

GRAND FINALE! - Even though we often take it for granted, it is probably good every once-in-awhile to stop for a second and realize just what an amazing thing the internet really is – which happens, of course, whenever we have a “computer glitch” of some kind and it seems like forever before we are “connected” again! And, one especially amazing feature of the internet is what we now commonly know as “Cloud” technology:

- Everything is accessible, everywhere, all the time, “backed up” --- it is real, but unseen!
- All the resources are available allowing users to be “fully functional”

As we celebrate today the Feast of the Ascension, it seems rather fitting that we hear Jesus being described and experienced as “in the cloud” --- way ahead of his time! It is interesting that, in Matthew’s Gospel, the 1st and only time the disciples encounter the Risen Jesus they do not immediately & confidently understand

- or recognize him as the women did
- where it might lead them
- what it might look like
- how it will turn out
- By “going Cloud”, Jesus kind of “forces them” to take next steps! He is accessible, everywhere, all the time, in real time even though unseen, providing all the resources and “back up” they/we need to be fully functional as his disciples --- but, functional for what? --

they are challenged to pursue the relationship

- they are still commissioned to do 3 things:
- Make disciples--- invite to personal (not “force”)
- Baptize them --- initiate, welcome (make connections)
- Teach them --- inform, empower (not lecturing, but sharing)

Basically, as Jesus ascends to the Father, he steps a bit to the side so that they can become what they are capable of!

Even with all of the benefits that the internet provides (ZOOM technology, private anytime-anywhere shopping, personalized music playlists...) a lot of folks can sometimes feel a bit isolated or disconnected. But, maybe there is an opportunity here – to help folks experience spiritual connection --- in two great ways: small groups and in-person worship!

This weekend we begin a kind of “grand finale” of feasts – continuing over the next three weekends with the Feasts of Pentecost (officially concluding the Season of Easter), the Holy Trinity and the Body and Blood of Christ. Especially when living through challenging times like ours, what a great series of celebrations to lift up our hearts and inspire our spirits!

With today’s Feast of the Ascension, we celebrate that Jesus has gone “up” --- but not absent; he’s “gone Cloud”, so that we can now “go out” on mission --- to invite, to initiate/welcome, to inform/share --- in his name!