



# Ascension PCA

April 2, 2023



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

***Look at the cross, think of the cross, meditate on the cross,  
and then go and set your affections on the world if you can...***

*As the sun gazed upon makes everything else look dark and dim,  
so does the cross darken the false splendor of this world.*

*As the taste of honey makes all other things seem to have  
no taste at all,*

*so does the cross seen by faith take all the sweetness  
out of the pleasures of the world.*

***Keep on, everyday, looking firmly at the cross of Christ.***

~ JC Ryle

# 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!

## PRAYER OF INVOCATION & ADORATION

### CALL TO WORSHIP

M: Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!

**P: Great is His power  
and of His wisdom there is no end.**

M: Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion,  
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!  
Behold, your King comes to you  
gentle and riding on a donkey.

**P: He shall have dominion from sea to sea  
and from the river unto the ends of the earth.  
All nations will be blessed through Him  
and they shall call Him blessed.**

M: All kings will bow down to Him  
and all nations will serve Him.  
For He will deliver the needy who cry out,  
the afflicted who have no one to help.

**P: He will take pity on the weak and the needy  
and save the needy from death.  
He will rescue them from oppression and violence,  
for precious is their blood in His sight.**

M: Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel,  
who alone does marvelous deeds.

**P: Praise be to His glorious name forever;  
may the whole earth be filled with His glory.**

M: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!

**P: Hosanna in the highest!**

### SONGS OF PRAISE

*All Glory, Laud, and Honor*

**All glory, laud and honor,  
to You, Redeemer, King,  
to whom the lips of children  
made sweet hosannas ring.**

**You are the King of Israel,  
and David's royal Son,  
now in the Lord's Name coming,  
the King and Blessed One!**

**The company of angels  
is praising You on high;  
and we with all creation  
in chorus make reply.**

**The people of the Hebrews  
with palms before You went;  
our praise and prayer and anthems  
before You we present.**

**To You, before Your passion,  
they sang their hymns of praise;  
to You, now high exalted,  
our melody we raise.**

**As You received their praises,  
accept the prayers we bring;  
for You delight in goodness  
O good and gracious King!**

Words by Theodulf, Bishop of Orléans ca. 820);  
Translated by John Mason Neale (1851; alt.)  
Music by Melchior Teschner (ca. 1615)  
PUBLIC DOMAIN

### *There is a Higher Throne*

**There is a higher throne  
than all this world has known;  
Where faithful ones from ev'ry tongue  
will one day come.**

**Before the Son we'll stand,  
made faultless through the Lamb;  
Believing hearts find promised grace.  
Salvation comes.**

*Hear heaven's voices sing.  
Their thund'rous anthem rings  
through em'rald courts and sapphire skies,  
their praises rise.*

*All glory, wisdom, pow'r,  
strength, thanks, and honor are  
to God our King who reigns on high,  
forever more.*

**And there we'll find our home,  
our life before the throne;  
We'll honor Him in perfect song  
where we belong.**

**He'll wipe each tear-stained eye  
as thirst and hunger die;  
The Lamb becomes our Shepherd King;  
We'll reign with Him.**

***Hear heaven's voices sing.  
Their thund'rous anthem rings  
through em'rald courts and sapphire skies,  
their praises rise.***

***All glory, wisdom, pow'r,  
strength, thanks, and honor are  
to God our King who reigns on high,  
forever more.***

Words and music by Keith and Kristyn Getty.  
© 2002 Thankyou Music

## **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.

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

*Isaiah 53:1-3*

Who has believed what he has heard from us?  
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?  
For He grew up before Him like a young plant,  
and like a root out of dry ground;  
He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him,  
and no beauty that we should desire Him.  
He was despised and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces  
He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.

## CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

**P: God Almighty, God of all mercy and grace,  
we come to confess our failures.**

**Father, our praise has too often been vain babbling  
rather than joyful confessions of Your perfection  
and passionate celebrations of Your salvation.**

**Jesus, we have freely sung the praises  
of earthly pleasure and passing beauty  
while forgetting and remaining silent  
concerning Your saving grace.**

**Holy Spirit, we have relied too much  
on our own strength  
and failed to remember Your presence  
and Your power in our lives.**

**Forgive our folly and refresh our souls.  
Fill us again with the joy of salvation. 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 PROMISE OF FORGIVENESS

*Isaiah 53:4-6*

Surely He has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed Him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.  
But He was pierced for our transgressions;  
He was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with His wounds we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned — every one — to his own way;  
and the LORD has laid on Him  
the iniquity of us all.

*Brothers and Sisters, in Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven!*

# SONG OF ASSURANCE

## *He Was Wounded*

**He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He bore our sins in His body on the tree;  
For our guilt He gave us peace,  
From our bondage gave release,  
And with His stripes, and with His stripes,  
And with His stripes our souls are healed.**

**He was numbered among transgressors,  
We did esteem Him forsaken by His God;  
As our sacrifice He died,  
That the law be satisfied,  
And all our sin, and all our sin,  
And all our sin was laid on Him.**

**We had wandered, we all had wandered  
Far from the fold of “the Shepherd of the sheep”;  
But He sought us where we were,  
On the mountains bleak and bare,  
And brought us home, and brought us home,  
And brought us safely home to God.**

**Who can number His generation?  
Who shall declare all the triumphs of His cross?  
Millions, dead, now live again,  
Myriads follow in His train!  
Victorious Lord, victorious Lord,  
Victorious Lord and coming King!**

Words by Thomas O. Chisholm (1920).

Music by Joseph N. Partain (1977).

Words: PUBLIC DOMAIN. Music © 2015 Nathan Partain

## 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

*Mark 15:16–32*

<sup>16</sup> And the soldiers led Him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed Him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on Him.

<sup>18</sup> And they began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

<sup>19</sup> And they were striking His head with a reed and spitting on Him and kneeling down in homage to Him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked Him, they stripped Him of the purple cloak and put His own clothes on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

<sup>21</sup> And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry His cross. <sup>22</sup> And they brought Him to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull).

<sup>23</sup> And they offered Him wine mixed with myrrh, but He did not take it. <sup>24</sup> And they crucified Him and divided His garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. <sup>25</sup> And it was the third hour when they crucified Him. <sup>26</sup> And the inscription of the charge against Him read, "The King of the Jews." <sup>27</sup> And with Him they crucified two robbers, one on His right and one on His left. <sup>29</sup> And those who passed by derided Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, <sup>30</sup> save Yourself, and come down from the cross!" <sup>31</sup> So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked Him to one another, saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. <sup>32</sup> Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with Him also reviled Him.

## 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 Irony of the Cross"*

*Pastor Nate Hitchcock*



# GIVING TO THE LORD

*Hebrews 13:5*

Keep your life free from love of money,  
and be content with what you have,  
for He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

# SONG OF RESPONSE

*The Power of the Cross*

**Oh, to see the dawn of the darkest day.  
Christ on the road to Calvary.  
Tried by sinful men, torn and beaten, then  
nailed to a cross of wood.**

**Oh, to see the pain written on Your face,  
bearing the awesome weight of sin.  
Ev'ry bitter thought, ev'ry evil deed,  
crowning Your bloodstained brow.**

*This the pow'r of the cross;  
Christ became sin for us.  
Took the blame, bore the wrath —  
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

**Now the daylight flees, now the ground beneath  
quakes as its Maker bows His head.  
Curtain torn in two, dead are raised to life;  
"Finished!" the vict'ry cry.**

*This the pow'r of the cross;  
Christ became sin for us.  
Took the blame, bore the wrath —  
We stand forgiven at the cross.*

**Oh, to see my name written in the wounds,  
for through Your suffering I am free.  
Death is crushed to death, life is mine to live,  
won through Your selfless love!**

*This the pow'r of the cross;  
Son of God — slain for us.  
What a love! What a cost!  
We stand forgiven at the cross!*

Words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend  
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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

*from Philipians 2*

M: Our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

**P : Who, 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.**

### 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.*

### PRAYER | MEDITATION

# 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

The Holy Bible, **English Standard Version.**

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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.

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ASCENSION-PCA.ORG

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

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