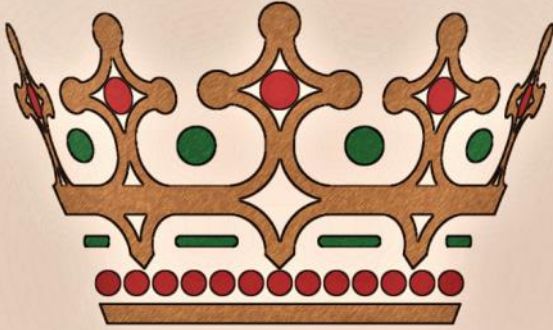




Ascension PCA

September 6, 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

Remembering God's past grace is necessary to fuel our faith in God's future grace for us. This makes the memory one of God's most profound, mysterious, and merciful gifts granted to us. God designed it to be a means of preserving (persevering) grace for His people. We neglect it at our own peril.

~ Jon Bloom

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

Psalm 77:11-14

**P: I will remember the deeds of the LORD;
yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.
I will ponder all Your work,
and meditate on Your mighty deeds.
Your way, O God, is holy.
What god is great like our God?
You are the God who works wonders;
You have made known Your might
among the peoples.**

PRAYER OF ADORATION

SONGS OF PRAISE

Only a Holy God

**Who else commands all the hosts of heaven?
Who else could make every king bow down?
Who else can whisper and darkness trembles?
Only a Holy God.**

**What other beauty demands such praises?
What other splendor outshines the sun?
What other majesty rules with justice?
Only a Holy God.**

***Come and behold Him,
The One and the Only.
Cry out, sing holy,
Forever a Holy God.
Come and worship the Holy God.***

**What other glory consumes like fire?
What other power can raise the dead?
What other name remains undefeated?
Only a Holy God.**

***Come and behold Him,
The One and the Only.
Cry out, sing holy,
Forever a Holy God.
Come and worship the Holy God.***

**Who else could rescue me from my failing?
Who else would offer His only Son?
Who else invites me to call Him Father?
Only a Holy God,
Only my Holy God!**

***Come and behold Him,
The One and the Only.
Cry out, sing holy,
Forever a Holy God.
Come and worship the Holy God.***

***Come and behold Him,
The One and the Only.
Cry out, sing holy,
Forever a Holy God.
Come and worship the Holy God.
Come and worship the Holy God.***

Words and music by Dustin R. Smith, Jonny Robinson, Michael Farren, Rich Thompson.
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and CityAlight Music

I Sing the Mighty Power of God

**I sing the mighty power of God,
That made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad,
And built the lofty skies.**

**I sing the wisdom that ordained
The sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at His command,
And all the stars obey.**

**I sing the goodness of the Lord,
That filled the earth with food;
He formed the creatures with His Word
And then pronounced them good.**

**Lord, how Your wonders are displayed
Where'er I turn my eye:
If I survey the ground I tread
Or gaze upon the sky!**

**There's not a plant or flower below
But makes Your glories known,
And clouds arise and tempests blow,
By order from Your throne.**

**While all that borrows life from You
Is ever in Your care,
And everywhere that man can be,
You, God, are present there.**

Words by Isaac Watts (1714; Mod.).
Music by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1906)
PUBLIC DOMAIN

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING

1 John 5:6-20

⁶ This is he who came by water and blood — Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. ⁹ If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. ¹⁰ Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

¹⁶ If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life — to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. ¹⁷ All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.

¹⁸ We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

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: God of all grace, we are weak and forgetful people, easily distracted by the joys and sorrows of our lives.

We are capable of great thoughts concerning You in one moment, yet we forget Your kindness and love as though we had no hope in the next. Forgive us, Father.

Jesus, thank You for clinging to us, even though we so often let go of You. You held fast in Your living, dying, and rising, always obeying Your Father and setting Your face toward the hill of sacrifice. You never forgot Your mission or resisted Your calling, but faithfully lived and died in our place. And though we may be quick to forget You and need reminding often, You never forget us. Instead, You intercede for us daily before Your Father and You are preparing a place for us!

Holy Spirit, make Jesus our greatest hope and all our glory.

May His resurrection assure us that His obedience was perfect, His sacrifice accepted, and His work finished.

Deepen our faith and guard our hearts.

~ Please use this time for silent confession.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

Hebrews 8:12

M: ...I will be merciful toward their iniquities,
and I will remember their sins no more.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

How Deep the Father's Love For Us

**How deep the Father's love for us;
How vast beyond all measure,
That He would give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure.**

**How great the pain of searing loss;
The Father turns His face away,
As wounds which mar the chosen One
Bring many sons to glory.**

**Behold the Man upon a cross;
My guilt upon His shoulders.
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.**

**It was my sin that held Him there,
Until it was accomplished.
His dying breath has brought me life,
I know that it is finished.**

**I will not boast in anything:
No gifts, no power, no wisdom.
But I will boast in Jesus Christ,
His death and resurrection.**

**Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer.
But this I know with all my heart,
His wounds have paid my ransom.**

**Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer.
But this I know with all my heart,
His wounds have paid my ransom.**

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 9:20 – 10:3

²⁰ And Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, ²¹ obliging them to keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same, year by year, ²² as the days on which the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

²³ So the Jews accepted what they had started to do, and what Mordecai had written to them. ²⁴ For Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur (that is, cast lots), to crush and to destroy them. ²⁵ But when it came before the king, he gave orders in writing that his evil plan that he had devised against the Jews should return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. ²⁶ Therefore they called these days Purim, after the term Pur. Therefore, because of all that was written in this letter, and of what they had faced in this matter, and of what had happened to them, ²⁷ the Jews firmly obligated themselves and their offspring and all who joined them, that without fail they would keep these two days according to what was written and at the time appointed every year, ²⁸ that these

days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, in every clan, province, and city, and that these days of Purim should never fall into disuse among the Jews, nor should the commemoration of these days cease among their descendants.

²⁹ Then Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew gave full written authority, confirming this second letter about Purim. ³⁰ Letters were sent to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, in words of peace and truth, ³¹ that these days of Purim should be observed at their appointed seasons, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther obligated them, and as they had obligated themselves and their offspring, with regard to their fasts and their lamenting. ³² The command of Esther confirmed these practices of Purim, and it was recorded in writing.

¹ King Ahasuerus imposed tax on the land and on the coastlands of the sea. ² And all the acts of his power and might, and the full account of the high honor of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? ³ For Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Ahasuerus, and he was great among the Jews and popular with the multitude of his brothers, for he sought the welfare of his people and spoke peace to all his people.

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

"Remembering Redemption"

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

SONG OF RESPONSE

Come, People of the Risen King

**Come, people of the risen King,
Who delight to bring Him praise.
Come, all and tune your hearts to sing
To the Morning Star of grace.**

**From the shifting shadows of the earth
We will lift our eyes to Him,
Where steady arms of mercy reach
To gather children in.**

***Rejoice, Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!***

**Come, those whose joy is morning sun,
And those weeping through the night.
Come, those who tell of battles won,
And those struggling in the fight.
For His perfect love will never change,
And His mercies never cease,
But follow us through all our days
With the certain hope of peace.**

***Rejoice, Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!***

**Come, young and old from every land,
Men and women of the faith.**

**Come, those with full or empty hands,
Find the riches of His grace.**

**Over all the world, His people sing,
Shore to shore we hear them call
The Truth that cries through every age:
Our God is all in all!**

***Rejoice, Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!***

***Rejoice, Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!***

Words and music by Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty & Stuart Townend
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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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

CONFESSING OUR FAITH

from the Belgic Confession, art. 18

P: We profess that God fulfilled the promise that He had made to the early fathers by the mouth of His holy prophets when He sent His only and eternal Son into the world at the time set by Him.

**The Son took the “form of a servant”
and was made in the “likeness of man,”
truly assuming a real human nature,
with all its weaknesses, except for sin;
being conceived in the womb
of the blessed virgin Mary
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
without male participation.**

**And He not only assumed human nature
as far as the body is concerned
but also a real human soul,
in order that He might be a real human being.
For since the soul had been lost
as well as the body,
He had to assume them both
to save them both together.
In this way He is truly our Immanuel —
that is: “God with us.”**

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

PRAYER/MEDITATION

BENEDICTION



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ASCENSION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ASCENSION-PCA.ORG

9:00AM: Worship Service (livestream)

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

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and that any automatic payments are being sent
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