

# Front Street United Methodist Church

## Ascension of the Lord



Prelude

Chorale Fantasie on 'Lasst uns erfreuen,' Op. 81, No. 2<sup>1</sup>

Flor Peeters (1903-1986)

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things: mercifully give us faith to perceive that, according to his promise, he abides with his Church on earth, even to the end of the ages; through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

Hymn

Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise<sup>2</sup>

UMH, 312

1. Hail the day that sees him rise, Al - le - lu - ia!  
2. There the glo-rious tri-umph waits, Al - le - lu - ia!  
3. See! the heaven its Lord re-ceive, Al - le - lu - ia!  
4. See! he lifts his hands a - bove, Al - le - lu - ia!

To his throne a - bove the skies, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Lift your heads, e - ter - nal gates, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Yet he loves the earth he leaves, Al - le - lu - ia!  
See! he shows the prints of love, Al - le - lu - ia!

Christ, a - while to mor - tals given, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Christ hath con- quered death and sin, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Though re - turn - ing to his throne, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Hark! his gra - cious lips be - stow, Al - le - lu - ia!

Re - as - cends his na - tive heaven, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Take the King of glo - ry in, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Still he calls the world his own, Al - le - lu - ia!  
Blessings on his church be - low, Al - le - lu - ia!

## The Word, *Read*

### Psalm 47

Clap your hands, all you peoples;  
shout to God with loud songs of joy.  
For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome,  
a great king over all the earth.  
He subdued peoples under us,  
and nations under our feet.  
He chose our heritage for us,  
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.       *Selah*

God has gone up with a shout,  
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.  
Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
sing praises to our King, sing praises.  
For God is the king of all the earth;  
sing praises with a hymn.

God is king over the nations;  
God sits on his holy throne.  
The princes of the peoples gather  
as the people of the God of Abraham.  
For the shields of the earth belong to God;  
he is highly exalted.

### 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 during 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 toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward 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 Word, *Proclaimed*

### Children’s Message

### The Scriptures in Conversation

## Offering & Meditation

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## Offertory

### The Fullness of Your Love<sup>3</sup>

Clay Stevenson (b. 1977)

As the Aldersgate band leads us in worship, reflect prayerfully on this modern icon, which depicts the Ascension of the Lord Jesus, now crowned in glory.



*Ivanka Demchuk (Ukrainian, b. 1990), "Christ in Glory," 2015. Mixed media on wood.*

## Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

## The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,  
maker 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;  
the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.**

## Response

### Alleluia Verse

William Bradley Roberts (b. 1947)

The musical score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/2 time signature. The melody is written in eighth and quarter notes. The second staff continues the melody, with a 4/2 time signature and lyrics 'al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia'. The third staff concludes the piece, with a 4/2 time signature and lyrics 'al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia'. The music is written in a simple, melodic style suitable for a congregational response.

## 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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory, forever.  
Amen.

## Hymn

## Jesus Shall Reign<sup>4</sup>

UMH, 157

1. Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the sun does its suc -  
2. To Je - sus end - less prayer be made, and end - less  
3. Peo - ple and realms of ev - ery tongue dwell on his  
4. Bless - ings a - bound wher - e'er he reigns; all pris - oners  
5. Let ev - ery crea - ture rise and bring hon - ors pe -

ces - sive jour - neys run; his king - dom spread from  
prais - es crown his head; his name like sweet per -  
love with sweet - est song; and in - fant voic - es  
leap and loose their chains; the wea - ry find e -  
cu - liar to our King; an - gels de - scend with

shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.  
fume shall rise with ev - ery morn - ing sac - ri - fice.  
shall pro - claim their ear - ly bless - ings on his name.  
ter - nal rest, and all who suf - fer want are blest.  
songs a - gain, and earth re - peat the loud a - men!

## Benediction

Go out into the world to bear witness to the Christ who has ascended to be everywhere present. And as you go, may God the Father give you the grace of wisdom and revelation, may Christ Jesus lift up his hands and bless you, and may the Spirit open to you all the riches of Christ's inheritance.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

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

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## Worship Notes:

The rosebud on the altar is in honor of Hannah Clarke Huneycutt, born March 23 to parents Matthew and Julia Huneycutt, and proud Grandmother, Betty Huneycutt.

Copyright Acknowledgments: *All music is in the public domain, except "The Fullness of Your Love," which has been recorded with permission from composer Clay Stevenson.*

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<sup>1</sup> Flor Peeters was a Belgian organist, teacher, composer, and editor of early organ music. His compositions are a synthesis of French and Flemish characteristics that represent a Neo-Baroque approach to composition. This piece alternates between polyphonic, fantasia-like sections and homophonic, chorale-like sections, where the tune, LASST UNS ERFREUEN, is most evident. The result is a piece in the style of the north German keyboard fantasia from the seventeenth century, but with archaic and modal harmonies to give it a more modern flair.

<sup>2</sup> This hymn by Charles Wesley (1707-1788) is one of the finest for Ascension Sunday. It speaks of Christ's work, his triumphal entry into glory, his heavenly reign, and his intercession on our behalf. Although Christ has disappeared from our sight, "Still he calls the world his own." Christ is still with us! The tune is attributed to Robert Williams (1782-1818), who, although blind from birth, was a musician of great repute. Llanfair is the anglicized form of "Llanfechell," the composer's home, Mynydd Ithel, Llanfechell, Anglesey.

<sup>3</sup> Clay Stevenson is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Music at Elon University, and serves as the Director of Music for Front Street's Aldersgate service. His professional focus centers on music production, critical listening, and live sound. He also serves as director for the student ensemble Techtronica. As a creator, Stevenson crafts original scores for regional and national ad agencies, most recently for the UN-AIDS international ad campaign. He also produces original music for regional artists and independent films.

<sup>4</sup> Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was a minister, hymnist, and theologian known as the "father of English hymnody." He is credited with the writing of over 750 hymns. Originally published in 1719, "Jesus Shall Reign" is archetypal of Watts's use of Scriptural imagery, giving particular attention to the imagery of the Psalms. Here his text presents a strong Christological interpretation of Psalm 72. We sing of the worldwide reign of Christ (st. 1), who is praised by all creatures (st. 2 and 5), whose rule results in blessings on people "of every tongue" (st. 3), and who brings redemption for the outcasts (st. 4).