

Ascension 2021 Service Transcript

Opening Screen

Above all powers

Hello and welcome to our Ascension Service for 2021. For forty days we have been celebrating the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, his bursting from the tomb and his defeat of the power of sin and death. He appeared to his disciples many times and told them about the kingdom of God.

Today we recall how he left this earth and returned to his Father, ascending into heaven to take his throne over all dominions and powers. Trusting in his reign over all creation, and submitting to his kingly rule, let us commit ourselves afresh to following His will and commands.

Let's pray

Our Almighty Creator God,
to You be praise and glory forever.
As Your Spirit moved on the face of the waters
bringing light and life to Your creation,
pour out Your Spirit on us today
that we may walk as children of light
and by Your grace and presence.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Blessed by God now and forever.
Amen.

VIDEO STEPHEN COTERELL

Reading from Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Ascension Day also marks the start of the period which we call Thy Kingdom Come when we will commit ourselves afresh to carrying out Jesus' Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.

During Thy Kingdom Come, it is hoped that everyone who takes part will:

- Deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pray for God's Spirit to work in the lives of those they know
- Come to realise that every aspect of their life is the stuff of prayer

After the very first Ascension Day the disciples gathered together in an upstairs room, waiting as Jesus commanded and it is recorded in Acts 1:14 that they constantly devote themselves to

prayer waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, along with Mary and Jesus' brothers. It reminds us too, that without the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing for God.

Thy Kingdom Come is a reminder to pray that the Spirit will inspire and equip us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with our friends and families, our communities and networks. It has been amazing how many varied ways there have been in which people from every Christian tradition have taken up this challenge and we will hear a few stories during the week.

And what is our prayer? That who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and his love for the world will hear it for themselves, and respond and follow Him. Specifically, each and every Christian across the country and the world is invited to pray that God's Spirit might work in the lives of 5 friends who have not responded with their 'Yes' to God's call to trust and follow Jesus for themselves.

But Thy Kingdom Come is not a one week wonder. By focussing on our mission as church, we are reminded to continue to pray "in season and out of season" that others will come to Jesus and that will not only just be transforming for their lives but that God will transform our lives as we see the Spirit at work.

Whether you have been part of 'Thy Kingdom Come' before or not, we invite you to take part in Thy Kingdom Come along with churches from over 65 different denominations in over 170 countries.

So what is our expectation for Thy Kingdom Come? Here's Justin Welby talking to Hope's Roy Crowne.

VIDEO

What will we be doing at MRBC in the next 10 days? On most days, we shall be meeting on Zoom at Midday for half an hour's prayer. Why not join us? Dates and connection details are in the post below us on the MRBC website. There are some days when we don't meet at Midday: on both Sundays and also on Monday 17th May when we join with other churches in Felixstowe for a Thy Kingdom Come themed Community Prayers on Zoom. Again, connection details are in the post immediately below the service page on the MRBC website.

Let's pray with expectancy and worship our great God. Here's Matt Redman to lead us in song, and this is from a Thy Kingdom Come rally in Trafalgar Square a few years back.

10,000 Reasons – Mat Redman

Prayers

Let's pray the Thy Kingdom Come prayer together

***Almighty God,
your ascended Son has sent us into the world
to preach the good news of your kingdom:
inspire us with your Spirit
and fill our hearts with the fire of your love,***

***that all who hear your Word
may be drawn to you,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.***

Father, we pray that in this Year's Thy Kingdom Come, that Your Spirit will prompt us to pray for those You have placed on our hearts not just for the next 10 days, but that we will do so on an ongoing basis.

More than that Lord, we pray that in every aspect of our lives, we may raise up the needs of others to You, particularly those you have brought into our lives, whether they know You or not.

May Your Spirit work in our lives too, facing us with our sins and weakness that as a people forgiven through faith in Christ we may find the cleansing, strength and holiness that draws us closer to You. May the name of Jesus be glorified.

We ask this in His name.

Amen.

Let's take a few moments to pray our own personal prayers for those the Lord has led us to pray for.

Being made one by the power of the Spirit, through faith in Jesus, let's pray as He taught 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.***

Each year, there is a Thy Kingdom Come song, specifically written for this time. Here's this year's, written to a well-known tune.

TKC Song 2021

Benediction

God the Father,
who has given to His Son the name above every name,
strengthen you to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord.

Amen.

God the Son,
who is our great high priest passed into the heavens,
plead for you at the right hand of the Father.

Amen.

God the Holy Spirit,
who pours out His abundant gifts upon the Church,
make you faithful servants of Christ our King.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen

Don't forget that this Sunday we are at the Baptist Assembly at 10-30am. Look out for connection details which you'll get either by email or you will find it here on the website and in our social media.