

# Let your faith take flight with the Ascension

Spring is here, and with the ascension of Our Lord we set our sights skyward. After a long, difficult winter we reach for the sun, thaw out together and celebrate Christ's resurrection with the abiding joy of living the Christian life this Easter season and beyond. Alleluia!

## The Ascension

Christ's ascension is a source of great hope for Christians. In the Nicene Creed, we profess our belief in Jesus' ascension when we say, "He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father." When Jesus rose from the dead, he conquered sin and death; when he ascended into heaven, he began a new life with God in the world of the divine. The Ascension is a mystery of our faith. It is a reminder of the power of God, and it fills us with the hope that, one day, all believers will be welcomed into eternal life with Christ.

## Family Activity

### Go Fly a Kite

*"But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight." ~ Acts of the Apostles 1:8-9*

On a windy day, find an open space in your backyard, a nearby park, a field or an empty parking lot and fly kites together as a family. Inexpensive kites are the best choice if you have little ones, because crash landings are sure to be part of the process.

**Talk about it:** Why do so many churches have tall steeples?

What do you think about when you look up at the sky? Why do you think we traditionally talk about heaven as “up”?

## **Family Activity**

### **Feed the Birds**

*“Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they?” ~ Matthew 6:26*

Find or purchase a large, open pine cone. Tie a piece of string or ribbon on the top and knot tightly. Cover the pine cone with peanut butter (be sure to get in the grooves). Place birdseed on a plate and roll the pinecone carefully in the seed to cover it completely. Hang the feeder near a window so you can watch the different kinds of birds that come to eat.

**Talk about it:** Bird-watching is a perfect opportunity to talk with children about Easter. Be sure to make connections between the new life of Jesus’ resurrection and the new life we see in nature in the springtime. Search for a bird’s nest in your yard to see if there are eggs inside. (Only look, do not touch!) Or look up information about birds hatching online. Kids love baby animals. Talk about how different baby birds look from their parents – and how different kids look compared to when they were born!

## **Family Activity**

### **Blow Bubbles**

*“The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ~ John 3:8*

Making homemade bubbles gives kids the opportunity to mix the ingredients before they float away on the breeze. In a pie plate or other shallow dish, mix 1/2 cup dish soap, 1 cup

water and 2 teaspoons sugar.

Get creative with kitchen tools and you'll find that "bubble wands" abound:

- a slotted spoon
- funnels
- fly swatters
- 6-pack rings
- small colander

**Talk about it:** As you watch the bubbles float up and away, talk about how we believe in things that we cannot see, such as the power of love and forgiveness. Give thanks to God for the gift of the Holy Spirit: "Thank you God for the gift of your son, Jesus, and for sending us your Spirit. Help us to follow you no matter where the wind blows, each and every day. Amen."