

Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions

May 18th - 23rd, 2026

Mon Mark 16:14-20 Awaiting the promised Spirit, we remember how the risen Jesus sent the eleven out to preach the Word, how vital it is to believe that Word, and how He confirmed His Word by various signs.

Tues John 15:26-16:4 When the Counselor comes, He will testify about Jesus, and so will Jesus' apostles. Not all will believe the testimony, to be sure, but fierce opposition does not mean that the Spirit was wrong.

Wed 1 Peter 4:7-11 The approaching end times call for a sound mind and prayerful watching, but most of all for love which uses the gifts that God has given in service to one another on our heavenly walk.

Thurs Ezekiel 36:25-27 The Lord will cleanse from impurity and idolatry. The Lord will give a new heart and put His Spirit within, that we, His people, may be led to walk in His ways.

Fri Psalm 97 The Lord reigns. The earth, created by Him, rejoices in this. Fire, lightning, mountains, and heavens bow before Him. All other "gods" are nothing compared to Him. Let us also rejoice and give thanks!

Sat Psalm 93 The Lord rules forever. Majesty and strength are His clothing. He is mightier than the thundering waters, and His word stands firm. His holiness is what makes His house eternally beautiful.

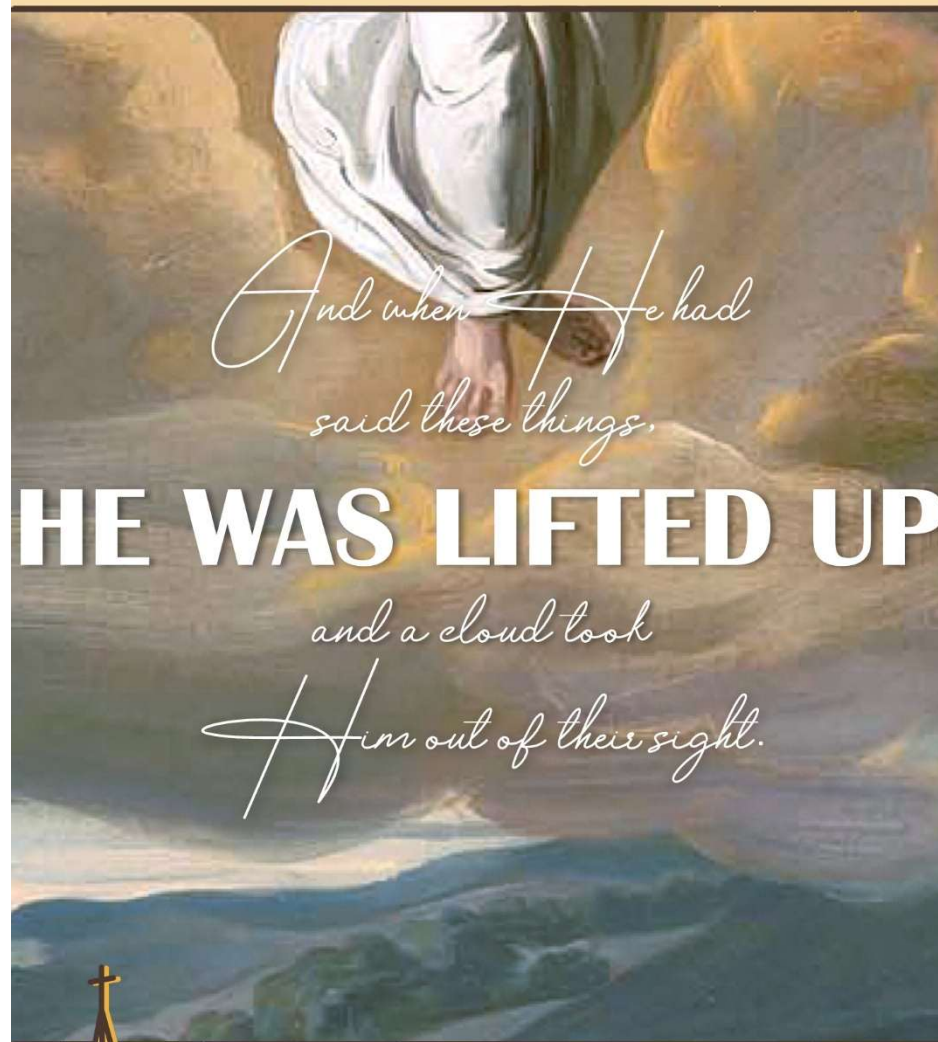
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Ascension Day (Observed)

May 17th, 2026

Liturgy: Ascension

Organist: Lana Strike



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✠ Opening Prayer ✠

Hymn: TLH #212:1-4, 7

“A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing”

The Invocation

Ac. 1:11; Ps. 47:5; Eph. 1:22-23

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?

C This same Jesus, who was taken from us into heaven, will return in the same way we saw Him go.



P God has gone up with a shout!

C The LORD with the sound of a trumpet!

P Our Lord Jesus Christ has ascended on high,

C And is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

P He is the Head of the body, the Church,

C And He fills all in all.

P Let us therefore worship our ascended Lord!

C With hearts full of joy and thanksgiving! Amen!

Confession of Our Sins

We come before God recognizing that we are sinful & need His forgiveness.

P Dearly beloved, let us approach Almighty God with humble hearts, confessing our sins and seeking His forgiveness for the sake of our ascended Lord Jesus Christ.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. We have not always lived in the light of Christ’s ascension, often forgetting His active reign and our calling to be His body on earth. Our focus has strayed to earthly concerns, and we have failed to witness boldly to His saving power. We have not perfectly loved You or our neighbor. For these sins, we are truly sorry and humbly repent. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ—His suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension—have mercy on us.

Congratulations to Amy Ruthenbeck and Verrick Stowe upon their graduation from 8th Grade at St. John’s Lutheran School!

St. John’s Fun Night – This Tuesday evening, the students of St. John’s will present a skit and some songs and will be hosting a walk-through art fair with an Amazon Rain Forest theme, featuring projects the students have made during the year. We also will have kindergarten graduation and plenty of snacks. If you are able, please come support our students and teachers! The fun begins at 6:00 pm.

Open House Invitation – The congregation is invited to a graduation open house for Daniel Ruthenbeck, Saturday, May 23, from 12-3:00 pm at the Ruthenbeck home.

Concluding Activities at Immanuel – Friday, May 22, will be the final day of classes at Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary. In giving the LORD God glory for the various achievements by students and student groups, Class Day will be held at 2:30 p.m. At 7:00 p.m., there will be a concert of sacred music sung by the Mass Choir and Tour Choir at Messiah Lutheran Church. On Saturday, May 23, there will be the concluding Graduation worship service at 10 a.m. at the ILC Fieldhouse.

The Branches – It’s time to renew or sign up for a July-June subscription to *The Branches*! Sign up any time before June 15, 2026. Subscriptions are \$16.00 per year for 4 issues. Pay by PayPal, Venmo, or check (email Sandy for PayPal option). Make paper checks payable to: “The Branches.” Contact: Sandy Hulke, Subscription Manager 29985 Norway Ave, Lindstrom, MN 55045, thebranchesmagazine@gmail.com.

Ushers	5/17	Trevor B, Tim Z, Josh E, Christian K, David R.
	5/24	Kendall B, Larry B.
	5/31	Phil S, Nathan V, Anthony F, Daniel R.
Cleaning	This Week – The Albrechts (wk. 3)	
	Up Next – The Eigenbergs	

witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." ⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."



The Ascension Is Good News

- I. Jesus' work here was done
- II. Jesus' work here had just begun

Response

TLH #223:1

☩ ♪ *We thank Thee, Jesus, dearest Friend,
That Thou didst into heav'n ascend.
O Blessed Savior, bid us live
And strength to soul and body give. Hallelujah!*

✠ **The Offering of Thankful Hearts** ✠

Hymn: TLH #221 "Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices"

✠ **The General Prayer & The Lord's Prayer** ✠

The Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

The blessing given by God for His people.

P The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you His peace.

☩ Amen!

Hymn: TLH #216 "On Christ's Ascension I Now Build"

P Upon this your confession, I, as a called servant of the Word, announce God's grace to you. Our ascended Lord Jesus Christ, now reigning at God's right hand, has accomplished full salvation for you. As He commanded before He ascended, forgiveness is proclaimed in His name. Because He is our active King and Intercessor, His pardon is freely given. Therefore, in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

☩ Amen!

The Introit

Ps. 110:1, 4-5; 47:5

P The LORD said to my Lord,

☩ "Sit at My right hand, 'Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

P The LORD has sworn And will not relent,

☩ "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

P The Lord is at Your right hand;

☩ He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath.

P God has gone up with a shout,

☩ The LORD with the sound of a trumpet.

The Gloria Patri

TLH #217:1

Latin for "Glory be to the Father."

☩ ♪ *Oh, sing with exultation, Sing to the Lord, rejoice,
And in His congregation Shout with triumphant voice.
For, lo, at God's right hand Is Christ in glory seated;
With death and hell defeated, As Victor doth command.*

Collect Prayer of the Day

A prayer to God that collects together the thoughts and theme of the day.

P Almighty God, as Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so may we also ascend in heart and mind and continually dwell there with Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

☩ Amen.



Luke 24:44-53

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 and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." ⁵⁰ And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵² And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God.

School Children's Song

"Christ Be My Leader"



Ephesians 1:15-23

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Confession of Faith

Col. 1:15-20

☩ "Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, for in Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and all things hold together in Him. He is also the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that in all things He might have the highest rank. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself (whether things on earth or in heaven) by making peace through the blood of His cross." Amen.

Choir

"This We Believe"

Hymn: WS #737

"Up Through Endless Ranks of Angels"

✠ The Sermon ✠



Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my