

OFFICIAL



Contemporary Ascension icon by Ivanka Demchuk, Lviv, Ukraine.

Ascension Sunday

Sunday 21 May 2023

Welcome to St Philip's

We acknowledge the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we worship, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present and emerging. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who worship with us.

St Philip's COVIDSafe Plan We are asking folk not attend church if they feel unwell, to be aware of their hand hygiene and to be mindful of social distance. Thank you. Masks are available for those who wish to wear one.

Pew sheet & Order of Service: the full Pew sheet with more news and reflections is available on our website. The QR code in the pews will direct you to the current edition, please use your phone/tablet and follow along. Service cards, Pew Bibles and Prayer Books are also available.

Offertory: at the offertory when our gifts are brought forward, there is an opportunity for you to make your contribution. A self-serve Eftpos machine is available in the foyer, you can use it before or after the service. St Philip's EFT details are also available if you would like to make a direct transfer: 702-389 05202512. Giving cards are in the foyer if you wish to place something in the offertory bag after giving electronically.

Communion: if you are baptised you are welcome to receive communion. If you would like to receive a blessing please cross your hands on your chest as you come forward.

The Flowers today are in loving memory of Barry Johnson

If you'd like to volunteer as a reader, sidesperson, welcomer or another role on the Roster, then please email rosters@stphilipsoconnor.org.au

St Philips O'Connor, ACT

www.stphilipsoconnor.org.au

email: comeandsee@stphilipsoconnor.org.au



[@stphilipsoconnor](https://www.facebook.com/stphilipsoconnor)

Rector: The Rev'd Martin Johnson 0478 619 911

From the Rector

Dear Friends

At the heart of our Parish Plan 2023-25 is prayer. Everything we do is founded on prayer. Today we begin an important week in the life of the Church, the week between Ascension and Pentecost. It is a week in which we pray for the outpouring and the gifting of the Holy Spirit. The Church of England has developed a prayer guide called 'Thy Kingdom Come' which encourages us to pray with this intention at this time of year. You can find the Website at:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

To get us started I have printed the introduction and the Novena for Ascensontide. Can I encourage you to check out the website and discover the prayer resources for this week. We will gather on Saturday this week for the third Seminar in our Missional Spirituality project, I hope that you can come along at 2pm and learn a little about what it means to be missional in our time and context.

This week is also the week of prayer for Christian unity. This gives us the opportunity to pray not just for unity among our companions in other traditions, but for unity in our own Communion.

Bishop Steven Pickard, who is known to many of you, is Chair of the national committee of the newly formed 'National Comprehensive Anglican Network' which is striving to promote a diverse and comprehensive vision of Anglicanism in Australia. I have registered our interest and I will keep you informed of the work of the network.

Blessings to you all during this week of prayer, I hope to see many of you next Saturday as we gather to learn a little about our mission in the world.

Martin

Eucharist for Ascension Sunday

Introit Hymn 371(TiS) (10am)

God is gone up on high,
with a triumphant noise;
the clarions of the sky
proclaim the angelic joys!

Refrain: Join all on earth, rejoice and sing;
glory ascribe to glory's king.

God in the flesh below,
for us he reigns above:
let all the nations know
our Jesus' conquering love! [Refrain]

All power to our great Lord
is by the Father given;
by angel hosts adored,
he reigns supreme in heaven. [Refrain]

High on his holy seat
he bears the righteous sway;
his foes beneath his feet
shall sink and die away. [Refrain]

His foes and ours are one,
Satan, the world, and sin;
but he shall tread them down
and bring his kingdom in: [Refrain]

till all the earth, renewed
in righteousness divine,
with all the hosts of God
in one great chorus join. [Refrain]

Charles Wesley 1707-88

Entrance Antiphon

**'Go and make disciples of all nations,' Jesus commands; 'I am with you always,
to the close of the age.'**

Matthew 28:19

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you

Christ is risen.
He is risen indeed.

Let us pray:
**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Christ has entered heaven itself, there to appear before God on our behalf.

Let therefore draw near in full assurance of faith and confess our sins to the God of grace.

Lord Jesus, you suffered a cruel death on the cross for our redemption, yet we have forgotten your pain and stayed in the realm of the evil you defeated.

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you were raised from death to bring us new life, yet we have preferred the comfort of the familiar, and the empty promises of a sinful world.

Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you have ascended to your Father and our Father, your God and our God; plead there at the right hand of God for our forgiveness and entry into the fullness of his presence.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God,

Who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith:

Pardon you ✕ and set you free from all your sins,

strengthen you in all goodness

and keep you in eternal life,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gloria (8am)

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's 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 righthand 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.

Gloria (sung at 10am)

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With the angels and archangels:

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With the patriarchs and prophets:

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With the Virgin Mary mother of God:

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With the Apostles and Evangelists:

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With all the martyrs of Christ:

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With all who witness to the Gospel of the Lord:

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

With all your people of the Church throughout the world.

Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

God of majesty,

you led the Messiah through suffering into the risen life,

and took him up into the glory of heaven:

clothe us with the power promised from on high,

and send us forth to the ends of the earth

as heralds of repentance and witnesses of Jesus Christ,

the firstborn from the dead,

who lives with you now and always;

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen.

Today's Readings

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 ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While 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; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' ⁷He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But 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.'⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards 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.'

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 47

O clap your hands, all you peoples :
and cry aloud to God with shouts of joy.

**For the Lord Most High is to be feared :
he is a great King over all the earth.**

He cast down peoples under us :
and the nations beneath our feet.

**He chose us a land for our possession :
that was the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.**

God has gone up with the sound of rejoicing :
and the Lord to the blast of the horn.

**O sing praises, sing praises to God :
O sing praises, sing praises to our King.**

For God is the King of all the earth :
O praise him in a well-wrought psalm.

**God has become the King of the nations :
he has taken his seat upon his holy throne.**

The princes of the peoples are gathered together :
with the people of the God of Abraham.

**For the mighty ones of the earth are become the servants of God :
and he is greatly exalted.**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians (1:15-23)

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love towards all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I 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, ¹⁸so 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, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God 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, ²¹far 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. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

For the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn 189 (TiS) (10am)

Glory to our boundless God,
who has promised peace on earth.
God the Father, glorious, strong,
heaven's Sovereign, Lord of all:
worship, thanks, and praise we give
when your glory we recall.

Let unceasing praise and prayer
come to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of God, incarnate Love,
Lamb who takes our sin away.
Risen and exalted Lord,
hear with mercy as we pray.

For in you alone we find
God's true holiness revealed:
You alone we claim as Lord,
Jesus Christ, through whom we see
God's own fullness manifest
in the Holy Trinity.

Carl P. Daw 1944-

Gradual (8am)

Alleluia,

Alleluia!

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.

Ephesians 1:18

Alleluia!

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke (24:44-53)

Glorify to you Lord Jesus 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.' ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And 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.' ⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God. For the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

**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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who 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

In our prayers we remember all in need, particularly: Ben, Hugh, Sarah, David, Otto, Bob, Noel, Deborah, Sue, Molly, Katherine, Matt David & Margot, those unable to gather with us, those in hospital or care.

We are continuing to offer support to the ABM project in Vanuatu following the recent cyclones and earthquake. Here is prayer for you to use:

*Loving God, console and strengthen all who have been affected by recent cyclones in Vanuatu, those who have lost their gardens – the source of their food, those who have lost their homes, and the children whose schooling has been disrupted. Through the support and generosity of our churches in Vanuatu and Australia, may they find a way to recovery and rebuilding.
We make our prayer in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

We commend to God the recently departed especially Harold Oakley, those whose anniversaries fall at this time: Charlotte Joseph (24/5/2002) and Baden Williams (27/5/2021), the victims of war and tragedy, those whose memories are dear to us, and those who have no one to remember them.

The Greeting of Peace

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. If you love me, rejoice because I am going to the Father'.

ohn 14.27,28

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn 526(TiS) (10am)

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have come to us
you are one with us,
Mary's son.

cleansing our souls from
all their sin
pouring your love and goodness in
Jesus our love for you we sing,
living Lord.
Lord Jesus Christ
now and every day
teach us how to pray,
Son of God.
you have commanded us to do
this in remembrance lord of you
into our lives, your power breaks through,
living Lord.

Lord Jesus Christ,
I would come to you
live my life for you, Son of God.
All your commands I know are true,
your many gifts will make me new,
into my life, your power breaks through,
living Lord;

Patrick Robert Norman Appleford 1925-

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit
of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed be God, by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened, by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.

Blessed be God for ever.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give out thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and good,
our duty and our joy,
always and everywhere to give you thanks,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ the King of glory.

Born of a woman,
he came to the rescue of our human race.
Dying for us, he trampled death and conquered sin.

By the glory of his resurrection
he opened the way to life eternal
and by his ascension,
gave us the sure hope
that where he is we may also be.

Therefore the universe resounds with Easter joy
and with choirs of angels we sing for ever to your praise:

**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.**

Merciful God, we thank you
for these gifts of your creation,
this bread and wine,
and we pray that by your word and Holy Spirit,
we who eat and drink them
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do, this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.'

Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
Proclaiming his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Renew us by your Holy Spirit,
unite us in the body of your Son,
and bring us with all your people
into the joy of your eternal kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom and in whom,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
we worship you,
in songs of never-ending praise:
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
Be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,
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.

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

The breaking of bread and communion

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ. We who are many are one body,

For we all share in the one bread.

Jesus Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Communion Antiphon

I heard the voice of a great multitude crying, Alleluia.

The Lord our God has entered into his kingdom.

Revelation 19:6

The sending out of God's people

Let us pray:

God of glory you sent your Son Jesus Christ into the world to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

Strengthen us who share this meal to continue his mission by living the good news we proclaim.

Most loving God, **you send us into the world you love.**

Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage in the power of your Spirit.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Christ our exalted king pour upon you his abundant gifts and bring you to reign with him in glory; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father ✕ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

Recessional Hymn 378(TiS) (10am)

he head that once was crowned with thorns
is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns
the mighty victor's brow.

The highest place that heaven affords
is his, is his by right,
the King of kings and Lord of lords,
and heaven's eternal light,

the joy of all who dwell above,
the joy of all below,
to whom he manifests his love
and grants his name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame,
with all its grace, is given,
their name an everlasting name,
their joy the joy of heaven.

They suffer with their Lord below,
they reign with him above,
their profit and their joy to know
the mystery of his love.

The cross he bore is life and health,
though shame and death to him;
his people's hope, his people's wealth,
their everlasting theme.

Thomas Kelly 1769-1855

News

The Rev'd Dr Colin Dundon has written for us a series called ***From Fear to Witness***. Based on the Sunday readings between Easter and Pentecost, you will find each study linked week-by-week on the home page of our website. If you would like a printed copy please let Martin know. This is a series to complement our Missional Spirituality Project.

At this year's AGM we were asked to consider a draft **Parish Plan for 2023-2025**. At the April Parish Council meeting the plan was adopted and will be integrated into our strategies and projects. As a reminder these five elements were seen as central to our ongoing life together: spiritual, worship, missional, community and financial. At each meeting we will be using one or more of these 'nudges' to guide our discussions. In the pew sheet there will be news and reflections on the projects that we are undertaking that align with our plan.

St John's Care is seeking the following for its pantry: Sweet biscuits, vegemite, 1kg plain flour, 1kg self raising flour, small packets of sultanas, Up & Go drinks. The website: <https://www.stjohnscare.org.au/> provides information on how we can help.

The updated **Parish Directory** is now available in hard or soft copy. If you would like a PDF copy (for your personal use only) please email or speak with Alison. If there are any updates required, please amend the copy marked as such in the front foyer of the church or let Alison know.

St Philip's Rosters We are always looking for volunteers to assist with the various rostered roles that support our worship services. We need more assistance in the sanctuary, this can be any of the following roles: Liturgical assistant, Crucifer, Server and/or Communion Server. Also looking for people who can operate the screen during a service, this is an easy job you can do from the pew! Training is available for any of the above tasks. Please chat to Martin or Leighton if you can assist in any way.

Key points from the May Parish Council Meeting

- **Termite treatment:** A contractor has completed treatment of the termite infestation around the church and office. As recommended by the contractor, Council has decided to replace all timber sleepers with concrete sleepers and lower the level of garden mulch against walls and A-frame beams.
- **Parish Covenant:** Council decided that consistent with the practice in other Parishes, St Philip's will not enter into a new Covenant between the Rector, the Parish and the Bishop. The last 3-year Covenant expired in February 2023. Council further resolved that the existing Covenant will be repurposed as a Parish planning document. In its view, even if no longer a Diocesan requirement, the document remains a valuable resource.
- **ANU relationship:** St Philip's ties with the ANU continue to strengthen. The Parish Planning Day generated enthusiasm for strengthening our relationship with ANU and making better

use of Parish facilities. Council is assisting with arrangements for St Philip's to host a choral concert later in the year. Rev'd Martin continues to serve as Secretary to the ANU Chaplaincy Board, which is about to move into the ANU's new Multifaith Centre.

- **Monthly prayer point:** Over this month let us pray 'Thy Kingdom Come.' Resources and links will be posted in the pew sheet.

Thy Kingdom Come

INTRODUCTION

The worldwide wave of prayer, *Thy Kingdom Come*, is rooted in the practice and experience of the earliest church as they obeyed Jesus' command to wait for the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:14 tells us their mission planning was rooted in constant, ground-breaking prayer: *They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. Acts 1:14*

At this time they were surely confused, uncertain, perhaps even fearful as they considered the enormity of the task, but also excited and on the edge of a whole new world as they knew themselves to be loved and forgiven because of their Lord's death and resurrection.

The *Thy Kingdom Come* Novena for 2023 is focused on verses from St John's First Letter. They express an excitement about the character of God and all He has done. The focus is on God's dynamic action in creation and salvation. Here is a story of love, hope, challenge, and peace. Here is God's powerful invitation to share His life and love: not only here and now but for all eternity.

Thy Kingdom Come is our annual invitation and encouragement to Christians and Churches, not only in England but across the world, to seek the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we might live out and share the Kingdom of God. This passion is the heartbeat of the life of the Church. This presence is what transforms a human institution into the Body of Christ.

At the heart of *Thy Kingdom Come* is our focus to 'Pray for five'. It is an invitation to bring five people before God – friends, family, neighbours or colleagues who are not yet following the Lord Jesus. It is an encouragement to pray that the Holy Spirit will open their hearts and minds to God's love, forgiveness, and peace.

At Pentecost the Apostles received the signs of the coming of the Holy Spirit: the wind of power, the fire of holiness, and the languages of communication. At Pentecost God gives the whole world the right to look at Christians and both see and hear the Good News of Jesus. We are called to *Live the Kingdom*. So each day's thought will begin with what God does; and end with what we are called to do.

We are grateful to the Very Rev'd Bob Key, who leads for us in *Thy Kingdom Come* across the Anglican Communion, for writing this year's Novena and applying St John's inspiring and challenging words to twenty-first century life.

We hope you will join us as we pray, 'Come Holy Spirit.'
The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby
The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell

ASCENSION DAY The God who reigns

Acts 1:10-11

¹⁰ *They 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.'*

Angels get some crazy lines in the Bible. Gabriel appears to the teenager Mary in her simple house in Palestine and says, 'Fear not!' The shepherds outside Bethlehem, a group not known for their religious devotion, are told there is good news of great joy for them. The Ascension story is the same. The angels (young men in white) ask the disciples: 'Why are you standing here looking into the sky?' Surely one of the Apostles must have thought: 'Why do you think we are? Jesus has just gone there and in the last six weeks our world has been turned upside-down. We have watched Him die, met Him alive again, had a wonderful time with Him of forgiveness, renewal, and teaching. Now He isn't here anymore.'

My sympathy is entirely with Peter, James, John, and the others. The angels are quite clear. Jesus has gone and He has told the disciples what to do. They are to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then, in His power, go into the whole world, even those parts they didn't know existed. They are to proclaim the good news of God's saving love in Jesus Christ. They are to call people to repent and believe in the Saviour.

That was, is, and always will be the task the church has been given to do.

That's it, in all its biblical clarity and simplicity. The Lord who ascended to heaven and reigns in glory has given us one great commission. We are to show and tell the good news of Jesus. In the book of Acts, St Luke shows us that this wonderful good news is demonstrated in every healing, every sermon, every breaking down of cultural barriers, in the provision of food for the poor in Jerusalem, in Paul taking on the philosophers in Athens, and so much more.

As we journey from Ascension to Pentecost, we follow the example of the first disciples. They prayed as they had never prayed before (Acts 1:14) and they planned for mission. Praying for our five folk who are not yet following Jesus is one way of getting involved in what God, the God who reigns, is doing. Just as those first disciples in Acts, we are to be living out the Kingdom. Everything we say and do becomes part of the proclamation. We are to be God's adverts, living icons of His love in the world.

Reflection

'See, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high' (Luke 24:49)

Some of the Minster community are spending this week on the Scottish island of Iona, whose abbey has been a site of Christian prayer and pilgrimage for fifteen centuries. It was the 20th-century founder of the modern Iona Community, a Church of Scotland minister named George MacLeod, who said of the Ascension: 'There is a human being in heaven; one of us has made it'.

One of us. Not one *like* us: not 'one *like* a human being', as the prophet Daniel put it, but a *real* human being: a real human being who is also God. We've been trying to get our heads round the mysterious truth of Jesus' identity since even before St Columba first arrived on Iona, in the middle of the 6th century. And the Ascension marks a key moment in our understanding of that identity. Early this morning, as we do every Ascension Day, members of the chaplaincies of both York's universities climbed the Minster tower, and my colleague Kevin said to the assembled students that Ascension is Jesus' graduation: the fulfilment of both his humanity and his divinity.

We use the language of ascending and descending- *up* to heaven, *down* to earth- as a way of trying to make sense of our feeling that there is a distance (maybe even a separation) between us and God: as if we belong *here*, and God *there*. Jesus forces us to rethink that idea. For he is both here and there; both with God and with us; both then and now.

All the ways we have of understanding how time and space work are simply too small to comprehend how God *can* be both human and divine. We're confronted with the same problem at the other end of the liturgical year: Ascension and Advent are opposite sides of the same coin. At Advent, we experience a similar knot in our linear understanding of time: we await the arrival of a baby who is simultaneously timeless, present in creation from the beginning of all time; *and* fixed in human history in first-century Palestine; *and* eternally present as we await the fulfilment of all time. At Ascension, we see that just as God transcends our understanding of time- past, present and future- so too God transcends our understanding of space- up and down, here and there.

There *is* no division between heaven and earth. God is, was, and ever shall be here. God is, was, and ever shall be one of us: from the beginning of time to its end.

Jesus tells his disciples to 'stay here in the city until you are clothed with power on high'. There's that spatial language again. For it is here in the city- *this* city and every city, the here and now where we live, work, study and rest, among other human beings like ourselves- that we are to work out what it means to be made in the image of God, for our humanity to be transformed by sharing in divinity. It is here, and now, that we are to build the Kingdom and live out the truth of God, until we discover for ourselves what is beyond this life, beyond our current capacity to imagine or comprehend.

The disciples of Jesus do not know how they will manage without him. They do not yet know what they can do; and they do not yet realise what it will cost them to do it. But their task is not to wait

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for Jesus to return at the end of time before they act. It is to begin the work *now* of transforming the world we live in into the kingdom of heaven. It is not that God belongs there and we belong here. Quite the opposite. There *is* a human being in heaven: and because there is *one*, wherever human beings are is also, already, touched with the divine.

'Why do you stand looking *up* into heaven?' It is all around you. There is a human being in heaven. The whole world belongs to God, across every boundary of time or space: and it is here in the city that we are to find him.

Dr Rowan Williams

This week @ St Philip's

<p>Today</p> <p>8am</p> <p>10am</p>	<p><i>Ascension Sunday</i></p> <p><i>Beginning of the week of prayer for Christian unity.</i></p> <p>Eucharist (followed by Breakfast)</p> <p>Sung Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)</p>
<p>Wednesday 24 May</p> <p>10am-Noon</p>	<p><i>John (d.1781) & Charles (d.1788) Wesley, evangelists</i></p> <p>Pandora's sorting and preparation</p>
<p>Thursday 25 May</p> <p>10am</p>	<p><i>Bede of Jarrow, priest & teacher (d.735)</i></p> <p>Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)</p>
<p>Saturday 27 May</p> <p>10am-1pm</p> <p>11am</p> <p>2-4pm</p>	<p><i>Saturday in the seventh week of Easter</i></p> <p>Pandora's</p> <p>Morning Prayer – Canberra Aged Care</p> <p>Missional Spirituality - Seminar 3</p>
<p>Sunday 28 May</p> <p>8am</p> <p>10am</p> <p>1pm</p>	<p><i>Day of Pentecost</i></p> <p>Eucharist (followed by Breakfast)</p> <p>Sung Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)</p> <p>Holy Baptism – Logan Sharwood</p> <p><i>Readings: Acts 2:1-21, Psalm:104:26-36, 1 Corinthians 12:1-13, John 20:19-23</i></p>

Rosters

		21-May-23	28-May-23	4-Jun-23	
Sunday of Month		3rd	4th	1st	
Liturgical Season		Seventh Sunday of Easter	Day of Pentecost	Trinity Sunday	
Flowers		Flower team	Flower team	Flower team	
Celebrant	8am	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Scott	8am
Preacher (if different to Celebrant)		Rev'd Scott			
Sidespeople		Rhonda & Susan	Shane & Tim	Margaret & Russell	
Liturgical Assistant			Brian M (Lit assistant)	Susan J (server)	
Audio Visual Operator					
1st Bible reader - OT		Julianne S	Shane W	Margaret M	
2nd Bible reader - NT		Rebecca P	Shane W	Russell M	
Celebrant	10am	Rev'd Scott	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	10am
Preacher (if different to Celebrant)				Rev'd Scott	
Sidespeople & Welcomer		Jeannette M, Laura W	Sally A & helper	Fred A & Janene B	
Liturgical Assistant		Rev'd Martin	Philippa W (Lit assistant)	Leighton (crucifer)	
Audio Visual Operator					
Musician(s) & Singers/Soloist		Colin F	Colin F	Colin F	
1st Bible reader - OT		Liz D	Sarah B	Brian M	
2nd Bible reader - NT		Ashton R	Colin D	Jos G	
Morning Tea		Liz D	Helen P	Ann M & Barbara G	
<i>Additional details/notes</i>					

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 27 May	2pm – 4pm	Missional Spirituality - Seminar 3
Saturday 24 June	2pm – 4pm	Missional Spirituality - Seminar 4
Saturday 29 July	10am – 1pm	<i>Pandora's Christmas in July</i>
Saturday 5 August	2pm – 4pm	Missional Spirituality - Seminar 5
Saturday 2 August	2pm – 4pm	Missional Spirituality - Seminar 6
Fri 8 - Sun 10 Sept		Diocesan Synod Canberra, Girls Grammar School
Sunday 1 October		ANU Choral Society concert @ St Philip's