



Ascension PCA

November 28, 2021



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

*And Mary said,
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant.
For behold, from now on all generations
will call me blessed;
for He who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is His name*

Luke 1:46–49

The only people whose soul can truly magnify the Lord are people like Elizabeth and Mary — people who acknowledge their lowly estate and are overwhelmed by the condescension of the magnificent God.

~ John Piper

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 18:1–3, 31,32

P: I love you, O LORD, my strength.

**The LORD is my rock and my fortress
and my deliverer,
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold.**

**I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.**

For who is God, but the LORD?

**And who is a rock, except our God? —
the God who equipped me with strength
and made my way blameless.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

SONGS OF PRAISE

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

**Come, ye thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
All is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin.
God our Maker doth provide
for our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.**

**All the world is God's own field,
fruit unto His praise to yield;
Wheat and tares together sown
unto joy or sorrow grown.
First the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear;
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.**

**Even so, Lord, quickly come,
bring Thy final harvest home;
Gather Thou Thy people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
There, forever purified,
in Thy presence to abide;
Come, with all Thine angels come,
raise the glorious harvest home.**

Words by Henry Alford (1844, 1867). Music by George J. Elvey (1859).
PUBLIC DOMAIN

The God of Abra'm Praise

**The God of Abra'm praise,
Who reigns enthroned above;
Ancient of Everlasting Days
and God of love.**

Jehovah, great I AM!

**By earth and heav'n confessed;
I bow and bless the sacred Name
forever blest.**

**The God of Abra'm praise,
at whose supreme command
From earth I rise and seek the joys
at His right hand.**

**I all on earth forsake,
its wisdom, fame and pow'r;
And Him my only portion make,
my shield and tow'r.**

**He by Himself hath sworn;
I on this oath depend.
I shall on eagles' wings upborne,
to heaven ascend.
I shall behold His face;
I shall His pow'r adore,
And sing the wonders of His grace,
forevermore.**

**The whole triumphant host
give thanks to God on high:
"Hail, Father, Son and Holy Ghost!"
they ever cry.**

**Hail, Abra'm's God and mine!
I join the heav'nly lays;
All might and majesty are Thine
and endless praise.**

Words by Thomas Olivers (1770). Music by Nathan Partain (2003)
Words: PUBLIC DOMAIN. Music: ©2003 Partain, Nathan

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT READINGS

Isaiah 7:10–14 / Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁰ Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the LORD Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

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

based on Psalm 15

M: LORD, who may dwell in Your sanctuary?
Who may live on Your holy hill?

**P: He whose walk is blameless
and who does what is righteous,
who speaks the truth from his heart
and has no slander on his tongue,
who does his neighbor no wrong
and casts no slur on his fellowman,
who despises a vile man
but honors those who fear the LORD,
who keeps his oath even when it hurts,
who lends his money without usury
and does not accept a bribe against the innocent.**

M: He who does these things will never be shaken.

**P: O LORD, have mercy on us!
We have lied and slandered,
we have harmed our neighbors
and cast slurs on other men,
we have honored the vile,
we have sought comfort before integrity,
we have withheld riches from the needy
and withheld justice from the innocent.
We are not blameless
and we cannot dwell with You
unless You have mercy on us.**

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

Psalm 103:11–12

M: For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is His steadfast love
toward those who fear Him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far does He remove our transgressions from us.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

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.***

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

1 John 4:7–21

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in Him, and He in God.

¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

¹⁹ We love because He first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

SONG OF RESPONSE

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

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

adapted from Philippians 2

M: What encouragement do you have
from being united with Christ?
What comfort from His love
and what fellowship with His Spirit?
What tenderness and compassion
have you known from Him?

**P: That Christ, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be grasped,
but made Himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
He humbled himself
and became obedient to death —
even death on a cross!**

...

**Therefore God exalted Him
to the highest place
and gave Him the name
that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth
and under the earth,
and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

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

Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed

**Alas, and did my Savior bleed,
and did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
for such a worm as I?**

**Was it for sins that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!
and love beyond degree!**

*My God, why would You shed Your blood
So pure and undefiled,
To make a sinful one like me
Your chosen precious child?*

**Well might the sun in darkness hide,
and shut His glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died,
for man, the creature's, sin.**

...

**Thus might I hide my blushing face
while His dear cross appears;
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
and melt my eyes to tears.**

***My God, why would You shed Your blood
So pure and undefiled,
To make a sinful one like me
Your chosen precious child?***

Words by Isaac Watts (1707); additional words and music by Bob Kauflin (1997)
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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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Scripture text from

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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 *volz.edw@gmail.com*

PASTORAL INTERNS:

Austin Clement *clement.austin@gmail.com*

Philip Suh *philipsuh@outlook.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*

Theo Vander Wel *theo@ascension-pca.org*

DEACONS:

Peter Contreras *peter@ascension-pca.org*

Fred Wilson *fred@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:

Rebecca Wheeler *dieseltheboxer@hotmail.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.