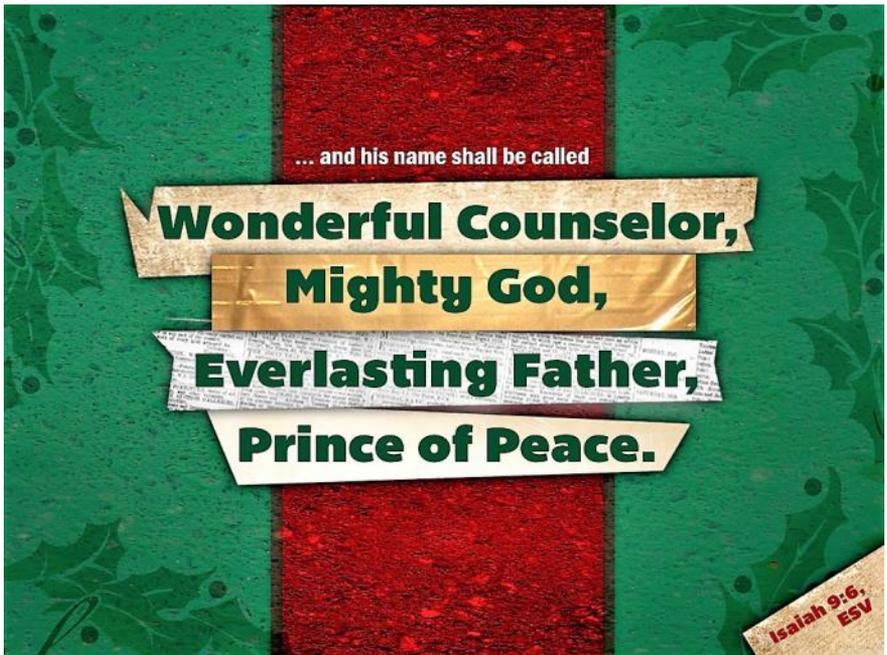




Ascension PCA

December 4, 2022



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.

WELCOME TO ASCENSION!

Thank you for joining us for worship today.

**We are delighted that you are here,
especially if this is your first time with us.**

Connect with One Another:

We would love to know that you were here this morning and encourage you to fill in a *Connect Card* so that we can follow up with you, answer your questions, or pray for you. Our practice of wearing *Name Tags* is to make you feel more comfortable among us, help you to identify staff and leadership, and make it easier for you to connect with us. See our back page for contact information. We heartily invite you to join us for *refreshments* and conversation after the service.

To Parents of Young Children:

If you would like to utilize it, we have a staffed *Nursery* for children through age 3 across the hall. We encourage younger children to remain with us during the service. They are not a distraction! *Clipboards for kids* are available to encourage our children to participate in our worship together. Stop by the special Kids Table to pick up clipboards and crayons for your child. Feel free to sit up front where your child can more easily see and hear what is happening.

Free Biblical Resources:

If you don't have a copy of God's Word, please help yourself to one of the free Bibles as our gift for you to take home. You are also welcome to browse the literature and resources available to you on the Welcome Table, carts, and stands.

Joyfully worshipping together
as the family of God,
with reverence and awe,
mindful of our heritage
as well as our present context.



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

O come, O come, and be our God-with-us...

Be folded with us into time and place,

unfold for us the mystery of grace,

and make a womb of all this wounded world.

O heart of heaven beating in the earth,

*O tiny hope within our hopelessness,
come to be born...*

to touch a dying world with new-made hands

and make these rags of time our swaddling bands.

~ from the sonnet "O Emmanuel" by Malcolm Guite

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

M: Jesus, Son of the living God, splendor of the Father, eternal Light.

P: Lord, we praise You!

M: Jesus, King of Glory, Son of the virgin Mary.

P: Lord, we praise You!

M: Jesus, Wonderful Counselor.

P: Lord, we praise You!

M: Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, our help and refuge.

P: Lord, we praise You!

M: Jesus, Good Shepherd, true Light, our way and our life.

P: Lord, we praise You!

PRAYER OF ADORATION & INVOCATION

SONGS OF PRAISE

Angels From the Realms of Glory

**Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth.
*Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.***

**Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light.
*Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.***

**All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son;
Evermore your voices raising
to th'eternal Three in One.**

***Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.***

Words by James Montgomery (1816, 1825).
Music by Henry T. Smart (1867).
PUBLIC DOMAIN

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

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT READINGS

Isaiah 40:3-5 & Luke 1:26-38

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of his father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy — the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

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 our salvation, what could we ever give to You
in return for Your greatest gift: Your own dear Son?**

**He is our peace and our salvation,
our Redeemer, our substitute.**

**He stooped low to raise us up —
was born like us that we might become like Him.**

**He united Deity to humanity,
the Creator become created,
so that one day we might shed our sinful flesh
and be remade in His likeness.**

**He worked out a perfect righteousness,
which was given to us,
so that we can draw near to You.**

**When we cannot rise to Him,
He draws close and lifts us up to Himself.**

**O God, these are tidings of great joy,
and yet we often live without joy in our salvation.**

**We find great joy in your good gifts
without lifting our hearts to worship You,
the Giver of all good things.**

**We prostitute our hearts daily;
our attention and admiration are easily bought
for a moment of pleasure and escape.**

O God, have mercy on us.

Forgive us for the sin that remains in us.

**Holy Spirit, enlarge our hearts
to celebrate this good news of great joy.**

**Settle our hope and our peace
in the love of Christ,
and make His throne the pleasure ground of our souls.**

In Christ's great name we pray, 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.

THE GOOD NEWS

John 3:16

M: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son,
that whoever believes in Him
should not perish but have eternal life.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

The Unbelievable

**Come and see the inconceivable
and believe the unbelievable:
God has come to dwell with us.
Begotten Son born into Adam's earth,
Promised One fulfilling ancient words,
God has come to dwell with us.**

*Who could ever know the depths
of the myst'ry of Your grace?
Though our minds can't take it in,
Lord, our hearts are filled with praise.*

**He will heal the unhealable,
He will save the unsavable;
God has come to dwell with us.
Heaven's joy will drink our bitter cup,
emptied out as He is lifted up;
God has come to dwell with us.**

*Who could ever know the depths
of the myst'ry of Your grace?
Though our minds can't take it in,
Lord, our hearts are filled with praise.*

**Lord, we're lost in overwhelming awe
at the thought of such amazing love;
God has come, God has come,
God has come to dwell with us.
God has come, God has come,
God has come to dwell with us.**

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

concluding with The Lord's Prayer:

**P: Our Father, Who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil
for Thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory forever.
Amen.**

READING OF THE WORD

Isaiah 9: 1-2, 6-7

¹ But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish.
In the former time He brought into contempt the land of
Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time
He has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond
the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon His shoulder,
and His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over His kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

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 Wonder of a Counselor”

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

SERMON NOTES: _____

GIVING TO THE LORD

from Nehemiah 10

We also assume responsibility for bringing to
the house of the LORD each year
the firstfruits of our crops and of every fruit tree...
We will not neglect the house of our God.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING

Wonderful, Merciful Savior

**Wonderful, merciful Savior,
precious Redeemer, and Friend,
Who would have thought that a Lamb could
rescue the souls of men?**

Oh, you rescue the souls of men.

**Counselor, Comforter, Keeper,
Spirit we long to embrace;
You offer hope when our hearts have
hopelessly lost the way,
Oh, we hopelessly lost the way.**

*You are the One that we praise,
You are the One we adore,
You give the healing and grace
our hearts always hunger for;
Oh, our hearts always hunger for.*

**Almighty, infinite Father,
faithfully loving Your own;
Here in our weakness You find us
falling before Your throne,
Oh, we're falling before Your throne.**

*You are the One that we praise,
You are the One we adore,
You give the healing and grace
our hearts always hunger for;
Oh, our hearts always hunger for.*

Words and music by Dawn Rodgers and Eric Wyse.
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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 TOGETHER

Colossians 1:13-18

**P: He as delivered us from the domain of darkness
and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,
in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

**[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation.**

**For by Him all things were created,
in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,
whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—
all things were created through Him and for Him.**

**And He is before all things,
and in Him all things hold together.**

And He is the head of the body, the church.

**He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,
that in everything He might be preeminent.**

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.**

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

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

SONG OF MEDITATION

Jesus, Strong and Kind

**Jesus said that if I thirst
I should come to Him.
No one else can satisfy
I should come to Him.**

**Jesus said if I am weak
I should come to Him.
No one else can be my strength
I should come to Him.**

***For the Lord is good and faithful,
He will keep us day and night.
We can always run to Jesus.
Jesus, strong and kind.***

**Jesus said that if I fear
I should come to Him.
No one else can be my shield.
I should come to Him.**

***For the Lord is good and faithful,
He will keep us day and night.
We can always run to Jesus.
Jesus, strong and kind.***

**Jesus said if I am lost
He will come to me.
And He showed me on that cross
He will come to me.**

***For the Lord is good and faithful,
He will keep us day and night.
We can always run to Jesus.
Jesus, strong and kind.***

Words and music by
Rich Thompson, Jonny Robinson, Michael Farren, Colin Buchanan.
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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

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Scripture text from

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Holy Bible, **New International Version**®, NIV®

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ASCENSION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ASCENSION-PCA.ORG

**10:00AM: Worship Service
(in-person & livestream)**

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Mon & Wed & Fri (9:00AM–5:00PM)

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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.