

As we come to celebrate Ascension Day let's take a moment to still all that is going on in our hearts and minds,
recognising that we are in the presence of the God who loves us:
the God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit Amen

The Lord be with you

For forty days we have been celebrating with joy the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ – and learning with the disciples who he appeared to many times, all that he showed them about the kingdom of God. Today we recall his Ascension to the Father to reign in love over all creation and promise his presence with us always.

Let's open our hearts to his presence now by seeking forgiveness and healing for all that obstructs our receiving and sharing of his love:

You raise the dead to life in the Spirit: Lord have mercy

You bring pardon and peace to the broken in heart: Christ have mercy

You make one by your Spirit the torn and divided: Lord have mercy

May the God of love and power, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. Amen

Let us pray:

Grant, we pray, Almighty God, that as we believe your only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we in heart and mind may also ascend and with him

continually dwell; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever, Amen.

A reading from the book of the Acts of the Apostles: 1:3-14

The word of the Lord, thanks be to God.

Reflection: see additional attachment

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, you promise to be with us always, even to the end of time: Unite and guide your church to be those who reveal your presence in acts of love and words of peace.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, you want the good news of your love to be taken to all nations: Bring to the whole world the healing and peace we cry out for.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord Jesus, in response to your ascension you disciples gather to share the joy of friendship with you: be with all of us who cannot gather with friends and family right now. Bless all those we love, our families, friends and neighbours. Protect all who are serving our communities in so many generous ways and all who feel vulnerable.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord Jesus, healer and companion of those in pain: we bring to you in a moment of quiet all those who are suffering today: May they know your presence as comfort and peace.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

Lord Jesus welcome into your Father's presence all who have died, may we, with them, come to share in your eternal kingdom.

Open our hearts to your Holy Spirit, and as you taught your disciples, teach us to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your 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,

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,

Forever and ever,

Amen.

The Church now invites us into nine days of prayer as we prepare for the celebration of Pentecost, the giving of the Holy Spirit. May these be days of grace and refreshment as we discover more of the ways we can come to know God's presence in our lives

As we wait in silence...make us ready for the coming of the Spirit

As we listen to your word...

As we worship you with joyful hearts....

As we see your image in those around us and your hand in all creation....

As we long for your refreshing

As we long for your renewal

As we long for your gifting.....make us ready for the coming of your Spirit

Let's go into the rest of the day with God's blessing:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, and the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with you, and with those who you love and pray for, today and everyday, Amen