



HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

MAY 28, 2017

7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER "ASCENSION SUNDAY"

"Ascension"

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"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."

(Acts 1:8-9)

Today is the 7th Sunday of Easter which is also "Ascension Sunday." Today we observe the "Day of Ascension" which was this past Thursday. The Ascension took place 40 days after Easter which means that next Sunday is the fiftieth day, or PENTECOST. (Don't forget to wear red.)

As we prepare for worship we'll listen to "Ascension" by Phil Traynor. He describes the piece as being a musical representation of the culmination of life as one rises to perfection.

Our Service begins with a **WELCOME** to all who are gathered to worship together. We share news of our life together as a church in our service because what we do, outside of worship, is a very vital portion of our 'service to God'.

Our Call to Worship each week is designed to bring us into focus and help us to heighten our awareness of being in a special place, in the presence of God.

Service elements today will reflect the scriptural theme of the Ascension of Jesus and the reaction of his disciples as they, and we, await the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Celebration of Worship

May 28, 2017 – 7th Sunday of Easter
"Ascension Sunday"

"WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP"

(They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Day by day, as they spent much time together, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.)

MUSIC AND TIME OF PREPARATION

(Enter reverently. Before the service, speak to God. During the service, let God speak to you. After the service, speak to one another.)

CHIMING THE HOUR

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AND SHARING LIFE IN THE CHURCH

PRELUDE AND BRINGING THE LIGHT

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We gather in this place, some empty, some filled, some whole, some broken:

yearning for the Holy Spirit to fill us.

We come, with ordinary people, who have shown us the way:

trusting that God will continue to illumine our hearts.

We celebrate the promises of the giver of grace, of the healer of all people:

that graced, we may serve others;

that healed, we may bring hope to the world.

Let us worship our God who comes to us, again and again.

***OPENING PRAYER (Responsive)**

Your love is so limitless that the needy receive goodness, and the lonely find a friend; the homeless find your heart open to them, and all can place their worries in your hands.

Parent of all, we will make your name known to all the world.

We gaze at the sky looking for you, when you can be found in the laughing play of children; we wonder where you have gone, while you are all around us in our sisters and brothers.

Cloud Rider, we will sing your name to all the world.

When our hearts are hardened by fears, you melt them with your hope; when our lips can only utter boasts, you teach us songs of humility.

Caregiver of us all, we will praise your name in all the world.

We will make your name known, even as we pray as we have been taught, saying,

"Our Father who art in heaven, and the power and the glory, forever.

Amen."

*- If you are comfortable doing so, please stand

***ASCENSION HYMN "O CHRIST, WHEN YOU ASCENDED"**
(LANCASHIRE -- "THE DAY OF RESURRECTION")

**"O Christ, when you ascended, you took your rightful throne;
Your time on earth had ended — yet we weren't left alone.
You reign o'er earth and heaven; your Spirit guides our way.
Your prayers uphold your people; you lead your church each day.**

**We look at earthly rulers and see what they command:
We note their years of power, the borders of their land.
Yet, Lord, you are not bounded by things like time and space;
Your reign is never-ending, you rule in every place.**

**We're tempted. Lord, to leave you in stories nicely told;
Sometimes we don't believe you and say your ways are old.
Sometimes we feel so lonely and live in doubt and fear —
But your ascension means, Lord, you're present with us here.**

**It's often quite a challenge to follow in your Way;
We're easily distracted! It's hard, Lord, to obey.
Sometimes we give you Sundays — an hour, maybe two —
But your ascension means, Lord, all life belongs to you.**

**One day, O Lord, we'll know you, as we are fully known;
One day this world of sinners will bow before your throne.
One day, God's whole creation will sing and praise your name;
On earth as now in heaven, we'll celebrate your reign."**

***PASSING THE PEACE** (Please Remain Standing)
May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And with you.

(At this time you are invited to share a sign of peace: a hug, a handshake, a kiss...)

***CHORAL RESPONSE:** (Hymn. No. 461, vs. 1)
**"God is here! As we Your people meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts."**

"CONFESSION AND PARDON"

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Jesus' life, and the manner of his death demonstrated that there was literally no limit to his love. Living a human life, as we do, he demonstrated how the values of the kingdom are different from the world's values and how God's standards are different from the world's standards. We live in the world also, and are exposed to all the trials and temptations that the world's values and standards place on us as Christians. Before the Ascension, Jesus called us to discipleship. As we once again await the coming of the Spirit, let us pray:

Our opening hymn is written for "Ascension Sunday" by Presbyterian hymnist Carol Winfrey Gillette, who takes the themes of the day and sets them to the familiar tune, "The Day of Resurrection" in "O Christ, When You Ascended."

In our final 'gathering act' we "**Pass the Peace**" as an act of caring, welcome, and mutual love. In any language, the love of God is translated into peace as we join hands and hearts together. We are re-gathered as a worshiping community with a verse from the Hymn "God Is Here"

Corporate Confession:
In the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition, we do not offer individual confession save for that which we offer in our silent prayers. Our prayer today reminds us that we are not simply individuals but citizens of the world seeking the kingdom of God. Our prayer and the "**Assurance of Forgiveness**" echo themes for the day.

“The Proclamation of God’s Word” is central in the life of the worshipping community. This ‘proclamation’ includes the reading of scripture, the sharing of an anthem or musical expression of the day’s theme, the Time With The Young Church and the preaching of the Word.

Today’s anthem is “Alleluia! Sing to Jesus.” William Dix wrote “Alleluia! Sing to Jesus” as a communion hymn for Ascension Sunday. “Though the cloud from sight received Him,” refers to Christ’s ascension. Even as Jesus assured us he would not leave us as orphans, this hymn also reminds us of His faithful promise, “I am with you ever more.” The tune is sung to the tune HYFRYDOL, written by Rowland H. Prichard.

We welcome your prayer for your disciples – which, Lord, is your prayer also for us. You prayed that you and your followers would be one as you and God are one.

Forgive us when we contribute to disunity or conflict in any of our relationships with one another.

Jesus prayed that God would keep and protect us from the influence of evil.

Forgive us for blaming you, O God, for distressing or difficult times and for believing that we can deal with problems in our own strength.

Jesus prayed that his disciples would be made and kept holy by the truth of the gospel - the reality of God's love for all people - revealed in Jesus and experienced through the Holy Spirit.

Keep us holy, O God, and empower us to be faithful witnesses of the truth of the gospel as long as we live. As Jesus' disciples and in his name we pray. Amen.

“Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.”

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

John assures us that "God gave us eternal life, and this life is in God's Son. Whoever has the Son has life...." and "God sent the Son into the world not to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. ...Those who believe in him are not condemned."

Thanks Be To God. Amen.

“THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S WORD”

HISTORY LESSON ACTS 1:6-14 (NT: p.118)

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks Be To God!

ANTHEM “Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON *JOHN 17: 6-19 (NT: p.111)

SERMON "Ascension"

"SHARING OUR RESPONSE TO GOD"

***HYMN OF RESPONSE 309 “Of The Father’s Love Begotten”**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH The Apostles' Creed (Ecumenical version)**
“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, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (universal) church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.”

BEING THE CHURCH IN PRAYER AND GIVING

AS WE COME TO PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. For a sure faith in the comforting promise of our Lord: "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world", and for a tranquil confidence that we are never alone:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For all of God's people, seeking in these days to be faithful, that they may be fruitful in every way, and that their lives, moved by God's grace, may give God:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

On this day to remember those who have sacrificed and given all they have for the love of country and the pursuit of peace and justice in a warring and unjust world we offer our thanks to you for them, their families and for those who serve still:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For the peace of the whole world, that we may all dwell in safety, and that the Word of God may be heard in word and deed without hindrance in every place:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For all who this day are seeking refuge. From the hostility of war, the brutality of domestic discord, the desperation of a spirit caught in the downward spiral of addiction, the cruelty of abuse at the hand of the powerful over the powerless, and all ills that assail a person's ability to be whole and well.

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For our nation and those who serve in our government at all levels, that all works of civil righteousness may be encouraged, that all wrongdoing might be exposed, and that the light of God's Word may shine in every place:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For the church that struggles with identity and with how to speak with authority in a secular world. For churches in conflict and for those churches which diminish your gospel by claiming exclusive connection to you.

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For those who are traveling for work or in leisure, that they may go their way in the assurance of God's protection and blessing:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

For those in need, the sick, the suffering, the dying, the mourning, and the lonely especially whom we have named and left unnamed in our hearts, that Christ would grant to each comfort and healing according to His loving kindness:

Hear our prayers, O Lord.

And finally, for ourselves, Lord, we pray for peace, for a sense of contentment, for true joy in our living, even as we wait, once again, for the powerful presence of your Holy Spirit.

Hear our prayers, O Lord, Amen.

OUR TITHES AND OFFERING

In our prayers we ask for God's presence with and intervention for those we list each week on the back of the bulletin. We have many who are in ongoing situations of treatment, others who are saddened by loss, and still others who face uncertain futures. We keep these in our prayers today and every day.

We share our Tithes and Offerings as an active response to God's blessings to us in our living. What we give supports the work and worship of the church including all of our programs, our mission efforts and our sharing of mutual love and affection for one another.

A "Charge and Blessing" is the parallel element of worship for the "Call to Worship" which begins the service. The charge is for us to take what we have gained in worship into the world as an active service to God. The blessing is a word to us to remember that God goes with us when we go.

Our Hymn of Parting is 'Come, Christians, Join to Sing' which is also an 'ascension' hymn by Church of England pastor, Henry Bateman. Originally the hymn, in its simplicity was written for children and the first line was, 'Come, Children, join to sing.' It was changed to be more inclusive. Each stanza begins with an exhortation—an imperative command to "Come" or "Praise." In stanza one, Bateman provides the children with the reason for singing: We offer "loud praise to Christ our King . . . before his throne. . . ." Christ desires our praise: "praise is his gracious choice. . . ." Stanza two reassures the children (and all of us) that this King is also "our guide and friend" and that "his love shall never end." This King will "condescend" to be a friend to the children. To condescend surely did not mean to patronize as it tends to mean today, but implies that Christ the King humbles himself to be in a personal relationship with us. Stanza three ends on an eschatological note. The author reassures children that they need not fear death. Beyond life, our songs will continue on "heaven's blissful shore . . . singing forevermore: Alleluia! Amen!"

The 'Benediction' offers the final 'good words' said over God's people as they continue to worship in their living day by day.

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**"Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."**

"GOD'S PEOPLE SENT INTO THE WORLD"

***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

We go from this place, having witnessed Jesus ascending; with Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Thaddeus.

We go to be the church with them constantly devoting ourselves to prayer.

We wait faithfully, even as we witness and work, for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

We wait for renewal of the Spirit with rush of wind and tongues of fire.

Come, breath of fire, our souls fill and inspire.

Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

***HYMN OF PARTING NO. 150 "Come, Christians, Join To Sing"**

***BENEDICTION**

CHORAL RESPONSE "Lord, Make Us More Holy"

**"Lord, make us more holy, Lord, make us more holy,
Lord, make us more holy, Until we meet again.
Holy, holy, holy, Until we meet again."**

*- If comfortable, please stand

(You are invited across the way for fellowship.)

Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

HIGHLANDS' HIGHLIGHTS
This Week at Highlands
Week of May 28 – June 3, 2017



This Week's Calendar of Events:

Today:	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Sunday School Worship Service Family Promise Guests Leave for next church Office Closed Crafty Ladies are NOT meeting this week. Choir Rehearsal Quilting and Sewing Group
Monday:		
Wednesday:	6:30 p.m.	
Friday:	9:00 a.m.	

"WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, AS CHRIST WELCOMES US!"

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU! We are so glad that you are here and worshipping with us this morning. We are privileged to have you with us and would invite you to a time of Fellowship in our Dining Hall after worship. Please do us a favor by signing the Friendship Register and mark appropriate boxes. There are also visitor cards in the pew racks. **FIRST TIME VISITORS – WE HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU! Thanks!**

MEMBERSHIP AT HIGHLANDS is open to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives and who wish to join in the worship and ministry of this church. The pastor or any member of the Session would be more than happy to discuss this with you.

A NURSERY IS PROVIDED IN THE FAMILY LIFE building for those who wish to have their children cared for during worship. Parents receive a 'silent pager' for peace of mind and will be paged in case of any need. Highlands takes great care in caring for your children.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH FOR AGES 3 THROUGH 1ST grade is in the Family Life building after "A Time with the Young Church," except on Communion Sundays. A nursery is provided for infants through two years of age in the Family Life Center. Worship folders for young Highlands' worshippers can be found at the usher's stand. PARENTS please help your children with their worship experience. **WE LOVE OUR CHILDREN AT HIGHLANDS** and want to keep them safe! Please help us with this goal by ensuring that **all children are supervised by an adult while on the playground at all times.**

DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEARING ASSISTANCE AT THE USHER'S STAND.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

TODAY IS THE 7th SUNDAY OF EASTER and also "**ASCENSION SUNDAY.**" On Thursday of this past week we reached the 40th day since our Easter celebration which is the 'Ascension of Our Lord' day. After preparing the disciples, before his death and after his resurrection, Jesus is taken up and "**seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**" The instructions for those who would be the church are to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit on **Pentecost, which is next Sunday.** Pentecost is a rich tradition in the life of our church and we'll celebrate the coming of the Spirit! (Wear red!) Want to help get the church ready? Pentecost decoration will be Saturday morning at 8 a.m.

ON PENTECOST SUNDAY (wear red) we will welcome the Spirit by welcoming our new Confirmands, and new members. We will honor our graduates and share the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper which means we also receive the JEMM offering. We conclude worship in the DINING HALL with a Celebration of the Church and a fellowship reception for all of our honorees! You don't want to miss PENTECOST AT HUPC!

CHRISTIAN NURTURE NEEDS SUMMER VOLUNTEERS. VBS is June 25 – 29 and we need your help to be a VBS worker. We also need summer Sunday School leaders. Please see Laura for more details

LOGOS, WELLNESS AND ADULT LOGOS ARE TAKING A BREAK UNTIL SEPTEMBER! Watch the bulletin for information this fall. We'll be looking for volunteers to help in our 25th year of Logos at Highlands! Think about joining the fun!

OUR FAMILY PROMISE GUESTS ARE MOVING TO THE NEXT CHURCH TODAY. Thank you to everyone that helped make this week a huge success. It takes many volunteers to support Family Promise and we appreciate your help. They will be back on September 10th. If you haven't volunteered in the past, please consider giving your time and talents to this great mission of Highlands.

LAST SUNDAY OUR THE SESSION SENT A CHALLENGE OUT TO HELP 'RAISE THE ROOF!' "**Raise the Roof**" is a short-term capital campaign to help us re-roof the Sanctuary. Please mark your gifts 'raise the roof.' We hope to get the work started as soon as possible and have it paid for by November.

OTHER ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

A SPECIAL “THANK YOU” to all who participated in last Sunday’s blood drive. We collected 20 pints of blood, three pints more than our goal of 17! This is an important mission for Highlands, and these pints will help a lot of people! Our fall blood drive is scheduled for Sunday, August 27th, if you would like to mark your calendars in advance.

HIGHLANDS PRECIOUS GIFTS PRESCHOOL IS ENROLLING for the Fall 2017 school year ages 15 months to 4 years old. We are excited to be an outreach of all the great Mission work at Highlands. Providing for a community of children on the campus of Highlands, you truly know God’s blessings. Stop by for a tour and meet the staff anytime Monday through Friday, 7:00am to 6:00pm. Tell your family, friends and neighbors about our great pre-school.

“Pro Life, Pro Choice” is the topic of the Thoughtful Christian Class at 9:00 a.m. Sunday, June 4th in the Fellowship Hall. The author of the material takes an approach of understanding the perspectives of both sides in light of our Christian faith and finding any common ground – not criticizing of either position or debate.

THE MEMBER CARE COMMITTEE is looking for additional persons to serve as Shepherds so that this program of our church can be maintained. The responsibility of a shepherd is to keep in touch with and support 5 – 7 families and/or individuals. This is a rewarding way to know your fellow members better and does not require a great deal of time. For information or to volunteer call Nancy Marsh at 645-3108 or 635-7582.

MICAH’S BACKPACK UPDATE: Thanks to generous donations, Micah’s pantry is well stocked with oatmeal and granola bars! A need at this time is toothbrushes. Each child receives a toothbrush at the beginning of the school year, before Christmas break and at the end of the school year. We are packing for 41 kids here at HUPC. Also, contributions of little boxes of raisins make a nice change in the snack menu. Thanks for all your help and encouragement!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW MORE ITEMS FOR The Highlands Baby Shower Mission Project. Recently we were able to send 20 bags to the hospital, so 20 babies and their families had a little gift to take home with them. We are already working on our next twenty gift bags, can you help? Baby clothes and blankets are much appreciated-ant color is fine. Thanks Again!!!

ARLINGTON COMMUNITY SERVICES: ACS needs the following items: toothpaste, powdered milk, canned milk, canned pasta, pasta sauce, canned meat, canned tomatoes, canned potatoes, peanut butter, jelly- HUPC’s specialty, and toilet tissue. Thirteen jars of jelly were collected this week. Every grocery order going out of ACS has a jar of HUPC jelly!

YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP. We are looking for a few items for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance kits. We are in need of 16 X 26-inch hand towels and single pack toothbrushes. (The one your dentist gives you would be great). Thanks for your continued love and support of this very basic and much needed program.

THANKS FOR YOUR EXCELLENT SUPPORT OF HAITI!! 30 sponsored children mean sustaining care for the children and staff of the Grace of Mercy orphanage in Haiti. Please remember your monthly pledge and **BE SURE YOUR CHECKS ARE MARKED “SPONSOR FOR HAITI CHILDREN”** to ensure the money goes into the right account.

FAMILY PROMISE BENEFIT AT THE ALHAMBRA SUNDAY JUNE 25 – featuring “Steel Magnolias” starring Dawn Wells, Mary Ann of Gilligan’s Island. Sunday, June 25 benefits Family Promise of Jacksonville. The show starts at 2:00 pm, doors open at 12:00 pm with the meal being served from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm. Purchase your ticket from Family Promise or a board member and help support homeless families with children. The ticket price of \$55 includes the meal, nonalcoholic beverages, tax, gratuities and a donation to Family Promise. **Ticket sales end June 12.** For tickets, please call Family Promise at 354-1818 or you can email them at bethmixson@familypromisejax.org

PRAYER CONCERNS AND TODAY’S SERVICE

SPECIAL PRAYERS: PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK: Nancy Moewe, JoAn Ewing, Don Hall, Jo and Hoagy Carmichael, Bill Byers, Nancy Hoot, Marilyn Reed, Al Hummel, Bill Duval, Pat Strader, Cathy Pate’s son, Hank Greene, Rufus Taylor’s brother, Fay Sweeney (9960 Atrium Way, Unit 18, Jax, FL 32225), Linda Youmans (c/o Teri Grimm, 4206 Harbour Island Dr. 32225), Kit Fink, Kenneth Moon, and Bruce and Annette Marley, Justin Marley (grandson), Louise Keen is residing at Brookdale Southside 9601 Southbrook Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32256 along with Al and Pat Hummel. Al and Pat’s address is 9601 Southbrook Dr., Apt E315, Jacksonville, FL 32256. You can reach Jacob Loerop through his email at Jacob.Loerop@CVN68.navy.mil, Jacob’s address is IT3 Jacob Loerop CVN 68 USS Nimitz Unit 100103 Box 1771 FPO AP 96620. Amelia Powell’s address is: AT2 Powell, Amelia N., VAQ-140, Unit 200107 Box 142, FPO AP 96601. You can also reach Amelia through her email. Her email address is: amelia.powell@cvw7.navy.mil.

PRAYER BEARS: Prayer Bears and Caring Critters are available in the Fellowship Hall after each service.

MEMBER CARE: Please call the church office with your prayer request. As always, prayer requests can be made as well by completing the gray slips in the church pews, using the church website (hupcjax.org under "Contact Us") or by notifying your Shepherd.

FAMILIES WE ARE PRAYING FOR THIS WEEK: Paul and Sarah Wubbena, Linda Youmans and Greig and Karen Young.

OUR VOLUNTEERS THIS MORNING ARE: Greeters: Jim and Jan Walters. Children’s Church Leader: David Bauerlein. Nursery Attendant: Jennifer Terrell.

THE FLOWERS ON THE COMMUNION TABLE are given to the glory of God by the Abbots in celebration of Rhiannon and Lexi’s high school graduation.