

I'll Fly Away
By Albert E. Brumley

See words in the printed copy.

Ascension Sunday

Seventh Sunday of Easter

See art work in printed copy.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Credits: Cover Art—*Woodcarving from the Church of St. George, Cologne, Germany (1330 A.D.).*

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For God was pleased...through Christ to
reconcile to himself all things, whether
things on earth or things in heaven,
by making peace through his blood,
shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:19-20

Old Orchard Church
June 1, 2014 — 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

Celebrating Jesus as the Community of Resurrection Peace

Having taken us through death on the cross,
Christ rose and ascended on high.
From there he lives his risen life in us,
He works his peace through us:

A peace stronger than hatred, stronger than fear;
A peace for anxiety, a peace for anger,
A peace for wrongs suffered.
A peace for all conflict
Within and without.

Jesus gives peace, yet not as the world gives it—
By temporary truce,
By begrudging compromise,
By walking away, by crying, “Peace, peace”
when there is none.

But the peace we know
Is the Death-Destroyer’s sweet assurance
That he makes all things serve him for our sake,
And that by the sacrifice of himself
And his exaltation to glory,
Heaven and earth are reunited,
And soon will be at peace forever.

Christ is risen! Christ is ascended! Alleluia!



Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Psalm 110

Epistle Lesson: I Thessalonians 4:11-18

Today’s Sermon

Christianity in Ephesus, Christianity in St. Louis Series

“Marriage and Singleness in the Church” (Part II)

I Corinthians 7:25-35

Ron Lutjens, Lead Pastor, preaching

Heaven and Earth at Peace

**After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes,
and a cloud hid him from their sight. Acts 1:9**

In the beginning, there was blessed fellowship between God and man, between heaven and earth. Although God and His creation were separate, they were united without being identified. But our fall into sin disrupted all that. Separateness became separation. The alienation of sin brought dis fellowship into creation. Man alienated himself from God; people became alienated from one another, and from the creation. Life in creation was subjected to the principle of self-existence, independence and isolation. But the glorious purpose—and result!—of Christ’s work was the re-union of heaven and earth, of God and His people. Redemption, which was intended and provided in terms of the original creation, aims at the restoration of fellowship. The principle of self-existence was overcome, in redemption, by the greater principle of reconciliation.

That’s what Christ’s ascension is about: reunion, fellowship restored, oneness between heaven and earth brought about by our Savior’s entrance into the Father’s presence.

So much about our Savior’s ascension is unique. There were no Christmas angels, no Golgotha darkness, no Easter earthquake. No brightly lit sky or rending of the veil or rolling stone. No singing.

The event is reported in utter simplicity: *he was taken up.*

Ah, but notice the *timing* of Christ’s departure: ‘**when he had spoken these things.**’ What things? You may recall that the disciples had asked Jesus a question, a good question, actually: ‘**Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?**’ The Savior’s answer came immediately, in word and in deed. The word was this: you don’t need to know the times or season in the Father’s hand; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses around the world. ‘**Now,**’ writes Luke, ‘**when he had spoken these things...he was taken up.**’

And what, do you suppose, is the meaning of his divine act-as-answer? It is this: the restoration of God’s rule requires the reunion of the Son with the Father. The Son of God, who is the Second Adam, carries His flesh (and ours), His sacrifice (for us), and His obedience into heaven, there to receive the Father’s approval and reward. The kingdom of God is restored on the basis of atonement and reconciliation. *The ascension belongs to Christ’s reconciling work for His sheep.*

—N.D. Kloosterman (1992)

