



St James's
PICCADILLY

The Eucharist for Ascension Day

Thursday 14th May 2026
at 6.30pm

With a congregation in the church
and live on YouTube





Sea Daffodil, Mary Delany, 1778

Welcome to St James's Church. Whether you are in the building or online, we are glad you are here.

Everyone is welcome to receive communion or a blessing so please do come forward at the appropriate time.

ORDER OF SERVICE

INTROIT *sung by the Lay Singers and Singing Scholars*

Psallite Domino, words: Psalm 67: 33-34 (Vulgate);
music by William Byrd (1540-1623)

Psallite Domino, qui ascendit super cœlos cœlorum ad orientem. Alleluia.

Sing ye to the Lord, who mounteth above the heaven of heavens, to the east. Alleluia

OPENING HYMN

[Tune: Hyfrydol; Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)]

**Alleluia, sing to Jesus,
his the sceptre, his the throne;
alleluia, his the triumph,
his the victory alone;
hark, the songs of peaceful Sion
thunder like a mighty flood:
Jesus out of ev'ry nation
hath redeemed us by his blood.**

**Alleluia, not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now;
alleluia, he is near us,**

faith believes, nor questions how;
though the cloud from sight received him
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget his promise,
'I am with you evermore'?

Alleluia, bread of heaven,
thou on earth our food, our stay;
alleluia, here the sinful
flee to thee from day to day.
Intercessor, friend of sinners,
earth's redeemer, plead for me,
where the songs of all the sinless
sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia, King eternal,
thee the Lord of lords we own;
alleluia, born of Mary,
earth thy footstool heav'n thy throne;
thou within the veil hast entered,
robed in flesh, our great High Priest;
thou on earth both priest and victim
in the Eucharistic feast.

OPENING RESPONSES

The priest says

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

He is risen indeed.

Alleluia!

The priest welcomes everyone and introduces the service.

**Eternal 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.**

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

The deacon says

Let us make our confession to God,
acknowledging all that separates us from Christ ascended
today.

Silence is kept.

**God of Resurrection,
who brings new life in Christ:
we confess our need for your grace,
but that we have yet sinned
through ignorance and self-seeking,
and through turning aside from your life.
We have squandered your gifts,
failed to live by your vision,
and allowed injustice in our world.
Raise us, we pray,
to live the fullness of the life to which you call us,
that we may love you with our whole heart,**

**and our neighbours as ourselves,
in Jesus Christ the risen Lord.**

Amen.

THE ABSOLUTION

The priest says

May the God who is both power and love forgive you
and free you from your sin;
give you healing and strength,
and raise you to new life in Christ.

Amen.

THE GLORIA *(St Augustine)*

The cantor sings

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Glory to God in the highest.

Peace to God's people on earth.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Holy One, Heavenly God, our Sovereign and Creator.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

We worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Jesus Christ, God's only begotten.

Miserere nobis.

Miserere nobis.

Lord God, Lamb of God.

Miserere nobis.

You take away the sin of the world.

Miserere nobis.

You are seated at the right hand of Majesty:
receive our prayer.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

For you alone are the Holy One.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

You alone are the Lord.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

You alone are the Most High.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit
in the glory of the Triune God.

Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Gloria in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Collect

The priest says

Risen Christ,
you have raised our human nature
to the throne of heaven:
help us to seek and serve you,

that we may join you at God's side
where you reign with the Spirit in glory,
now and for ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 1.1-11

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After 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. While 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; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

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 towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They 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.'

Listen for what the Spirit is saying.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

During the psalm, the Gospel is carried in procession down the central aisle of the church where it is read among the people.

Please turn and face the Gospel as it passes.

PSALM 47

*Response: **O sing praises to God, sing praises.***

Clap your hands together, all you peoples;

O sing to God with shouts of joy.

For God Most High is to be feared;

God is the great Ruler over all the earth.

God subdued the peoples under us

and the nations under our feet.

God has chosen our heritage for us,

the pride of Jacob, whom God loves.

God has gone up with a merry noise,

the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.

O sing praises to God, sing praises;

sing praises to our Ruler, sing praises.

For God is the Ruler of all the earth;

sing praises with all your skill.

God reigns over the nations;

God is seated upon the holy throne.

The nobles of the peoples are gathered together

with the people of the God of Abraham.

For the powers of the earth belong to God
who is highly exalted.

THE GOSPEL

The cantor sings

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

All sing

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

(repeat as a round)

The reader says

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

The cantor sings

Glory to you O Lord

Glory to you O Lord.

Luke 24.44-end

Then he said to them, '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.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And 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.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

The cantor sings

Praise to you O Christ
Praise to you O Christ.

The cantor sings

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

All sing

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Please sit.

SERMON

The Revd Dr Ayla Lepine

A period of silence is kept for personal reflection.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*The Apostles' Creed*)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe 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, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The deacon says

Let us pray for the world, for the church,
for all in need and for those who have asked for our prayers.

Please kneel or sit for prayers led by a member of the congregation.

THE PEACE

The priest says

The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said 'Peace be with you'. Then were they glad when they saw the Lord.

The deacon says

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The priest says

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Please share the Peace in a socially distanced way if you are in the building, and in the YouTube chat function if you are online.

During the offertory hymn, a collection will be taken. If you have cash, please fill in the Gift Aid envelopes in the pews with the pens available. If you don't have cash, please use the tap donate device in the collection plate, which is set to £5, or the QR code on page 19.

OFFERTORY HYMN

[Tune: Llanfair; Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)]

**Hail the day that sees him rise, *Alleluia!*
ravished from our wistful eyes! *Alleluia!*
Christ, awhile to mortals given, *Alleluia!*
reascends his native heaven: *Alleluia!***

**See! He lifts his hands above; *Alleluia!*
See! He shows the prints of love; *Alleluia!*
Hark! His gracious lips bestow *Alleluia!*
blessings on his Church below: *Alleluia!***

**Saviour, parted from our sight, *Alleluia!*
high above the azure height, *Alleluia!*
grant our hearts to you may rise, *Alleluia!*
following you beyond the skies: *Alleluia!***

**Cast ourselves before your throne, *Alleluia!*
here our heaven of heavens to own, *Alleluia!*
there we shall with you remain, *Alleluia!*
partners of your endless reign: *Alleluia!***

PRAYER AT THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

The priest says

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 priest leads the Church's Thanksgiving for Creation and
Redemption in Christ ...*

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 thanks and praise.

The priest continues the Church's prayer of thanksgiving ...

SANCTUS (*Williams*)

Sing each phrase after the cantor

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,**

**Hosanna,
Hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest.**

The cantor sings

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

All sing after the cantor

**Hosanna,
Hosanna,
Hosanna in the highest.**

*The prayer of consecration continues recalling Christ's command to his disciples at the Last Supper, ending with:
"...as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me"*

The cantor sings

Great is the mystery of faith.

All sing after the cantor

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

*The prayer continues ...
at the end of the prayer, sing after the cantor ...*

**Blessing and honour, glory and power,
be yours for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Silence is kept.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

You are invited to pray in your own language.

The priest says

Let us pray in the words that Jesus gave us.

**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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Bread is broken and the priest says

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

The priest says

This is the table of Christ.

It has been made ready for those who love God,
and those who want to love more.

So come; you who have much faith and you who have little.
You who have been to this sacrament often
and you who have not been for some time.
You who have tried to follow Christ and you who have failed.
Come. It is Christ who asks us to meet him here.

THE COMMUNION

*During Communion the Lay Singers and Singing Scholars will sing **O Rex Gloriæ**, words: Antiphon to the Magnificat for Second Vespers at Ascension; music: William Byrd (1540-1623), first published in Gradualia II 1607.*

O Rex gloriæ, Domine virtutum,
qui triumphator hodie super omnes coelos ascendisti;
ne derelinquas nos orphanos,
sed mitte promissum Patris in nos,
spiritum veritatis.
Alleluia.

*O King of glory, Lord of all power,
Who ascended to heaven on this day triumphant over all;
Do not leave us as orphans,
But send us the Father's promise,
The spirit of truth.
Alleluia.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Eternal God,
you have raised our humanity in Christ
and have fed us with the bread of heaven:
mercifully grant that,
nourished with such spiritual blessings,**

**we may set our hearts in the heavenly places;
through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.
Amen.**

HYMN

[Tune: Maccabaeus; Words: Edmond Budry (1854-1932)
trans. Richard Birch Hoyle (1875-1939)]

**Thine be the glory,
risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory
thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment
rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave-clothes
where thy body lay:**

Refrain:

***Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son,
endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.***

**Lo, Jesus meets us,
risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets us,
scatters fear and gloom;
let the Church with gladness
hymns of triumph sing,
for her Lord now liveth,
death hath lost its sting:**

**No more we doubt thee,
glorious Prince of Life;
life is nought without thee:
aid us in our strife;**

**make us more than conquerors
through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan
to thy home above:**

THE BLESSING

The priest says

May God, by whose love Christ was raised from the dead,
open to you the gates of everlasting life.
And the blessing of God almighty:
Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you on this day and for ever.
Amen.

The deacon says

Go in the peace of Christ.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Thanks be to God.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**



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your smartphone to make a one-off or regular
donation.*



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or use one of the tap donation points in the
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statement as 'Supported Business'.*



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