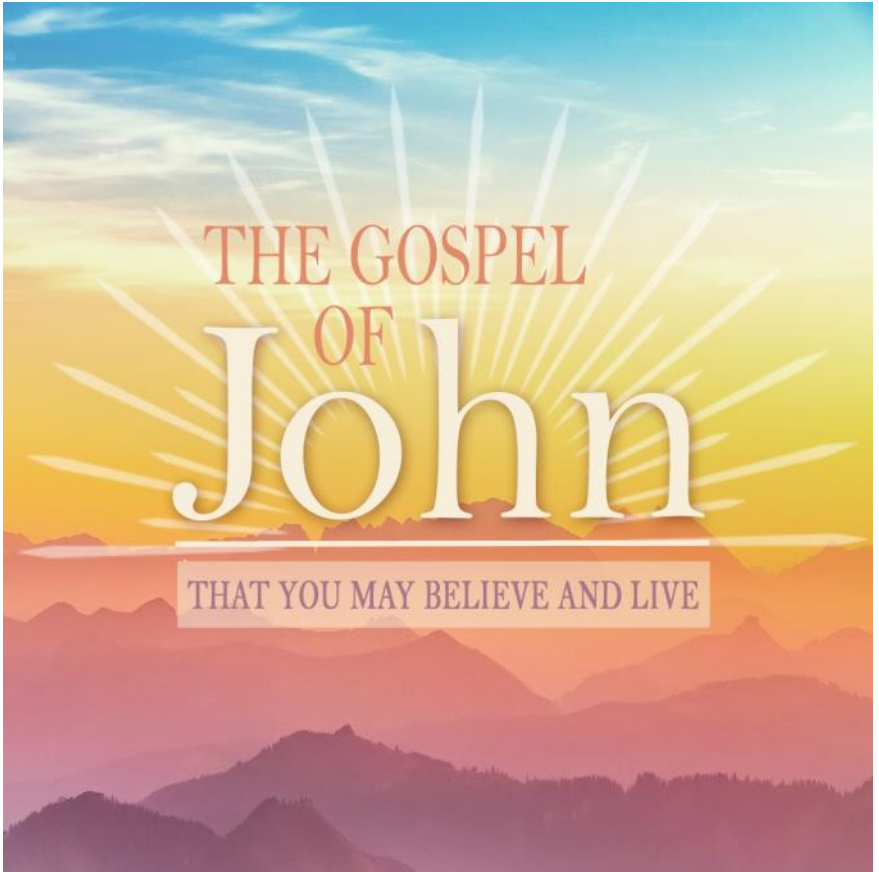




Ascension PCA

September 10, 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

*O Lord the God of Israel,
Who is enthroned above the cherubim,
You are the God, You alone,
of all the kingdoms of the earth;
You have made heaven and earth.
Incline Your ear and hear;
open Your eyes, O Lord, and see.
Visit us and accept our worship today
in the name of Your Son Jesus Christ
and through Your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

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

Hebrews 1:1-3

M: Long ago, at many times and in many ways,
God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

P: but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son,

M: whom He appointed the heir of all things,
through him He also created the world.

**P: He is the radiance of the glory of God
and the exact imprint of His nature,
and He upholds the universe by the word of His power.**

M: After making purification for sins,
He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...

P: Praise God for the gift of the Son!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION & ADORATION

SONGS OF PRAISE

Psalms 84

**O Lord of hosts, how lovely
the place where Thou dost dwell!
Thy tabernacles holy
in pleasantness excel.
My soul is longing, fainting,
Jehovah's courts to see;
My heart and flesh are crying,
O living God, for Thee.**

**So they from strength unwearied
go forward unto strength,
Till they appear in Zion
before the Lord at length.
O hear, Lord God of Jacob,
to me an answer yield;
The face of Thine Anointed,
behold, O God, our Shield.**

**O God of hosts, Jehovah,
how blest is everyone
Who confidence reposes
on Thee, O Lord, alone.
O Lord of Hosts, how lovely
the place where Thou dost dwell!
Thy tabernacles holy
in pleasantness excel.**

Words from Psalm 84; *Book of Psalms* (1871); alt.
Music by Henry T. Smart (1836)).
PUBLIC DOMAIN.

Tell Out, My Soul

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of His word;
In God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His name!
Make known His might, the deeds His arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy name, the Lord, the Mighty One.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of His might!
Powers, dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight;
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul, the glories of His word!
Firm is His promise, and His mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!**

Words by Timothy Dudley-Smith (1961). Music by Holly Dutton (2001).
Words: ©1961 Hope Publishing Company. Music: ©2001 Dutton, Holly

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.

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 54

Elder C.J. DeGroot

To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites went and told Saul, "Is not David hiding among us?"

- 1 O God, save me by Your name,
and vindicate me by Your might.
- 2 O God, hear my prayer;
give ear to the words of my mouth.
- 3 For strangers have risen against me;
ruthless men seek my life;
they do not set God before themselves. *Selah*
- 4 Behold, God is my helper;
the LORD is the upholder of my life.
- 5 He will return the evil to my enemies;
in Your faithfulness put an end to them.
- 6 With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to You;
I will give thanks to Your name, O LORD, for it is good.
- 7 For He has delivered me from every trouble,
and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

**P: Almighty God,
The heavens and earth exist by Your powerful word;
History unfolds as the work of Your hand;
The whole creation demonstrates Your omnipotence;
No one can thwart Your plans.
But, too often, we have failed to trust You.
Forgive us, Father, for forgetting Your promises.
Forgive us for trusting ourselves,
while disregarding our sufficient Savior.
Forgive us for fearing the power of man,
and failing to tremble at Your mighty Word.
Forgive us for losing heart,
instead of rejoicing in the hope of glory in Jesus.
Renew in us a right spirit,
grant us the power of Your Spirit,
and lead us in the way everlasting.
Through Jesus 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

2 Corinthians 5:21

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

In Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven!

SONGS OF ASSURANCE

Glorious Christ

**The radiance of the Father
before the dawn of time;
You spoke and all creation came to be.
The molecules and planets
reveal Your great design,
and every one was made so we could see,
so we could see:**

***You are the glorious Christ,
the greatest of all delights.
Your power is unequalled,
Your love beyond all heights.
No greater sacrifice
than when You laid down Your life.
We join the song of angels
who praise You day and night,
Glorious Christ.***

**You left the air of heaven
to breathe the dust of earth,
and dwell among the outcast and the poor.
You came to be forsaken
and died to take our curse,
so You could be our joy forevermore,
forevermore.**

***You are the glorious Christ,
the greatest of all delights.
Your power is unequalled,
Your love beyond all heights.***

**No greater sacrifice
than when You laid down Your life.
We join the song of angels
who praise You day and night,
Glorious Christ.**

Words and music by Bob Kauflin
© 2012 Sovereign Grace Praise

Speak, O Lord

**Speak, O Lord, as we come to You,
to receive the food of Your Holy Word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
shape and fashion us in Your likeness;
That the light of Christ might be seen today
in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
all Your purposes for Your glory.**

**Teach us, Lord, full obedience,
holy reverence, true humility.
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
in the radiance of Your purity.
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow'r that can never fail —
let their truth prevail over unbelief.**

**Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us —
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time,
that will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we'll stand on Your promises;
and by faith we'll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built,
and the earth is filled with Your glory.**

Words and music by Keith Getty & Stuart Townend
© 2005 Thankyou Music

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

John 5:30–47

³⁰ "I can do nothing on My own. As I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will but the will of Him who sent Me. ³¹ If I alone bear witness about Myself, My testimony is not true. ³² There is another who bears witness about Me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about Me is true. ³³ You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. ³⁴ Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. ³⁶ But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about Me that the Father has sent Me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent Me has Himself borne witness about Me. His voice you have never heard, His form you have never seen, ³⁸ and you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom He has sent. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from people. ⁴² But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. ⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive Me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

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.**

GIVING TO THE LORD

Psalm 111:1

Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

SONG OF RESPONSE

O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus!

**O the deep, deep love of Jesus!
vast, unmeasured, boundless, free;
Rolling as a mighty ocean
in its fullness over me.**

**Underneath me, all around me,
is the current of Thy love;
Leading onward, leading homeward,
to Thy glorious rest above.**

**O the deep, deep love of Jesus!
spread His praise from shore to shore;
How He loveth, ever loveth,
changeth never, nevermore.**

**How He watches o'er His loved ones,
died to call them all His own;
How for them He intercedeth,
watcheth o'er them from the throne.**

**O the deep, deep love of Jesus!
Love of ev'ry love the best;
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing,
'Tis a haven sweet of rest.**

**O the deep, deep love of Jesus!
'Tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me;
And it lifts me up to glory,
for it lifts me up to Thee.**

Words by Samuel Trevor Francis (1834–1925).

Music by Thomas John Williams (1890)

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

CONFESSING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

The Belgic Confession, Article 20

**P: We believe that God —
who is perfectly merciful and also very just —
sent His Son to assume the nature
in which the disobedience had been committed,
in order to bear in it the punishment of sin
by His most bitter passion and death.
So God made known His justice toward His Son,
who was charged with our sin,
and He poured out His goodness and mercy on us,
who are guilty and worthy of damnation,
giving to us His Son to die,
by a most perfect love,
and raising Him to life for our justification,
in order that by Him we might have
immortality and eternal life.**

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

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).
Alt words vv.1-2, lyrics v.3, and music by Matt Merker (2013).
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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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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 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ASCENSION-PCA.ORG

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

9:00AM: Discipleship Hour

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