

Church at Home

Ascension Sunday | May 24, 2020

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we have suspended our regular Sunday worship services and are encouraging people to worship together in their homes. This resource is intended to be flexible and adaptable for a variety of settings, depending on the gifts and resources available. It is structured after our regular worship service, but you may do what works for your context. Some sections have recommendations for worshipping in families with small children.

Gathering & Greeting

<p>Call to Worship <i>(Psalm 47:5-8; Rev. 5:13)</i></p> <p>God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.</p> <p>Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises!</p> <p>For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise!</p> <p>God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne!</p> <p>To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power forever and ever! Amen!</p>	<p><i>*For families with small children*</i></p> <p>We come to worship God today, because he has invited us to worship him.</p> <p>Today we celebrate that our resurrected King Jesus ascended to heaven to sit at God's right hand.</p> <p>Let's sing to him!</p> <p><i>Families may light a candle as they begin Sunday worship as a visual reminder that worship is a special time when we rest in God's presence in a special way.</i></p>
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Song Suggestions:

Depending on your context and gifts, you may want to sing along with songs on YouTube, have someone lead with piano and guitar, or sing together acapella. Feel free to break open the songbook or hymnal and sing your family's favourites, or pick a few from these suggestions (check the [Church at Home page](#) for a YouTube playlist).

All Hail the Power
Come Thou Fount, Come Thou King
Crown Him with Many Crowns

King of Heaven
Behold Our God
Rejoice the Lord is King

Confession & Assurance

Read Acts 1:1-11.

Prayer of Confession:

**Merciful Father,
by your power Christ was raised,
by your power he was lifted up,
and seated at your right hand,
to rule over all things
in heaven and on earth.**

**We confess
that we often live as though
we are in control
over our lives, our wealth, our power.
We forget that we are merely stewards
of this marvellous creation.**

**Forgive us, O Lord, we pray.
Fill us with your grace,
that we may live
as your faithful servants in this world.**

Amen.

The prayer of confession may be followed by a time of silence, if desired.

Assurance of Pardon:

Read Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 49 together

Q.

How does Christ's ascension to heaven benefit us?

A.

**First, he is our advocate in heaven
in the presence of his Father.**

**Second, we have our own flesh in heaven
as a sure pledge that Christ our head
will also take us, his members,
up to himself.**

**Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth
as a corresponding pledge.**

**By the Spirit's power
we seek not earthly things
but the things above, where Christ is,
sitting at God's right hand.**

People of God, hear the good news of the gospel: In Jesus Christ, our victorious King, all our sins are forgiven. By his resurrection and ascension, we are assured of our own resurrection, when Christ comes again. **Thanks be to God!**

For families with small children

Read the story of the Ascension from a children's Bible or a simplified translation (like the New International Reader's Version) and talk with your children about how Jesus is our victorious king who rules over us from heaven.

Prayer:

**Dear Jesus, you are our champion.
You have already won the battle.
Forgive us when we worry
and try to find other champions to protect us.
Help us to always trust in you,
especially when we feel like
things are out of our control.
Amen.**

Families may talk about how baptism reminds us that in Jesus' victory, we are also victorious. The water on our heads is like a crown that reminds us that we are kings and queens in the kingdom of God together with King Jesus.

Hearing the Word

Scripture Reading: Psalm 68

Song of Preparation: Breathe on Me, Breath of God

The sermon video will be available on the church website under “Sermons” and on the Church at Home webpage.

If households prefer not to watch a sermon video, read the passage together from your preferred translation or a children’s Bible. A sermon manuscript can also be found on the Church at Home webpage if people prefer to read the sermon.

Prayer of Application

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who rides on the clouds, ascended on high, ruling over kings and nations and powers and principalities from the right hand of the Father, you are head of the church and Lord over all. In this time of uncertainty and upheaval, may we offer our lives to you, knowing that you are our good and faithful God, and that all God’s promises are “yes!” in you. In your name we pray, Amen.

Shameless plug for a great resource



Check out Kids Corner from ReFrame Media, the English language ministry of Back to God Ministries, International. Kids Corner has audio adventures, Bible stories, and faith-forming activities for young children and families. Check it out at <https://kidscorner.reframedia.com>.



The Story of Pentecost

What was it like the day that the Holy Spirit came? God



The Story of Paul’s Conversion



The Story of Dorcas

Have you ever met anyone that reminded you of Jesus? Come

Responding to God's Word

Song of Response: Sing to the King

Prayers of the People:

Check the [Church at Home page](#) for a prayer from one of our elders!

Given the reality that all of us are encouraged to stay at home, reflect together on what you “see” happening in this time. How has your perspective on this changed over the week? This can be a great time for parents to check-in with their kids, and to be honest with their kids about their own struggles and fears. Take a pulse of how each other are doing. What has been joy-filled about this past week? What has been challenging?

Invite everyone to share what they would like to lift up to God, their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears.

Review the “Church Family News” section of the bulletin on the church website.

Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

Check the [Church at Home page](#) for a prayer from one of our elders.

For families with small children

Memorizing the Lord’s Prayer is a great way to equip your children with important worship language. If you’ve already memorized the Lord’s Prayer, start memorizing a Psalm together.

Make a prayer video! Work together as a family to make a list of all the people and things you’d like to pray for, then give a different part of the prayer to each member of the family and make a little video of all the things you’re praying for as a family. Send your family video to grandparents, friends from church or school, teachers, or whoever else you want to encourage this week.

Offering

If you desire to give financially in this time, please check the bulletin for the most up-to-date options for giving.

Today’s second offering is for Back to God Ministries, International. BTGMI is the multimedia outreach ministry of the Christian Reformed Church. “*We beseech Thee, O Spirit divine...*” in 1939, these six words were broadcast across the airwaves with the launch of the Christian Reformed Church’s first weekly radio program. These gospel messages weren’t just for church members—they were for everyone. Over the last 80 years, media technology has expanded from radio to television to smartphones. Each step brought new opportunities to share God’s Word with people everywhere! Today your church, along with congregations across North America, partners with BTGMI to share the Gospel in 10 of our world’s major languages. Although the biblical messages we share using today’s media don’t use “thee” and “thou,” like the first radio message, their purpose remains the same: to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, disciple believers, and strengthen the local church. Contribute online at backtogod.net/donate-canada.

Blessing

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord smile upon you, and give you peace.

Amen.

Close by singing the Doxology or an appropriate song.