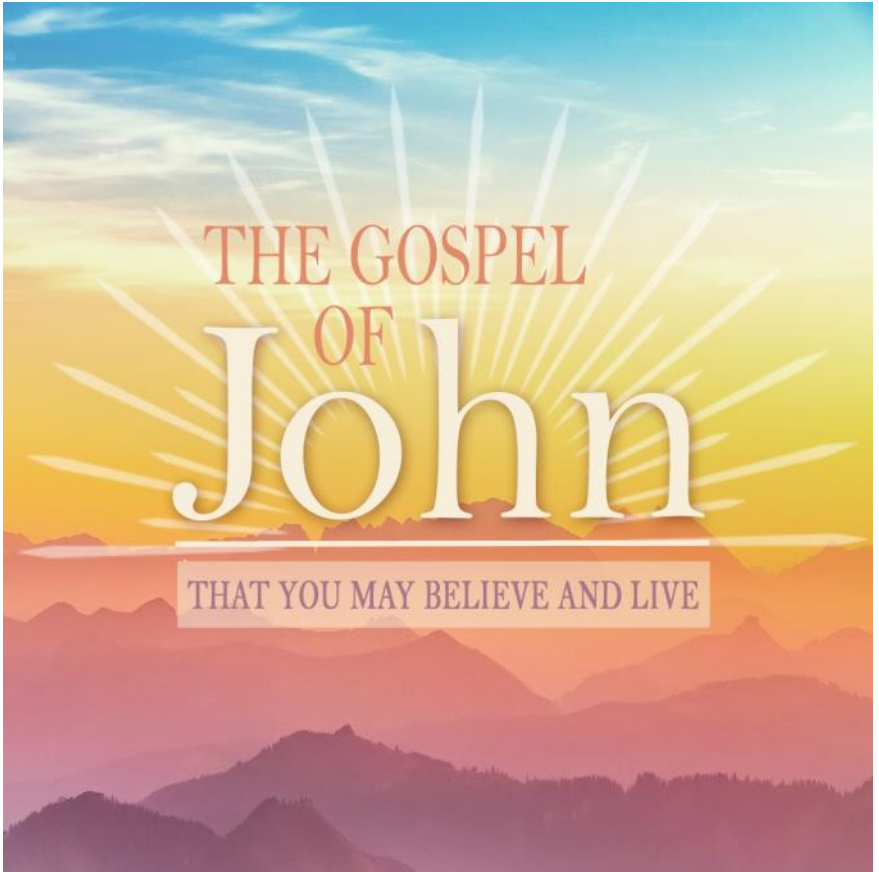




Ascension PCA

January 14, 2024



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

*A glorious throne set on high from the beginning
is the place of our sanctuary. (Jeremiah 17:12)*

As overwhelming as our trials can be,
as enveloping as the darkness appears,
as deep as the floodwaters grow,
we can find solace of heart in knowing our souls are safe
in a place bigger, broader, deeper than any distress...
The Triune Godhead is not scrambling to keep us covered.
Our security has been established in the heavens
from the very beginning, and it will be standing there,
keeping us sound in Christ at the end, and forevermore.

~ Jared Wilson

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

Colossians 1:15-20, Psalm 145:1

M: He 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.
For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
making peace by the blood of His cross.

**P: We will extol you, our God and King,
and bless Your Name forever and ever!**

SONGS OF PRAISE

Psalm 145:1-7

**I will Thee praise, my God, O King,
and I will ever bless Thy Name;
I will extol Thee everyday
and evermore Thy praise proclaim.**

**The LORD is great, He praise exceeds;
His greatness fully search can none;
Race shall to race extol Thy deeds
and tell Thy mighty acts each one.**

**Upon Thy glorious majesty
and wondrous works my mind shall dwell;
Men shall recount Thy dreadful acts,
and of Thy greatness I will tell.**

Words from Psalm 145:1-7, *Trinity Psalter* (1994).
Music by John Hatton (1793).
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10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)

***Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name.***

**The sun comes up,
it's a new day dawning;
It's time to sing Your song again.
Whatever may pass,
and whatever lies before me,
Let me be singing when the evening comes.**

***Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name.***

**You're rich in love,
and You're slow to anger.
Your name is great, and Your heart is kind.
For all Your goodness,
I will keep on singing:
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.**

***Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name.***

**And on that day
when my strength is failing,
The end draws near, and my time has come;
Still my soul will sing
Your praise unending:
Ten thousand years and then forevermore.**

***Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name.
I'll worship Your holy name.***

Words and music by Matt Redman and Jonas Myrin
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worshiptogether.com songs (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing).

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 68:1-19

Elder C.J. DeGroot

- 1 God shall arise, His enemies shall be scattered;
and those who hate Him shall flee before Him!
- 2 As smoke is driven away, so You shall drive them away;
as wax melts before fire,
so the wicked shall perish before God!
- 3 But the righteous shall be glad;
they shall exult before God;
they shall be jubilant with joy!
- 4 Sing to God, sing praises to His name;
lift up a song to Him who rides through the deserts;
His name is the LORD;
exult before Him!
- 5 Father of the fatherless and protector of widows
is God in His holy habitation.
- 6 God settles the solitary in a home;
He leads out the prisoners to prosperity,
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.
- 7 O God, when You went out before Your people,
when You marched through the wilderness,
- 8 the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain,
before God, the One of Sinai,
before God, the God of Israel.
- 9 Rain in abundance, O God, You shed abroad;
You restored your inheritance as it languished;
- 10 Your flock found a dwelling in it;
in Your goodness, O God, You provided for the needy.
- 11 The LORD gives the word;
the women who announce the news are a great host:
- 12 "The kings of the armies — they flee, they flee!"

Selah

- 13 The women at home divide the spoil —
though you men lie among the sheepfolds —
the wings of a dove covered with silver,
its pinions with shimmering gold.
- 14 When the Almighty scatters kings there,
let snow fall on Zalmon.
- 15 O mountain of God, mountain of Bashan;
O many-peaked mountain, mountain of Bashan!
- 16 Why do you look with hatred, O many-peaked mountain,
at the mount that God desired for His abode,
yes, where the LORD will dwell forever?
- 17 The chariots of God are twice ten thousand,
thousands upon thousands;
the LORD is among them; Sinai is now in the sanctuary.
- 18 You ascended on high,
leading a host of captives in Your train
and receiving gifts among men,
even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there.
- 19 Blessed be the LORD,
who daily bears us up;
God is our salvation.

Selah

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

**P: Lord Jesus, I have sinned times without number,
and been guilty of pride and unbelief,
and of neglect to seek You in my daily life.
My sins and shortcomings present me
with a list of accusations,
but I thank You that they will not stand against me,
for all have been laid on Christ.
Deliver me from every evil habit,
every interest of former sins,
everything that dims the brightness of Your grace in me,
everything that prevents me taking delight in You.
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

Galatians 1:3-5

L: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

Light of the World

**Light of the World, Treasure of Heaven,
brilliant like the stars in the wintery sky.
Joy of the Father, reach through the darkness,
shine across the earth, send the shadows to flight.**

**Light of the World, from the beginning
the tragedies of time were no match for Your love.
From great heights of glory, You saw my story.
God, You entered in and became one of us.**

***Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah,
sing hallelujah for the things He has done!
Come and adore Him, bow down before Him.
Sing hallelujah to the Light of the World.***

**Light of the world, crown in a manger,
born for the cross, to suffer, to save.
High King of Heaven, death is the poorer.
We are the richer by the price that He paid.**

***Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah,
sing hallelujah for the things He has done!
Come and adore Him, bow down before Him.
Sing hallelujah to the Light of the World.***

**Light of the World, soon will be coming.
With fire in His eyes, He will ransom His own.
Through clouds He will lead us straight into glory,
and there He shall reign forevermore.**

***Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah,
sing hallelujah for the things He has done!
Come and adore Him, bow down before Him.
Sing hallelujah to the Light of the World.***

Words & music by Andrew Berghold, Ed Cash, Franni Cash, Martin Cash, Scott Cash

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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 9:1-41

¹ As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ Having said these things, He spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then He anointed the man's eyes with the mud ⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?"

⁹ Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰ So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." ¹² They said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for He does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about Him, since He has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²² (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed

that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.)²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."²⁵ He answered, "Whether He is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."²⁶ They said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"²⁸ And they reviled him, saying, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from."³⁰ The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where He comes from, and yet He opened my eyes."³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, God listens to him.³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.³³ If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."³⁴ They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"³⁶ He answered, "And who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?"³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen Him, and it is He who is speaking to you."³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped Him.³⁹ Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near Him heard these things, and said to Him, "Are we also blind?"⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."

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 Light Who Gives Sight"

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

GIVING TO THE LORD

1 Timothy 6:6-8

Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment,
for we brought nothing into the world,
and we cannot take anything out of the world.
But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING & RESPONSE

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).
Words: PUBLIC DOMAIN. Music: © 2012 Walk Out of the Grave Music

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 Apostles' Creed

**P: I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead and buried;
He descended into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits on the right hand of God
the Father Almighty;
from there He shall come to judge
the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

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.
Gluten-free bread and grape juice are available from the trays.
Please HOLD elements until we can all partake TOGETHER.*

SONG OF MEDITATION

Jesus, Lover of My Soul

**Jesus, Lover of my soul,
let me to Thy bosom fly,
while the nearer waters roll,
while the tempest still is high.**

**Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
till life's storm is past;
safe into the haven guide;
receive my soul at last!**

**Other refuge have I none;
I helpless hang on Thee;
leave, oh, leave me not alone,
still support and comfort me.**

**All my trust on Thee is stayed,
all help from Thee I bring;
cover my defenseless head
in the shadow of Thy wing.**

**Thou, O Christ, are all I want;
here more than all I find;
raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
heal the sick and lead the blind.**

**Just and holy is Thy name,
I'm all unrighteousness;
false and full of sin I am;
Thou full of truth and grace.**

**Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
grace to cover all my sin;
let the healing streams abound;
make and keep me pure within.**

**Thou of life the fountain art,
let me take of Thee;
spring Thou up within my heart,
for all eternity.**

Words by Charles Wesley (1740). Music by Greg Thompson (2000).
Words: PUBLIC DOMAIN. Music: 2000 Cardiphonia Music .

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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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 on the back page.

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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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