

Thursday 14th May 2026 - Ascension Day Benefice HC Gilling.

Today on Ascension Day we once hear again the great promise and commission of our Lord Jesus Christ. The promise is He will send His Holy Spirit to be with those who are His followers and the commission is for those followers to go out into the world to bring in the Kingdom.

At His Ascension Jesus promises that we will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon us, so that we can be his witnesses to the ends of the earth.

The *power* that Jesus is given in the Ascension is *shared* with us through the *promised* Holy Spirit to continue His mission.

The promise means that regardless of what is happening in our lives or in our world, when we witness and experience all the apparent “gaps” where people are struggling, we know that our ascended Lord is in control and has not abandoned us. He is seated at God’s right hand – far above all rule and authority – and intercedes for us. There may be times now when we wish He would do a little more now, but that is not ultimately up to us. Instead, we are invited to trust Him, even when we don’t understand His ways, even when we find it difficult to comprehend, we are invited to believe that God is in control, and we are called to fill in the gaps by bringing His love into those spaces.

My role as a hospital chaplain attracts many descriptive titles; one is “gap-filler”, because the role bridges many gaps in the encounters that take place – between suffering and comfort, between prayer and peace, between life and death. These are all “gaps” that chaplains, and all of us wherever we are, are invited into, to bring Gods love,

comfort and peace. In doing so the person receiving the ministry may look from their situation to somewhere else and step into that metaphorically and spiritually.

Tonight we had some words from our reading from the Book of Acts, seem to refer to these gaps. *“Two men in white robes ask the disciples, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?”* Their question suggests that there is somewhere else to be looking and not a question to be answered. Maybe it’s a call to fill a gap.

Look at the gaps in your life and our community today. For some there is a gap between the life we are living and the one we want to live, the person we are and the person we want to be. For most of us there is probably a gap between the world as it is today and the world, we want to give our children and grandchildren. Every wound, loss, and broken heart is a gap waiting to be filled. Injustice is a gap that is swallowing up lives. Hunger, poverty, homelessness, loneliness, racism, violence are gaps asking for our presence. Broken relationships are gaps asking for someone to step in.

What gaps do you see in your life and in our church and communities today? Some gaps are individual and personal; others are communal and shared. Who is falling through and getting lost in the gaps? What does stepping into the gap mean and look like for you today. What keeps you from stepping into the gap?

Whatever the gaps in our lives and community might be today, we have a choice to make, we can keep looking up toward heaven, to that which is unseen and intangible, or we can turn our eyes to our neighbour who is visible, reach out our hands to the circumstances that are tangible, step

into the gap, and do something and the Ascended Jesus promises His help and His grace will fill all the gaps through us if we let it.

The miracle of the Ascension brings joy to our hearts, because it reminds us of Jesus' power, His promise, and His presence among us. May our trust in these things bring joy to our hearts, purpose to our lives, and praise to our lips.

Thanks be to God. Amen.