

RIVER OF LIFE



12 MAY 2024



RIVER OF LIFE LUTHERAN | refreshing truth for all people

725 S. Estrella Pkwy (Suite 120) Goodyear, Arizona 85338

The Festival of the Ascension of Our Lord

OUR PASTOR

Pastor Lincoln Albrecht (623) 312.8650 pastor.lincoln.albrecht@gmail.com

WELCOME TO RIVER OF LIFE

Thank you for joining us this morning. In our worship service, God's children—you & I—gather together before God to be strengthened through God's Word. In response to God's message of love to us, we offer God our worship and praise.

The worship folder you're holding has the entire Order of Service. If you have questions, feel free to ask one of our ushers or anyone near you. The unfamiliar can be intimidating—let us help you. We want you to be comfortable & comforted here.

Restrooms are located in the front corner for your convenience.

God wants everyone to worship together. We recognize that public worship is a learning process for children. Parents, if you feel like you need a moment, there is a room in the back of the worship area where you can see, hear, and participate in worship without being heard.

OUR FOCUS FOR WORSHIP THIS MORNING

For forty days, the Church has cried, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!" But forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he departed from his disciples and was enthroned in glory in heaven. It may seem like a strange thing for us to celebrate, but this is good news. Grace and truth have defeated the power of death over humanity. He has ascended above every power and authority so nothing can ever separate us from his love. From heaven he rules all things as our Lord and King. Today we celebrate his Ascension to glory. He does not leave his disciples or us alone. Instead he abides among all his believers and provides us with the enduring comfort of the Holy Spirit. One day he will return to bring us to be where he is with him for eternity.

The Gathering for the Ascension of Our Lord

Minister: In the name of the Father and of the Son ✚ and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN

See, the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph | **174 (1)**

The musical score is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of six lines of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "I See, the con - qu'ror mounts in tri - umph; See the King in roy - al state, Rid - ing on the clouds, his char - iot, To his heav'n - ly pal - ace gate. Hark! The choirs of an - gel voic - es Joy - ful al - le - lu - ias sing, And the por - tals high are lift - ed To re - ceive their heav'n - ly King."

M: Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights above.

P: **Praise him, all his angels. Praise him, all his heavenly hosts.**

M: How majestic is the LORD'S name in all the earth!

P: **He has set his glory above the heavens.**

M: For the LORD is the Most High over all the earth.

P: He is exalted far above all gods.

M: God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.

P: God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.

M: The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble.

P: He sits enthroned between the cherubim. Let the earth shake.

M: The throne of our God will last forever and ever.

P: A scepter of justice will be the scepter of his kingdom.

M: Praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted.

P: His splendor is above the earth and the heavens.

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: We have gathered in the house of our Holy God. He is the King of kings and LORD of lords. Let us confess our sins:

P: I confess that I am sinful in thought, word, and deed.

I daily fail to do what you command, and continually do what you forbid.

LORD, I am sorry for my sins. I believe that for the sake of my LORD Jesus Christ, you will have mercy on me.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

M: Upon this your sincere confession, by Christ's command and by his authority, I assure you that your sins are all forgiven. The vacant cross and the empty grave are God's signs to you that he has accepted the sacrifice of his one and only Son. Whoever believes this simple truth of Scripture has eternal life. The LORD is gracious and righteous! The LORD is with you always, even to the very end of the age.

P: Amen.

Praise and Prayer

M: Let us praise the LORD who has saved us and now rules all things for the good of his Church.

HYMN

See, the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph | 174 (2)

***Who is this that comes in glory With the trump of jubilee?
Lord of battles, God of armies, He has gained the victory.
He who on the cross did suffer, He who from the grave arose,
He has vanquished sin and Satan; He by death has crushed his foes.***

M: Praise be to the LORD, for he has heard our cry for mercy.

P: **The LORD is my strength and my shield.**

M: My heart trusts in him and he helps me.

P: **My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him.**

M: The LORD is my strength and my song.

P: **He has become my salvation.**

HYMN

See, the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph | 174 (3-4)

***3 While he lifts his hands in blessing, He is parted from his friends;
While their eager eyes behold him, He upon the clouds ascends.
He who walked with God and pleased him, Preaching truth and doom to come,
He, our Enoch, is translated To his everlasting home.***

***4 He has raised our human nature On the clouds to God's right hand;
There we sit in heav'nly places, There with him in glory stand.
Jesus reigns, adored by angels; Man with God is on the throne.
By our mighty Lord's ascension We by faith behold our own.***

PRAYER OF THE DAY



M: Lord Jesus, King of glory, on this day you ascended far above the heavens, and at God's right hand you rule the nations. Leave us not alone, we pray, but grant us the Spirit of truth that, at your command and by your power, we may be your witnesses in all the world; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

P: Amen.

The Word

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Acts 1

In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 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."

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



Jesus encouraged the little ones to come to him. During this portion of the worship service, the children are invited forward to learn a truth tailored for them.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Matthew 28:20

M: Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is risen!

P: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia.**

M: Surely I am with you always,

P: **to the very end of the age. Alleluia.**

SONG OF PRAISE

A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing | 171 (1-2)

1 A hymn of glo - ry let us sing! New songs through-
2 The ho - ly ap - os - tol - ic band Up - on the

out the world shall ring: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
Mount of Ol - ives stand, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Christ, by a road be - fore un - trod, As - cends un -
And with his fol - low - ers they see Their Lord as -

to the throne of God. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
cend in maj - es - ty. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

4 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸ This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”

⁹ (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 24

M: The Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter twenty-four:

⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was

taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

P: Praise be to you, O Christ!

When Jesus rose from the dead, he made a point of appearing to his disciples on Easter night. He also made a point of connecting all the dots between his death and resurrection and the words of Moses and the Prophets.

The disciples needed to understand the Scriptures because these are the very promises of God. They needed to know that the same God who made those promises was standing before them and would keep all his new promises.

As Jesus prepared them for his Ascension into heaven, he made more promises to his disciples. He would clothe them with power and enable them to be witnesses of all the things they had heard him say and seen him do.

With these promises backing them, and the blessings he gave them as he ascended into heaven, they were filled with so much joy they returned to Jerusalem to praise God for his grace.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Crown Him with Many Crowns | 341



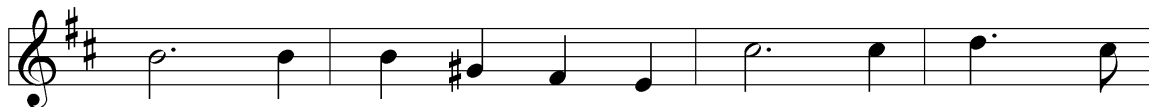
1 Crown him with man - y crowns, The Lamb up - on his
 2 Crown him the Lord of love— Be - hold his hands and
 3 Crown him the Lord of life, Who tri - umphed o'er the
 4 Crown him the Lord of heav'n, En - throned in worlds a -



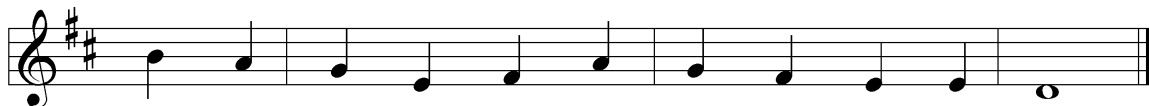
throne; Hark how the heav'n - ly an - them drowns All
 side, Rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, In
 grave And rose vic - to - rious in the strife For
 bove; Crown him the King to whom is giv'n The



mu - sic but its own. A - wake, my soul, and
 beau - ty glo - ri - fied. No an - gel in the
 those he came to save. His glo - ries now we
 won - drous name of Love. Crown him with man - y



sing Of him who died for thee, And hail him
 sky Can ful - ly bear that sight, But down - ward
 sing Who died and rose on high, Who died e -
 crowns As thrones be - fore him fall; Crown him, ye



as thy match-less King Through all e - ter - ni - ty.
 bends his won-d'ring eye At mys - ter - ies so bright.
 ter - nal life to bring And lives that death may die.
 kings, with man - y crowns For he is King of all.

Our Response to God's Word ¹

M: In Christ, you have heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.

P: We believe in Christ and trust in the truth he has revealed to us in his Word.

M: If you are asked, "What do you believe in the Second Article, concerning Jesus Christ?" answer briefly:

P: I believe that Jesus Christ, true Son of God, has become my Lord.

M: What does it mean that Jesus has become our Lord?

P: He has redeemed me from all evil, from sin, death, and the devil.

M: Before this we had no Lord and King but we were all captive under the power of the devil.

P: I was condemned to death and entangled in sin and blindness.

M: When we were created by God the Father, and had received from him all kinds of good things, the devil came and led us into disobedience, sin, death, and all evil. We lay under God's wrath and displeasure, doomed to eternal damnation, as we had deserved.

P: There was no counsel, no help, and no comfort for us until this only and eternal Son of God, in his unfathomable goodness, had mercy on our misery and wretchedness and came down from heaven to help us.

M: He has rescued us, poor lost creatures, from the jaws of hell. Jesus alone won us, made us free, and restored us to the Father's favor and grace.

P: He has taken us as his own, under his protection, in order that he may rule us by his righteousness, wisdom, power, life, and blessedness.

M: What does it mean that Jesus is our Ascended Lord?

P: After rising from the grave and defeating death, he ascended into heaven and assumed the power, glory, and honor that were always his in heaven.

M: The entire Gospel—our salvation and blessedness—rests upon these truths.

¹ Our confession is based on Luther's explanation to the 2nd Article of the Apostles' Creed in his Large Catechism.

THANK OFFERING

God's people respond with thankful hearts. The people of River of Life have joined to offer God the first-fruits of all he has given us. Our offerings support God's work in this community and the world. If you are a visitor with us, thank you for joining us today. Please do not feel obligated to support our ministry, but we ask that you do take time to fill out a digital connect card (azriveroflife.com/connect) so we can thank you for joining us. Thank you & God bless you!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Dwell in our homes, O Lord. Let the trust of our families be centered in you alone, so that no difficulty, trial, or adversity may rob us of our confidence. You, Lord, are our help in every time of need. Today we ask you to be with all the families in our community. We all need your abiding presence.

P: Relieve the afflictions of the weary and the sick. Dry the tears of the lonely, troubled, and sorrowful. Lead them to look to you as the unfailing spring of healing and hope. God of mercy, you alone can heal, reconcile, and restore!

M: Heavenly Father, you are the source of life, wisdom, and truth. Every good and perfect gift comes from your gracious hand. Look with favor on all mothers who care for and nurture their children with loving concern and faithful instruction. May their children honor them and call them blessed.

P: When they become weary, sustain them with physical and spiritual rest.

M: Holy Comforter, be with all mothers who grieve the loss of treasured children through miscarriage, stillbirth, accident, or any other kind of loss.

P: Strengthen those who have been unable to bear children. Comfort them in their longing. Replace any jealous pangs with a measure of contentment. Assure them your love spares no expense. You gave them your own Son.

M: Dearest Jesus, use the Word we have studied this hour to make us more like you, so that we might better carry out the task you have placed before us as mothers, fathers, & children. Hear our prayers for all families in our community. Lead them to find their strength, their rest, their reward in you alone:

A time for silent, personal prayers for our community.

M: Repent and live is your promise to us. In that spirit, we pray as you taught:

P: **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 forever. Amen.**

HYMN

On Christ's Ascension I Now Build | **173**



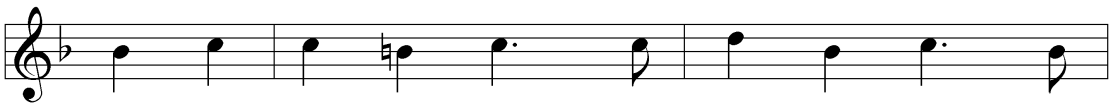
1 On Christ's as - cen - sion I now build The hope of
2 Since Christ re - turned to claim his throne, Great gifts for
3 Oh, grant, dear Lord, this grace to me, Re - call - ing



my as - cen - sion. This hope a - lone has al - ways stilled
me ob - tain - ing, My heart shall rest in him a - lone,
your as - cen - sion, That I may serve you faith - ful - ly,



All doubt and ap - pre - hen - sion; For where the
No oth - er rest re - main - ing, For where my
A - dorn - ing your re - demp - tion; And then, when



head is, there as well I know his mem - bers
treasure went be - fore, There all my thoughts shall
all my days will cease, Let me de - part in



are to dwell When Christ shall come and call them.
ev - er soar To still their deep - est yearn - ing.
joy and peace In an - swer to my plead - ing.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness. The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

P: Amen.

SONG OF DEPARTURE

A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing | **171 (4-5)**

4 ***"You see him now, ascending high
Up to the portals of the sky."
Alleluia! Alleluia!
"Hereafter Jesus you shall see
Returning in great majesty."
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!***

5 ***Be now our joy on earth, O Lord,
And be our future great reward.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Then, throned with you forever, we
Shall praise your name eternally.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!***



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US THIS MORNING

We recognize how busy this world and your life can be. Thank you for setting aside a Sunday morning to be with us in God's house. Stick around for a bite to eat and a refreshing drink. One of life's greatest pleasures is meeting new people and growing lasting relationships. We'd love to get to know you better.

INTERESTED IN JOINING RIVER OF LIFE?

Would you like to learn what the Lutheran church believes and teaches? Are you interested in joining our church, or going through a refresher class? We would love to meet with you and study God's Word. If you're interested, speak with Pastor Albrecht.

MOTHERS' DAY GIFT

As a special gift to all the moms today, we have a Bundtini and flower for you to take home. Thank you for all that you do in serving God as mothers & grandmothers!

JUNE VOTERS' MEETING & OPEN FORUM

JUNE 9

On June 9th, we will be hosting an open forum for the council to provide an update on the ministry work we share and for the congregation to provide feedback. The major items up for discussing and deciding upon are the church budget and discussing future plans for our shared ministry. After the open forum, we will have a fellowship meal.

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Hymn #174 **See, the Conqueror Mounts in Triumph** Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807-85, abr., alt.

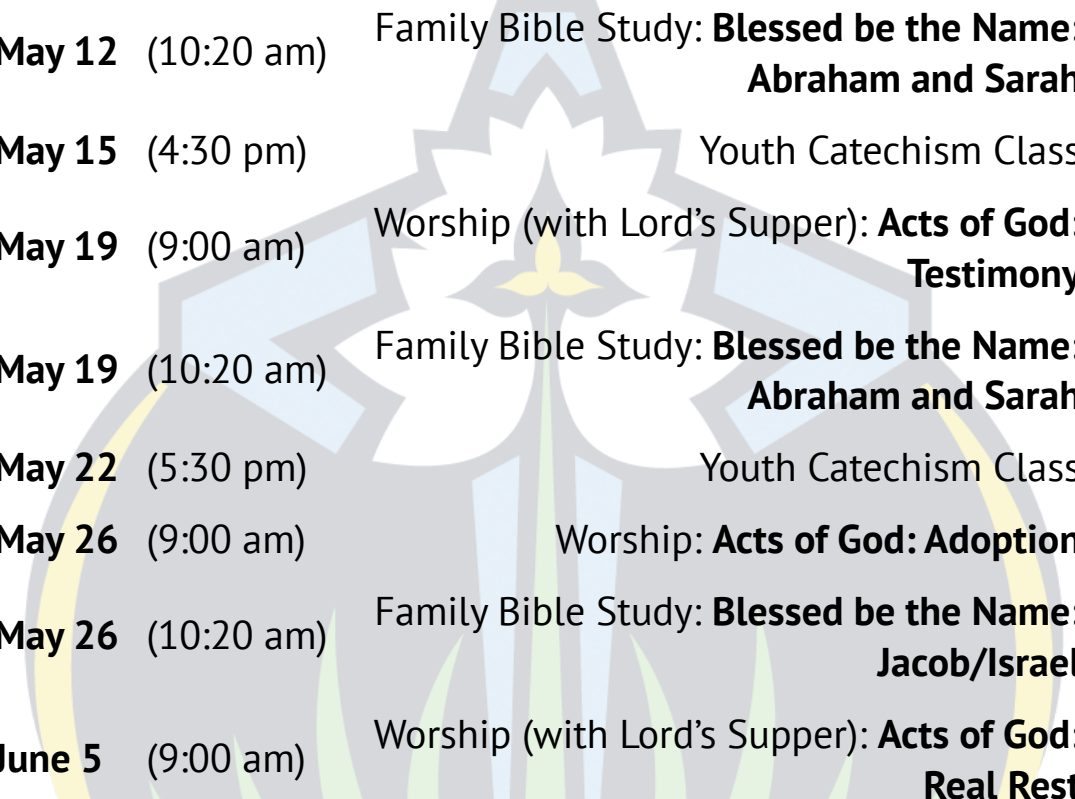
Hymn #173 **On Christ's Ascension I Now Build** Text: Josua Wegelin, 1604-40; tr. William M. Czamanske, 1873-1964, alt.

Hymn #341 **Crown Him with Many Crowns** Text: Matthew Bridges, 1800-94, st. 1-2, 4, abr., alt.; Godfrey Thring, 1823-1903, st. 3.

Hymn #171 **A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing** Text: The Venerable Bede, 673-735, abr.; tr. composite.

RIVER OF LIFE

Certainty & Hope In The Coming Days

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- May 12** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Blessed be the Name: Abraham and Sarah**
- May 15** (4:30 pm) Youth Catechism Class
- May 19** (9:00 am) Worship (with Lord's Supper): **Acts of God: Testimony**
- May 19** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Blessed be the Name: Abraham and Sarah**
- May 22** (5:30 pm) Youth Catechism Class
- May 26** (9:00 am) Worship: **Acts of God: Adoption**
- May 26** (10:20 am) Family Bible Study: **Blessed be the Name: Jacob/Israel**
- June 5** (9:00 am) Worship (with Lord's Supper): **Acts of God: Real Rest**

CONNECTING WITH RIVER OF LIFE

Videos of recent worship services and audio recordings of weekly sermons are available online. Check out our website or our Facebook page.

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refreshing truth for you