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## **ASCENSION SUNDAY A**

21st May 2023

A short act of worship and daily devotions

A Free resource funded by donations from Individuals, churches and **twelvebaskets**.

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For more information <https://theworshipcloud.com/terms/free-weekly-resource>

## Opening prayers

Your love has lifted me, and lifted each one of us,  
Help me to know something of that love today,  
In my worship, my thanksgiving, and my praise.

Help me to love you, as you first loved me,

*[Pause]*

Use the following words to help centre yourself in the moment. Say them out loud, or speak them in your mind:

Jesus, open my heart.

Prepare yourself to hear God's word in a new way:

Jesus, open my heart.

Listen for God's voice, calling you to serve others and love radically:

Jesus, open my heart.

Hold the joys, regrets and frustrations from the week, and look ahead to the opportunities next week will bring:

Jesus, open my heart.

Hold the people you share your life with, and the challenges that come with relationships and friendships:

Jesus, open my heart

Rest a moment in the quiet:

Jesus, open my heart.

Amen.

## Hymn:

152 STF – This is the day that the Lord has made - [YouTube](#)

**You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are most familiar.**

**Readings:** Luke 24:44-53 – [Click for reading](#)

## Response to the reading

Today we hear Luke's version of the last words Jesus says as part of his earthly ministry. His final 'motivational speech' if you will...

As Jesus blesses his disciples and ascends into heaven, he sets in motion the continuation of his work, the work we are still taking with us today. The fact that this

story is repeated to the early church in the first chapter of Acts, just seeks to emphasise that the baton has been passed on. The Holy Spirit is coming, not just for those first disciples but for everyone who claims to be a follower of Jesus. If we are willing to take part in that work we are not simply left to do so in our strength, but will be gifted the helper in order that we are never alone.

Questions for reflection on your own for a minute or two, and look for opportunities to discuss these with a friend or group of friends this week.

- What's the best piece of motivational advice I've ever heard?
- How did it feel when you first heard it?
- What's the best motivational advice you think you can give to someone else?
- Where have you seen God's Spirit at work in your life this week? This month? This year?
- What new thing might you try and do 'with God's help' in the coming weeks?

That knowledge of God's help to us, through the Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus at the moment of his ascension to heaven can be a source of great confidence to us. As we seek to be faithful people, living out a life of hope, we can cling to that promise in the face of challenge and opposition. In a world that can sometimes seem hostile to the message of the church it helps us to remember that while we have a mission to be part of, it is God who is always in control. We join him in making known his Spirit in the world.

### **Song:**

Everlasting Arms – Lou Fellingham and the National Methodist Choir of Great Britain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBLRnDSyO-Q>

### **Blessing**

I go from this place, hearing words of encouragement from the Creator,  
I go from this place, inspired to follow in the ways of the Christ,  
I go from this place, transformed by the power of the Spirit,  
Travel with me, triune God, that I may come to know you more each day.

Amen.

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## **Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week**

### **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

- God of all grace,  
Today I am thankful, for what I have received.  
Amongst all the pressures and stresses of life,  
I am taking a moment to be grateful, to notice your goodness at work in my life,  
To see that the whole universe is sparkling with love and possibility.
- Help me to live from a place of gratitude today,  
In Jesus' name.  
Amen.

## **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

- Today, for your prayers, you might like to focus on peace. There are live wars happening in our world and you may wish to pray about them, using a news website to help you learn about any that you might not be aware of.
- Or, you may feel you need to pray for peace in your own life, or the lives of those close to you. For those who are experiencing relationship breakdown, violence, conflict or tension.
- Prince of Peace, come amongst us.

## **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May**

- Today you may wish to use your prayer time for all involved in education: teachers, classroom assistants, school leaders and other school staff. May they have the resources they need to be safe and inspiring people, blessing the children in their care.

## **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> May**

- Chose a piece of music that you find relaxing or calming (you might like to look up something by Karl Jenkins if you have no immediate inspiration!).
- Spend some time just listening to the music, ideally with your eyes closed and your hands still. Switch off from the distractions of modern life, just for a few moments.
- Pray about any of the emotions you notice or feel during this time.

## **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May**

- Today marks the start of Cliff College Festival (at which Twelve Baskets is exhibiting), and as people gather in Derbyshire, you might like to pray that is a time of encounter and energising that can flow back into churches and communities around the UK and beyond.
- Or you may choose to spend the time praying for your own local community, which may feel a very long way from Cliff College Festival, but which you know, and you know it's prayer needs. Bring those prayers and hopes for a better, kinder, safer, more complete community to God throughout the day as they occur to you.

## **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January**

- Gracious God, thank you for this week.  
As I head into the weekend, show me how to be a channel of your grace, peace, hope and love out into the world.
- Lead me, by your Spirit, O God. Amen.