



Ascension PCA

November 29, 2020



**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

On this side of eternity, Christmas is still a promise.
Yes, the Savior has come,
and with Him peace on earth,
but the story is not finished.
Yes, there is peace in our hearts,
but we long for peace in our world.
Every Christmas is still a “turning of the page”
until Jesus returns.
Every December 25 marks another year
that draws us closer to the fulfillment of the ages,
that draws us closer to ... home.
Christmas is an invitation to a celebration
yet to happen.
If you’ve got Christmas longing,
you’re about to be satisfied...
just hold on and say with me...
Maranatha! Come Lord!

~ Joni Eareckson Tada

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 66:1-4

M: Shout for joy to God, all the earth!
Sing the glory of His name;
make His praise glorious!
Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds!
So great is Your power
that Your enemies cringe before You.

**P: "All the earth bows down to You;
they sing praise to You,
they sing the praises of Your name."**

PRAYER OF ADORATION

M: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the LORD.

M: Let us give thanks to the LORD our God.

**P: It is truly right for us to offer our praise to You,
LORD God Almighty.
You have created this world and rule over it
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
You have made us in Your image
and freed us from slavery to the power of sin.
You claimed us as Your people
and made a covenant with us,
first with Israel and then with all who called
on the name of Jesus Christ.**

...

Therefore, we praise You and join the heavenly hosts in singing to the glory of Your name:

“Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of Your glory.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD.

Hosanna in the highest!”

SONGS OF 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, Radiancy 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

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Thou Wisdom, from on high,
And order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And cause us in her ways to go.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Latin Hymn (1710), translated by John Mason Neale (1851).

Music: Plainsong (13th century)

PUBLIC DOMAIN

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT READINGS

Isaiah 2:1-5

- ¹ The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
- ² It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,
- ³ and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
- ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.
- ⁵ O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Romans 13:11-12

- ¹¹ Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.
- ¹² The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

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: Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open
and all desires known,
and before Whom no secrets are hidden
and every private wish known
as if it were spoken aloud...
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the power and grace of Your Holy Spirit,
so that we may perfectly love You
and worthily magnify Your holy Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

In these moments, we confess our personal sins to God so that we may take hold of the forgiveness won for us by Christ, our Redeemer.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

from Ephesians 1

M: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will — to the praise of His glorious grace which He has freely given us in the One He loves.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

Canticle of the Turning

**My soul cries out
with a joyful shout
That the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings
of the wondrous things
That You bring to the ones who wait.**

**You fixed your sight
on Your servant's plight,
And my weakness You did not spurn,
So from east to west
shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?**

***My heart shall sing of the day You bring.
Let the fires of Your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn!***

**Though I am small,
my God, my all,
You work great things in me,
And Your mercy will last
from the depths of the past
To the end of the age to be.**

**Your very name
puts the proud to shame,
And to those who would for You yearn,
You will show your might,
put the strong to flight,
For the world is about to turn.**

***My heart shall sing of the day You bring.
Let the fires of Your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn!***

**Though the nations rage
from age to age,
We remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must
deliver us
From the conqueror's crushing grasp.**

**This saving word
that our forebears heard
Is the promise which holds us bound,
'Til the spear and rod
can be crushed by God,
Who is turning the world around.**

***My heart shall sing of the day You bring.
Let the fires of Your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn!***

***My heart shall sing of the day You bring.
Let the fires of Your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn!***

Words by Rory Cooney (1990) from the *Magnificat*, Luke 1:46–55, UBP
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Music by Nathan Partain (2002), UBP

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.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READING OF THE WORD

Ruth 1:1-7

¹ In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. ² The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.

³ But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ⁴ These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, ⁵ and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

⁶ Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited His people and given them food. ⁷ So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

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

"The Greener Grass Conspiracy"

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

SONG OF RESPONSE

Now Thank We All Our God

**Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done,
in whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.**

**O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
To keep us in His grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
of this world in the next.**

**All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
The Son and Spirit blest,
who reign in highest heaven
The one eternal God,
whom heaven and earth adore;
For thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.**

German text by Martin Rinckart (1636); translated by Catherine Winkworth (1858, alt.)
Music by Johann Crüger (1647)
PUBLIC DOMAIN

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

Pastor Ed Volz

CONFESSING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

Titus 3:3-7, Romans 8:1

**P: At one time we too were foolish,
disobedient, deceived, and enslaved
by all kinds of passions and pleasures.
We lived in malice and envy,
being hated and hating one another.**

**But when the kindness and love
of God our Savior appeared,
He saved us,
not because of righteous things we had done,
but because of His mercy.**

**He saved us through the washing of rebirth
and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
whom He poured out on us generously
through Jesus Christ our Savior,
so that, having been justified by His grace,
we might become heirs
having the hope of eternal life.**

**There is therefore no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Please come forward to receive the elements at the table, then return to your seats. Please HOLD elements until we can all partake TOGETHER.

SONG OF MEDITATION

How Sweet and Awesome is the Place

**How sweet and awesome is the place
with Christ within the doors,
While everlasting love displays
the choicest of her stores.**

**While all our hearts and all our songs
join to admire the feast,
Each of us cries, with thankful tongue,
“Lord, why was I a guest?”**

**“Why was I made to hear Your voice,
and enter while there’s room,
When thousands make a wretched choice,
and rather starve than come?”**

**‘Twas the same love that spread the feast
that sweetly drew us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
and perished in our sin.**

**Pity the nations, O our God,
constrain the earth to come;
Send Your victorious Word abroad,
and bring the strangers home.**

**We long to see Your whole church full,
that all the chosen race
May, with one voice and heart and soul,
sing Your redeeming grace.**

Words by Isaac Watts (1707; Alt. 1961, 1990, mod.)
Old Irish hymn melody (alt. 1990)
PUBLIC DOMAIN

GOD SENDS US

*We end by receiving God's promises to us as His people.
He will be with us as we serve Him in this world,
to the end of all time.*

BENEDICTION

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.**

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ASCENSION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ASCENSION-PCA.ORG

**9:30AM: Worship Service
(in-person & livestream)**

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*

A NOTE ABOUT GIVING

Please make sure that checks are made out to
Ascension Presbyterian Church
and that any automatic payments are being sent
to the **P.O. Box mailing address** listed.