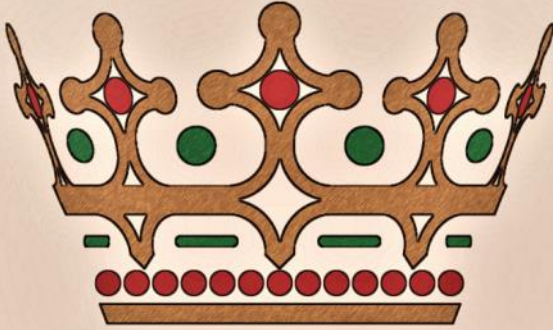




Ascension PCA

August 2, 2020



ESTHER

A community of worshipping, maturing,
and multiplying disciples of Jesus Christ,
to the glory of God the Father,
by the power of His Spirit,
and in the hope of God's Kingdom.

A word about our liturgy

The elements and sequence that make up our worship service (the liturgy) is the way we tell ourselves, one another, and all in this place, the grand story of the Triune God: the story of God pursuing a people despite their wanderings and forgetfulness, and shaping them into His people for His glory.



QUIETING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

*Jesus, Thy boundless love to me
no thought can reach, no tongue declare;
O knit my thankful heart to Thee,
and reign without a rival there:
Thine wholly, Thine alone I am:
be Thou alone my constant flame.*

~ Paul Gerhardt

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP

*We gather at the invitation of God through His Word.
He speaks first, revealing Himself to us,
and we respond with one voice in joy and thanksgiving!*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 6:1-3, Revelation 15:3-4

M: In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the LORD
sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up;
and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Above Him stood the seraphim.

Each had six wings:

with two he covered his face,
and with two he covered his feet,
and with two he flew.

And one called to another and said,

*"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
the whole earth is full of His glory!"*

**P: Great and amazing are Your deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are Your ways,
O King of the nations!
Who will not fear, O Lord,
and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship You,
for Your righteous acts have been revealed.**

PRAYER OF ADORATION

SONGS OF PRAISE

Glorious and Mighty

**Majesty, Your glory is shining
Brighter than the moon and the stars.
Marveling, we honor and fear You
above all gods.**

***Glorious and mighty,
You're awesome in beauty,
Joyful songs we raise!
Glorious and mighty,
You're awesome in beauty,
Greatly to be praised!***

**Majesty, You fashioned the heavens;
Your decrees can never be changed.
Over all the plans of the nations,
Your judgments reign.**

***Glorious and mighty,
You're awesome in beauty,
Joyful songs we raise!
Glorious and mighty,
You're awesome in beauty,
Greatly to be praised!***

**Majesty, we'll sing with creation;
When You come again in the clouds.
Every knee will bow down and worship
the one true God.**

***Glorious and mighty,
You're awesome in beauty,
Joyful songs we raise!
Glorious and mighty,
You're awesome in beauty,
Greatly to be praised!***

Words by Bob Kauflin, Joel Szczebel, Todd Twining
Music by Joel Szczebel, Todd Twining
© 2008 Sovereign Grace Praise

Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies

**Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night;
Dayspring from on high, be near;
Daystar, in my heart appear.**

**Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return
Till Thy mercy's beams I see;
Till Thy inward light impart,
Glad my eyes, and warm my heart.**

**Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
Fill me, Radiance divine,
Scatter all my unbelief;
More and more Thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.
More and more Thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.**

Words by Charles Wesley (1740);
Music by Luke Morton (2012)
Music: © 2012 Walk Out of the Grave Music

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING

1 John 3:11–24

Love One Another

¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers,

that the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.

¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

¹⁹ By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; ²⁰ for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. ²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

²² and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³ And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴ Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him.

And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

GOD CLEANSSES US

We gather each week as sinners in constant need of His mercy. The corporate confession of sin acknowledges this and invites honest expression before God. However, God isn't silent as we cry out to Him — He assures us that His grace is bigger than our sin. God's forgiveness is for all those who humble themselves before Him in Christ Jesus.

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

P: Merciful God,

**You made us in Your image,
with a mind to know You,
a heart to love You and others,
and a will to serve You.**

**But we confess to You,
that our knowledge is imperfect,
our love is inconsistent,
and our obedience is incomplete.**

**In Your tender and patient love,
Forgive us through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.**

~ Please use this time for silent confession.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

Romans 8:35, 38–39

**M: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
For I am convinced that neither death nor life,
neither angels nor demons, neither the present
nor the future, nor any powers, neither height
nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

SONG OF ASSURANCE

He Will Hold Me Fast

**When I fear my faith will fail,
Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail,
He will hold me fast.**

**I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path;
For my love is often cold;
He must hold me fast.**

*He will hold me fast,
He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so,
He will hold me fast.*

**Those He saves are His delight,
Christ will hold me fast;
Precious in His holy sight,
He will hold me fast.**

**He'll not let my soul be lost;
His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost,
He will hold me fast.**

*He will hold me fast,
He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so,
He will hold me fast.*

**For my life He bled and died,
Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied,
He will hold me fast.**

**Raised with Him to endless life;
He will hold me fast;
'Till our faith is turned to sight,
When He comes at last!**

...

***He will hold me fast,
He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so,
He will hold me fast.***

***He will hold me fast,
He will hold me fast;
For my Savior loves me so,
He will hold me fast.***

Lyrics vv. 1-2 by Ada Habershon (1861-1918) PUBLIC DOMAIN

Alt words vv.1-2, lyrics v.3, and music by Matt Merker

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GOD SPEAKS TO US

The Holy Spirit makes the reading and preaching of God's Word a crucial means of growing and comforting God's people and awakening people to new faith in Jesus.

PASTORAL PRAYER

READING OF THE WORD

Esther 5:1 – 6:14

Esther Prepares a Banquet

¹ On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters, while the king was sitting on his royal throne inside the throne room opposite the entrance to the palace. ² And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

³ And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom." ⁴ And Esther said, "If it please the king, let the king and Haman come today to a feast that I have prepared for the king."

⁵ Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, so that we may do as Esther has asked." So the king and Haman came to the feast that Esther had prepared.

⁶ And as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king said to Esther, "What is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled."

⁷ Then Esther answered, "My wish and my request is:

⁸ If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my wish and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come to the feast that I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said."

Haman Plans to Hang Mordecai

⁹ And Haman went out that day joyful and glad of heart. But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he neither rose nor trembled before him, he was filled with wrath against Mordecai. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home, and he sent and brought his friends and his wife Zeresh.

¹¹ And Haman recounted to them the splendor of his riches, the number of his sons, all the promotions with which the king had honored him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and the servants of the king. ¹² Then Haman said, "Even Queen Esther let no one but me come with the king to the feast she prepared. And tomorrow also I am invited by her together with the king. ¹³ Yet all this is worth nothing to me, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

¹⁴ Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Let a gallows fifty cubits high be made, and in the morning tell the king to have Mordecai hanged upon it. Then go joyfully with the king to the feast." This idea pleased Haman, and he had the gallows made.

The King Honors Mordecai

¹ On that night the king could not sleep. And he gave orders to bring the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

² And it was found written how Mordecai had told about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, and who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ³ And the king said, "What honor or distinction has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" The king's young men who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."

⁴ And the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about having Mordecai hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

⁵ And the king's young men told him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."

⁶ So Haman came in, and the king said to him, "What should be done to the man whom the king delights to honor?" And Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?" ⁷ And Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honor, ⁸ let royal robes be brought, which the king has worn, and the horse that the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown is set. ⁹ And let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble officials. Let them dress the man whom the king delights to honor, and let them lead him on the horse through the square of the city, proclaiming before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.'"

¹⁰ Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry; take the robes and the horse, as you have said, and do so to Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate. Leave out nothing that you have mentioned."

¹¹ So Haman took the robes and the horse, and he dressed Mordecai and led him through the square of the city, proclaiming before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor."

¹² Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered. ¹³ And Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of the Jewish people, you will not overcome him but will surely fall before him."

Esther Reveals Haman's Plot

¹⁴ While they were yet talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried to bring Haman to the feast that Esther had prepared.

GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father,
And to the Son,
And to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning,
Is now and ever shall be,
World without end.
Amen, Amen.**

PREACHING OF THE WORD

"A Series of Fortunate Events"

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

SONG OF RESPONSE

O Love that Will Not Let Me Go

**O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.**

**O Light that follow'st all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.**

**O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.**

Words by George Matheson (1882). Music by Christopher Miner (1997)
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GOD COMMUNES WITH US

The Lord's Supper is a meal for the family of God, given by Jesus the night before His death to be celebrated until His return. It points back to the cross, forward to the return of King, and spiritually nourishes us for today as we eat and drink in faith.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

CONFESSING OUR FAITH

P: We shall do as our Lord commands.

**We proclaim that our Lord Jesus
was sent by the Father into the world,
that He took upon himself our flesh and blood,
and bore the wrath of God against our sin.**

**We confess that He was condemned to die
that we might be pardoned,
and suffered death
that we might live.**

**We proclaim that He is risen
to make us right with God
and that He shall come again
in the glory of His new creation.**

This we do now and until He comes again.

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

PRAYER/MEDITATION

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.**

BENEDICTION



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ASCENSION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ASCENSION-PCA.ORG

9:00AM: Worship Service (livestream)

10:30AM: Worship Service (outdoors at ECOG)

Meeting Address:

8224 220th Street SW, Edmonds, WA 98026

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 838, Lynnwood, WA 98046

APC Office:

Mon & Wed & Fri (9:00AM–5:00PM)

(425) 286-8617

office@ascension-pca.org

STAFF & LEADERSHIP

PASTOR:

Rev. Nate Hitchcock *nate@ascension-pca.org*

ASSISTANT PASTOR:

Rev. Edward Volz *ed@ascension-pca.org*

PASTORAL INTERN:

Austin Clement *clement.austin@gmail.com*

OFFICE MANAGER:

Rina Kroes *office@ascension-pca.org*

ELDERS:

Brett Chase *brett@ascension-pca.org*

Bob Miller *bob@ascension-pca.org*

Bo Stocklin *bostocklin@ascension-pca.org*

Chris Sledge *chris@ascension-pca.org*

DEACONS:

Philip Barrow *philip@ascension-pca.org*

Peter Contreras *peter@ascension-pca.org*

Fred Wilson *fred@ascension-pca.org*

Charlie Stanley *charlie@ascension-pca.org*

Kyle Bartlett *kyle@ascension-pca.org*

MUSIC DIRECTOR:

Leandra Howell *leandra.m.howell@gmail.com*

HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR:

Monica Sledge *cmkesledge@gmail.com*

MEAL COORDINATOR:

Sheila Bloedow *s.bloedow@comcast.net*

NURSERY COORDINATOR:

Diane Miller *drsm40@gmail.com*

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Please make sure that checks are made out to
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