lord in innocence, righteousness, and holiness. This new man is created by the Holy Ghost. He renews and strengthens that which He created in us through the means of grace; through the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God, and the Blessed Sacraments which our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, instituted for us.

We have heard all about the work of the Holy Ghost from our Lord Himself through the Gospel readings during these forty days between His resurrection and His ascension. Our Lord has been instructing us as to what we should expect from the time of His ascension to the time when He comes

to take us from this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven. This is exactly what our Lord + Jesus did for His Apostles during these forty days. St. Luke in His Acts of the Apostles tells us this is so. He showed Himself alive after His passion for forty days. Proving to them that He was alive. He made them eyewitnesses to His resurrection after His death and burial. St. Luke also writes in our Epistle for today that our Lord spoke to them the things concerning the kingdom of the Lord God. He explained to them from the Scriptures why the Son of Man, the Messiah, must suffer many things, die, be buried, and rise again on the third day.

He took this time—these forty days—and showed them that all these things must take place for the redemption of all mankind, so that all those who cling to Him in faith might be justified and saved from eternal death. Our Lord also charged them during this time to go into all the world as eyewitnesses to these events so that all the world might hear and believe. They were to baptize all who heard and believed, baptizing entire families from infants to the old and infirm. They would be accompanied by the Holy Ghost. He would confirm the truth of what they preached by accompanying the Word of the Lord God with signs and wonders. They would cast out demons, speak in tongues, that is, speak languages they did not know as if they did know them, so that those who knew those languages would hear and believe. They would also take up deadly serpents and not die from their venom. They would not die from being poisoned by their enemies. They would lay hands upon the sick, so that the diseases would leave them, and they would be healed.

All these things the Apostles were taught by the Lord + Jesus. These were the things He instructed them to do. These were the things that would bring the saving Gospel of salvation in our Lord + Jesus, the Christ alone to all the world. This would become the task of the Church. This is the Great Commission of the Church. It is to proclaim to all the world that the One and Only Savior of the world is found in the Lord + Jesus, the Christ alone. He atoned for the sins of the whole world upon the tree of the holy cross. He proved that His sacrifice won forgiveness, life and salvation for all the world by His resurrection. All those who hear and believe receive salvation. All who hear and believe receive the gifts that our Lord + Jesus would have us receive.

We have received from Him Holy Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar. We have received from Him the gift of the Absolution of our sins, spoken from the minister in the stead and by the command of our Lord + Jesus. Through these means the Apostles made new believers on the Lord + Jesus through the help and comfort of the Holy Ghost working through those means. We still use these same means today. The Church still has the same mandate which our Lord gave to Apostles during the forty days between His resurrection and ascension.

Our Lord died to atone for our sins. He rose again to prove that His sacrifice was sufficient for the atonement of our sins. Now today, forty days after His resurrection—forty days after Easter—our Lord ascends into Heaven to sit at the right hand of the heavenly Father. He won His kingdom and His authority and power by His death and resurrection. Today, He takes up the throne which He won by His death and resurrection. Our Lord + Jesus now rules in Heaven. He will rule forever and ever. He will also come again on the Last Day to take us from this evil world to the joys and comforts of our eternal, heavenly home.

But since this life and this world are filled with evil; since we suffer the torments of our own sinfulness, and the consequences of sin being in this world, our Lord + Jesus has promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us. He is with us even unto the end of the age. He is with us through His holy Word. The Word Incarnate is with us in His written Word, which proclaims all that He has done, and will do for us. It is to this pure preaching, which proclaims the works and merits of the Christ, to which we cling in faith and are justified by Him.

Our Lord spent these forty days between His resurrection and ascension preparing His Apostles

for the time when He would not be with them face to face. They were to go into all the world and proclaim His works and merits, and baptize all those who cling to Him in faith. Our Lord's earthly ministry ended with a time frame of forty days. It also began with a time frame of forty days, when He was tempted by the devil in the wilderness. Then the devil had power and authority over this world, but now in these forty days, our Lord rules and reigns. The devil was soundly defeated and destroyed by His sufferings upon the tree of the holy cross. He was innocent of the crimes leveled against Him. Therefore, the grave could not hold Him. He rose again on the third day to reveal to all the world His victory over sin and death; His victory over the prince of this world, the devil.

Our Lord + Jesus now rules and reigns from the right hand of the heavenly Father. He still sends out His ministers into all the world to preach the good news that through His works and merits all the world may have forgiveness and life everlasting. All those who believe on Him gladly receive the gift of Holy Baptism, and confess that He alone is the One, True Savior of all the world.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us give thanks that our Lord has defeated death and the grave, that He has defeated the devil and his horde. For He has now ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father until He comes again to take us from this world to our eternal home in Heaven. Let us also rejoice and give thanks, that our Lord and Savior does not leave us alone and helpless in this evil world, but has given us the means to lead us into our eternal home. He has given us the gifts of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He has given us the Absolution. These means proclaim to us that our sins are forgiven for the sake of the death and the resurrection of our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ. They are visible and verbal signs that all those who believe on the Lord + Jesus have eternal life, and will rise again from the dead on the Last Day. Thanks be to our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ, Who has risen from the dead, and lives and reigns on high. Hallelujah! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord + Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same + Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ + Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!