

CELEBRATING THE SABBATH
Ascension Day

May 16, 2021 at 10 o'clock



The astronaut represents the glory of humanity's scientific achievement. Jesus (Ascending) represents humanity's spiritual ideal and ultimate reward. Both are ascending to the heavens - one by rocket, the other by the divine hand of God. Both have to have a lot of faith.

--Jay Norton, Artist

PRELUDE

Elevation

Antoine Édouard Batiste

SHARING OUR WELCOME VIRTUALLY

WE COME TO WORSHIP

Peace be with you.

And also with you.

Come and see the love God has given to us.

Come and see what it means to be children of God.

Come with this hope, that Christ's presence is real.

With joy, we come to see the Lord.

--The Abingdon Worship Annual 2009, via re-worship.blogspot.com

HYMN #638

In the Bulb There is a Flower

[Click here to see hymn](#)

Join as you are able!

**In the bulb there is a flower, in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise, butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

**In our end is our beginning, in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing, in our life eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

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OPENING PRAYER

**In the great quiet of God, my troubles are but pebbles on the road,
my joys are like the everlasting hills.**

So it is when I step through the gate of prayer from time into eternity.

**When I am in the consciousness of God, my brothers and sisters are not far-off and forgotten,
but close and strangely dear.**

They shine, as if a light were glowing within them.

Even those who frown on me and love me not, seem part of the great scheme of God.

--Walter Rauschenbusch, pioneer of the Social Gospel movement

A MOMENT FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES Lauren Dube

SELECTION *Grace* arr. Bill Ingram
The Whitechapel Handbell Choir
Jessica Berube, director

SCRIPTURE LESSON [Luke 24:44-53](#) Elizabeth Oman-Wilfrid

AN ASCENSION RETROSPECT *Ascension of the Lord* Art in the Christian Tradition
Vanderbilt University

SERMON *Dear Theophilus...* Erica Avena

MEET OUR CONFIRMANDS Andrew Chang

A TIME OF 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

A WORD FROM OUR MISSION PARTNERS Beth Hines, Community Partners in Action

RESPONDING WITH OUR GIFTS

Offertory *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* arr. Bill Ingram
The Whitechapel Handbell Choir
Jessica Berube, director

To Give an Online Offering Now: <http://www.whfirstchurch.org/donate/give>

Or Give by Text: Text *GIVE* to (860) 222-7870. Click [here](#) to watch a demo video.

A check can be mailed to the church:

First Church of West Hartford, 12 South Main St., West Hartford, CT 06107

Doxology, Words: Hymnal, No. 47; Tune: Hymnal, No. 46

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

HYMN #234 *Crown Him with Many Crowns* [Click here to see hymn](#)
Join as you are able!

**Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.**

**Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity.**

**Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save;
his glories now we sing who died, and rose on high,
who died, eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Improvisation on "DUKE STREET"* Jim Boratko
"Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun"