Acts 1:6-14

6 So when they had come together,
they asked him,
'Lord, is this the time
when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?'

7 He replied,
'It is not for you to know
the times or periods
that the Father has set
by his own authority.

8 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.'

9 When he had said this,
as they were watching,
he was lifted up,
and a cloud took him
out of their sight.

10 While he was going
and they were gazing up
towards heaven,
suddenly two men in white robes
stood by them.

11 They said,
'Men of Galilee,
why do you stand looking up
towards 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.'

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem
from the mount called Olivet,
which is near Jerusalem,
a sabbath day's journey away.

13 When they had entered the city,
they went to the room upstairs
where they were staying,
Peter, and John, and James,
and Andrew, Philip and Thomas,
Bartholomew and Matthew,
James son of Alphaeus,
and Simon the Zealot,
and Judas son of James.

14 All these
were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with
certain women,
including Mary the mother of Jesus,
as well as his brothers.

John 17:1-11

After Jesus had spoken these words,
he looked up to heaven and said,

'Father, the hour has come;
glorify your Son
so that the Son may glorify you,

[2]since you have given him authority over all people,
to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

[3]And this is eternal life,
that they may know you,
the only true God,
and Jesus Christ
whom you have sent.

[4]I glorified you on earth
by finishing the work
that you gave me to do.

[5]So now, Father,
glorify me in your own presence
with the glory that I had
in your presence
before the world existed.

6 'I have made your name known
to those whom you gave me
from the world.

They were yours,
and you gave them to me,
and they have kept your word.

[7]Now they know that everything
you have given me
is from you;

[8]for the words that you gave to me
I have given to them,
and they have received them
and know in truth
that I came from you;
and they have believed
that you sent me.

[9]I am asking on their behalf;
I am not asking on behalf of the world,
but on behalf of those whom you gave me,
because they are yours.

[10]All mine are yours,
and yours are mine;
and I have been glorified in them.

[11]And now I am no longer in the world,
but they are in the world,
and I am coming to you.

Holy Father, protect them in your name
that you have given me,
so that they may be one, as we are one.

Reading from The Acts of the Apostles This Week

This last Sunday of Easter season returns to Acts 1
How do we get from a few demoralized disciples,
and a couple of private resurrection appearances,
to an early church across the 'known world'?

What were they waiting for? What are we waiting for?
v6 proposes 'restoration' of a kingdom to Israel
v7 sidesteps – not for you to know the times God set
what would 'restoration' mean for them, or for us?

Instead: you will receive power, Holy Spirit upon you
you become witnesses, *martyres*, the big Acts theme
overture to the book: 1-7 Jerusalem, 8-11 Judea-Samaria,
ends of the earth 13-28 – echoing Luke 24:47

Jesus gives instructions, then floats up into a cloud
(Remember Elijah 'taken up'? The baptism of Jesus?)
they stand looking up, till '2 men in white robes' speak
and redirect them where to look for Jesus next

The reading ends with a list of 11 disciples
(Judas Iscariot having committed suicide)
You could compare the list with the gospels
and wrestle a traditional compromise

Don't miss 'and certain women',
including Mary the mother of Jesus,
'and his brothers' *adelphois* - biological ones?
Who's 'in the room', 'with a voice'?

Reading from the Fourth Gospel This Week

We complete Easter still in John's upper room speeches
Jesus has been addressing disciples from c.15 –
now addresses God in a prayer form

Words are put in Jesus' mouth –
asking for himself, and for his followers
glory *doxa* knowing *ginosko*

Is glory, praise, honour about ego, pride?
Is knowing about cognition, or owning intimately
(Luke 1 has Mary use it to angel, 'I have not known…')

What's the glory you claim for Jesus, and church?
What's the knowing you seek for us?
what versions would you resist?

This is more Johannine circular prose,
resisting spiritual, occult, esoteric, elitist versions
17:2 people is *sarx,* flesh

UCC people read the closing line,
"that they may be one, as we are one"
ut omnes unum sint as colonial imperialism
modified by Mohawk 'all our relations'

Like Acts' ascension,
John is transitioning Jesus' job to ours
as he stands in a different relation to us here and now
the Orthodox version, Christ Pantocrator