

Parish of St. Thomas, Apostle & Martyr, Ipswich

Seventh Sunday of Easter / Ascension

Collect: Risen, ascended Lord, as we rejoice at your triumph, we pray, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, fill your Church on earth with power and compassion, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Psalm 68.1-10

1 Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee before him.
2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God.
3 But let the righteous be joyful; let them exult before God; let them be jubilant with joy.
4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds - his name is the Lord - be exultant before him.
5 Father of orphans and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation.
6 God gives the desolate a home to live in; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious live in a parched land.



7 O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness,
8 the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
9 Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad; you restored your heritage when it languished;
10 your flock found a dwelling in it; in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles:

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." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers. (Acts 1.6-14)

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (17.1-11)

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may

know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. **This is the gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, o Christ.**

Reflection:

Jesus' Ascension into heaven is the culmination and fulfilment of his work on earth: It's the most amazing event, that he, the son of God, came to share our human lives with all their vulnerability, complexity, richness, tragedy, joy and suffering – he came to share all of that and then he takes it with him into God, as he returns to the Father. Through his life, his self-giving death and resurrection he has redeemed humanity – he taken away any barriers between ourselves and God – has opened for everyone the door of being a beloved child of God and to be part of God's loving purposes for the world. This is stuff for poets

— and Malcolm Guite, in this sonnet called 'Ascension Day', puts it beautifully:

We saw his light break through the cloud of glory
Whilst we were rooted still in time and place
As earth became a part of Heaven's story
And heaven opened to his human face.
We saw him go and yet we were not parted
He took us with him to the heart of things
The heart that broke for all the broken-hearted
Is whole and Heaven-centred now, and sings;
Sings in the strength that rises out of weakness,
Sings through the clouds that veil him from our sight,
Whilst we ourselves become his clouds of witness
And sing the waning darkness into light;
His light in us, and ours in him concealed,
Which all creation waits to see revealed.



...He took us with him to the heart of things....whilst we ourselves become his clouds of witness and sing the waning darkness into light..

In this week, running up to Pentecost, we are invited to pray especially for God's kingdom to come. We always underestimate what difference our prayer makes in the world - and therefore we don't prioritise it. But when we remind ourselves that God's spirit is in us and at work through us, then what better use of some of our time than making space in our hearts and minds for God to guide us and be more part of our lives. Only making time for 10 minutes of prayer each day, to say the Lord's prayer, to pray to notice where God is at work around, to offer ourselves as God's workers in God's kingdom makes a huge difference. God's kingdom is all around us already - and not confined to the Church - in every kind and loving act, in every word of hope and forgiveness, in every act of courage and generosity, that reaches out to a stranger, in every moment of

thankfulness for the beauty of our world and all the gifts in our lives. At the moment, many of us are longing to return to the social and economic life we had before lockdown – it won't be the same - a new 'normal' will have to emerge, and is being shaped right now: a time for deep prayer. So, let's resolve to contribute to that through our prayer, our faith and loving action. Let's light up Suffolk with prayer! - Revd Jutta

May you may know the Peace of the risen Christ, who came and stood among his disciples and said 'Peace be with you'. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

Alleluia! The peace of the risen Christ be always with you.

Here are the words of two hymns you may like to sing or pray this week:

Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And His righteousness;
And all these things shall be added unto you.
Allelu, alleluia.

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
Allelu, Alleluia.*

You shall not live by bread alone,
But by every word
That proceeds out from the mouth of God.
Allelu, alleluia.

Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
Seek, and ye shall find.
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.
Allelu, alleluia.

1 Rejoice, the Lord is King!
Your Lord and King adore;
mortals, give thanks and sing,
and triumph evermore.

*Lift up your heart,
lift up your voice;
rejoice, again I say, rejoice.*

2 Jesus the Saviour reigns,
the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains,
he took his seat above.

3 His kingdom cannot fail;
he rules o'er earth and heav'n;
the keys of death and hell
are to our Jesus giv'n.

4 He sits at God's right hand
till all his foes submit,
and bow to his command,
and fall beneath his feet.

Call this number → for free,
for a greeting from Justin Welby,
Archbishop of Canterbury! Then
listen to hymns being sung, prayers, or
reflections. Give it a go, it's a lovely way
to worship from home!



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers



21st to 31st May: Thy Kingdom Come Worldwide prayer initiative:
Please, see the attached sheet and join in 'Light up Suffolk with prayer' more resources on <https://www.light-wave.org/prayer>

Or: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/thy-kingdom-come>

Please pray for:

Those with chronic or long-term illness: Eric Dickerson, Rosemary, Adam, Jenny and Andrew Barfield, Kathy Steele, Frank D., Andrew Derrett, Peggy, Pat, Natacha, Christine, Stephen, Julie, Samantha, Jill, Rex, Molly Johansen, Margaret Christian, Marion (Val's sister-in-law)

Those undergoing treatment or currently ill: Mike Harding, Emily & family (9 years old with cancer), Juliet Adams, Matthew Hare, Gloria Elmer, Helen Harlow, Jean Dominy, Leslie Bloomfield, Pete Tancred, Val's niece, Katie (cancer), Peter, Hazel Messenger (cancer, very ill), Jim, Richard (June's nephew), Sylvia Eley, Dougie

All who are affected by the Coronavirus in the UK and around the world: For the **International Rescue Committee and other aid agencies** working to curtail the spread of Covid19 in developing countries; **for all health care staff, esp. those in care homes.** For all who are living alone and self-isolating. All affected by domestic violence.

Those who have recently died, and their families mourning their loss, among them: Ian, Gerry, Agnes Kronenberger R.I.P.



Birthdays this week:

Bishop Martin (29th)

Thank you from Pam for the many cards and phone calls on her 90th birthday!

Online Church Services:

Sunday 24 May - 10am ZOOM Worship

Tuesday 26 May –6.00 pm LiveStream

**Meditation on facebook/
StThomasPilgrimCommunity
facebook/StThomasIpswich**

Wednesday 27 May:

10 am Livestream Eucharist

Pray for members of the St Thomas Congregation

(each week we will include a dozen names)

Naomi with Dan, Millie, Lily-Rose, Archie & Dylan, Peggy, Carol Brown, Lyanne & Aaron, Keith, June Browes, Mary, Canon Chris, Phyllis, Margaret Christian,

Sunday Worship Video & other Worship resources on the church facebook page.

Church Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/stthomasipswich/>

Church website:

<http://stthomasipswich.org.uk/>

**YOUR SUPPORT NEEDED FOR NWIPSWICH
FOODBANK organised by the Big Local Trust:**

Please drop non-perishable food at
Castlehill Community Centre, Highfield Road
on MONDAYS between 9.30 and 11.00am.

Contacts:

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Cat's day off: Mondays

If you would like to chat, please do give us a ring:

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