Christ Church, Oxford
House Evensong for Ascension Day
May 21st 2020
Music before the service recorded by Ben Collyer, Christ Church Organ Scholar
A Chime in the Dark from Philip Wilby’s Organ Hours

Sentence

God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

Psalm 47.5

Welcome and introduction

The College Chaplain, Revd Clare Hayns

The Collect for Ascension Day

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that as we believe your only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ
to have ascended into the heavens,
so we in heart and mind may also ascend
and with him continually dwell;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Hymn

Recorded by the choristers of Christ Church,
Pembroke and Worcester, accompanied by Sophie Biddell

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus;
His the scepter, His the throne.
Alleluia! His the triumph,
His the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion
thunder like a mighty flood;
"Jesus out of ev'ry nation
has redeemed us by His blood.

Alleluia! Not as orphans
are we left in sorrow now.
Alleluia! He is near us;
faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received Him
when the forty days were o'er,
shall our hearts forget His promise,
"I am with you evermore"?

W. Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)
Responses

Plainsong Preces and Responses
sung by members of College Choir from home

Minister O Lord, open thou our lips
and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
Choir and God, make speed to save us.
Minister O Lord, make haste to help us.
Choir Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
Choir as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
Minister Praise ye the Lord.
Choir The Lord’s Name be praised.

Psalm 47

Read by voices from across the Christ Church Community

Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with loud songs of joy.
For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome,
a great king over all the earth.
He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet.
He chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.
God has gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
For God is the king of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm.
God is king over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.
The princes of the peoples gather
as the people of the God of Abraham.
For the shields of the earth belong to God;
he is highly exalted.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit. Amen
In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; or John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” He replied, “It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 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. While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Here ends the first reading

My soul doth magnify the Lord:
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him:
throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm:
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat:
and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

(Luke 1: 46–55)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.

Reading
Luke 24. 44–end
Read by Professor Ian Watson, Censor Theolgiae

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; 53 and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Here ends the second reading

The Sermon
The Revd Canon Adrian Daffern
Vicar of Great St Mary’s,
The University Church of Cambridge
The Anthem

Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace
Samuel Wesley, (1810-1876)
Sung by the College Choir from home

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,
whose mind is stayed on thee.
The darkness is no darkness with thee,
but the night is as clear as the day.
The darkness and the light to thee are both alike.
God is light and with him is no darkness at all.
Oh let my soul live, and it shall praise thee,
for thine is the kingdom, the power,
and the glory, for evermore.

The Lesser Litany and Responses

Plainsong Preces and Responses
Sung by members of College Choir from home

Minister       The Lord be with you.
Choir          And with thy spirit.
Minister       Let us pray.

Choir          Lord, have mercy upon us.
               Christ, have mercy upon us.
               Lord, have mercy upon us.

Choir          Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen.
Minister   O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.
Choir       And grant us thy salvation.
Minister   O Lord, save the Queen.
Choir       And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.
Minister   Endue thy ministers with righteousness.
Choir       And make thy chosen people joyful.
Minister   O Lord, save thy people.
Choir       And bless thine inheritance.
Minister   Give peace in our time, O Lord.
Choir       Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.
Minister   O God, make clean our hearts within us.
Choir       And take not thy Holy Spirit from us

The Prayers
Led by the Revd Canon Graham Ward

During the prayers these responses may be made

Lord, in your mercy
All    Hear our prayer

Hymn
Recorded by Christ Church Cathedral Choir in 2004, under the direction of Stephen Darlington, from the CD ‘Favourite Hymns from Oxford’ (Griffin)

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 virgin’s son  
The god incarnate born  
Whose arm those crimson trophies won  
Which now his brow adorn  
Fruit of the mystic rose  
Yet of that rose the stem  
The root whence mercy ever flows  
The babe of Bethlehem

Crown him the Lord of love;  
behold his hands and side,  
rich wounds, yet visible above,  
in beauty glorified;  
no angels in the sky  
can fully bear that sight,  
but downward bends their burning eye  
at mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of years,  
the potentate of time,  
creator of the rolling spheres,  
ineffably sublime.  
Glassed in a sea of light,  
Where everlasting waves  
Reflect his throne, the Infinite!  
Who lives, and loves, and saves.

Matthew Bridges (1800-1894)  
and Godfrey Thring (1823-1903)  
Tune: Diademata

The Dean concludes with the House Prayer and blessing, which ends

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

Music after the service recorded by Ben Collyer, Christ Church Organ Scholar  
Laudes by Francis Pott

Cover Image: The Rising Christ, Attributed to Bernardino Butinone, with thanks to Christ Church Picture Gallery. Photo: Ralph Williamson