

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Welcome to Christ's Service of Worship for the Lord's Day

May 14, 2023
Ascension Sunday



WE WELCOME YOU TO WORSHIP! You are special, because God brought you here today. Together we celebrate and rejoice in God's blessings in our lives!

GATHER JOYFULLY

THE PRELUDE

Amazing Grace, arr. Geoff White Jessica Mundy

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Ezekiel 34:1-7a; Acts 17:22-31; I Peter 3:13-22

(Congregants are encouraged to read and reflect upon these passages as they prepare for worship.)

BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

GATHERING HYMN 268 *Crown Him with Many Crowns*

**Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne;
hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own!
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity.**

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Minister: Clap your hands, all peoples!

God has gone up with a shout of joy. (Psalm 47:1, 5)

Congregants: The Lord Jesus Christ has risen to reign.

His is the name above all names. (Ephesians 1:20-21)

Minister: We are witnesses: the Lord is risen!

Congregants: Christ has ascended to reign on high!

Minister: Come, let us worship the risen Lord!

*HYMN OF PRAISE 321 *The Church's One Foundation*

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION (unison)

Almighty God, we gather to give You our praise and thanksgiving.

Your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ,

ascended far above all heavens to sit at Your throne of grace.

Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised,

he abides with us on earth to the end of time.

We confess that we have not always bowed before him,

or acknowledged his rule in our lives.

Too often we have followed the ways of the world,

and failed to give him glory.

Forgive us, and raise us from sin,

so that we may be Your faithful people,

**obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who rules the world and is head of the Church.
Hear these our private prayers.**

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

In the Word of God, we read that "the God of grace,
Who calls us to eternal glory in Jesus Christ,
will restore, support, and strengthen us."
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE HYMN 239 *Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing!

**Good Christians all, rejoice and sing!
Now is the triumph of our King!
To all the world glad news we bring:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Acts 1:6-11

⁶So 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.'

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM

To Glory in the Lord

Susan Naylor Callaway

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD Mark 13:24-33

²⁴ 'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸ 'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³² 'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.

Minister: This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregants: Thanks be to God.

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION (unison)

**God Most High, reigning in glory,
send us Your Holy Spirit with Your wisdom,
to shine Your truth in our hearts,
so that we may worship You in joy,
and follow Your path for life.
Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

THE SERMON

Russ Merritt

IF YOU KNEW THE WORLD WAS COMING TO AN END...

*HYMN OF COMMITMENT 462 *I Love to Tell the Story*

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (unison)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

GO FAITHFULLY

*HYMN OF DEDICATION 277

Hail Thee, Festival Day! (Ascension Verses 1 and 2)

Congregation will sing the Refrain, Choir will sing the Verses

**Refrain: Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
day when our Lord was raised, breaking the kingdom of death.**

Choir: He who was nailed to the cross, is ruler and Lord of all people.
All things created on earth sing to the glory of God;

**Refrain: Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
day when our Lord was raised, breaking the kingdom of death.**

Choir: Rise from the grave now, O Lord, the author of life and creation. Treading the
pathway of death, new life you give to us all:

**Refrain: Hail thee, festival day! Blest day to be hallowed forever;
day when our Lord was raised, breaking the kingdom of death.**

CHARGE

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

OUR SERVICE

*Indicates the People Standing

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Thought for the month:

As we celebrate and imagine the holy spirit in the image of the dove, consider these words from Thomas Merton: "The sky is my prayer, the birds are my prayer, the wind in the trees is my prayer, for God is all in all."

Earth Care:

Plant seeds for a garden, even a window garden, support a local food system and to remember hope and new life in Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WISH A HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY to all the mothers of the congregation!

FORTY DAYS AFTER CELEBRATING THE RESURRECTION, near the conclusion of the season of Easter (Eastertide), we commemorate the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven. The closest Sunday (today) is recognized as Ascension Sunday. On this day, we give thanks for Christ's sovereign reign over all creation, as well as his priestly intercession for us at the throne of God's mercy, and we give attention to the promise that he will come again in the glory of God's new creation. Let us proclaim with joy that Jesus is already Lord of heaven and earth, and head of the Church.

The Men's Prayer breakfast will meet this Thursday, May 18th at 8:30 am at Pete's Deli.

THE MINISTER WILL BE PERFORMING A FAMILY WEDDING this coming weekend and will be out of town, so elder Pam Claterbaugh will preach and lead in worship.

On June 4th, we will be recognizing our high school and college graduates. If you have a loved one who is graduating, please send Lynn Kirby a note with the school they are graduating from, any honors from that school and what they will be doing next. We love our kids and want to recognize their hard work. You can email the information to lkirby70092cox.net.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION will be celebrated on Pentecost Sunday, May 28, in our morning worship service.

Hey Kids, mark your calendars. On June 11th from 4-6 PM, we will gather at the church for some fun and fellowship. We will have a bounce house, water balloons, and games. We will work on a service project together and end our evening with pizza and drinks. Be sure to bring a friend.

GUESS WHAT!! We are again collecting clean medicine bottles. Thanks to Marie we have another source for the pill bottles. The Salem Animal Shelter will gladly take what we collect. Make sure they are clean and have the labels removed. Place them in the container on the table in the narthex. Thank you.

Calendar

Today	10:00 am	Sunday School
	11:00 am	Worship Service
Thursday	8:30 am	Men's Prayer Breakfast At Pete's Deli
Next Sunday	10:00 am	Sunday School
	11:00 am	Worship Service

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
3911 Greenland Avenue, Roanoke, Virginia 24012-3250
WEBSITE:WWW.NORTHMINSTERPCUSA.ORG

Russ Merritt, Pastor Melissa Hudson, Music Director
Susie Tallmage, Secretary Lauren Axelson, Nursery Attendant
Ministers...Members of Northminster

If you or someone you know should be included in the list of those needing special prayer, please contact the Pastor. If prayers have been answered and we can celebrate God's goodness by removing your name from the list, let the Pastor know.

Let us keep those listed below in our prayers.

Members

Ann Bailey	Bill Bailey	Frances Bowling
Pam Claterbaugh	Barry Ferrell	Joe Gwitt
Karen Gwitt	Jake Hayes	Barbara Jones
Dennis Kincer	Sheila Lancaster	Floyd Moretz
Ann Pace	Mac Pace	Ken Riding
Buddy Smith	Sandy Smith	Dora Slee
Lois Waddell	Patsy Linton and Family	

Friends and Family

Nancy Assaid	
Joaquin Bielawski	Annette Daughty
Shirley Basham	Terry Foss
Donna Betters	John Morris
Mabel Bowman	Vicki Widener
Jay Taylor	Lucy Collier
Gladys Hughston	

*THE SESSION *

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson

Elders: Pam Claterbaugh, Richard Claterbaugh, Trent Cundiff, Matt Graybill, Joe Gwitt, Tom Hale, Gary Harris, Jyke Jones, Daniel Kirby, Lynn Kirby, Sherry Moses, Debbie Newman, Dora Slee, Gayle Wise

