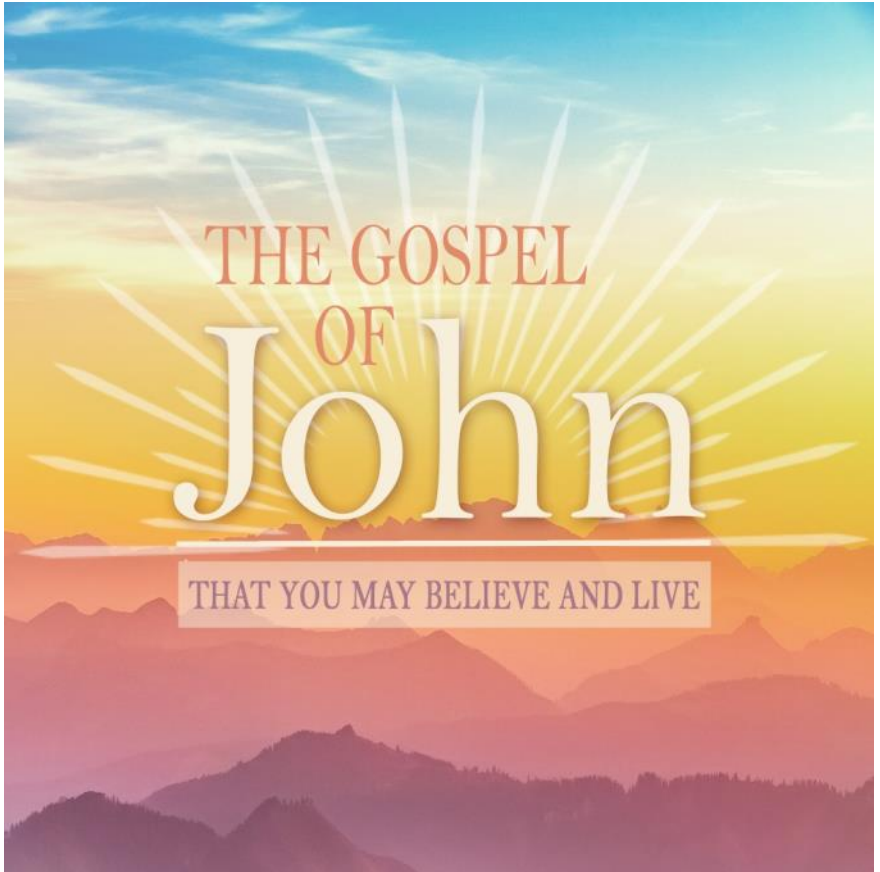




Ascension PCA

February 4, 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

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious Day,
up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory,
sin's curse has lost its grip on me;
For I am His and He is mine —
bought with the precious blood of Christ.
No guilt in life, no fear in death,
this is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home,
here in the power of Christ I'll stand!

~ Stuart Townend (from the song "In Christ Alone")

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

Psalm 113:2-7

**P: Blessed be the name of the LORD
from this time forth and forevermore!
From the rising of the sun to its setting,
the name of the LORD is to be praised!
The LORD is high above all nations,
and His glory above the heavens!
Who is like the LORD our God,
who is seated on high,
who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?**

SONGS OF PRAISE

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

**Come, Thou Fount of every blessing
tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.**

**Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
mount of God's unchanging love.**

**Here I raise my Ebenezer,
hither by Thy help I've come;
And I hope by Thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.**

**Jesus sought me when a stranger
wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
interposed His precious blood.**

**Oh, to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let Thy grace now, like a fetter,
bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.**

**Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
seal it for Thy courts above.**

**Oh, that day when freed from sinning,
I shall see Thy lovely face,
full arrayed in blood-washed linen,
how I'll sing Thy sovereign grace.**

**Come, my Lord, no longer tarry,
bring Thy promises to pass,
for I know Thy power will keep me
till I'm home with Thee at last.**

Words by Robert Robinson (1758) & Bob Kauflin (2008).
Music by John Wyeth (1813).
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Holy Forever

**A thousand generations falling down in worship
to sing the song of ages to the Lamb.
And all who've gone before us
and all who will believe
will sing the song of ages to the Lamb.**

**Your name is the highest,
Your name is the greatest,
Your name stands above them all.
All thrones and dominions,
all powers and positions,
Your name stands above them all.**

***And the angels cry, "Holy!"
All creation cries, "Holy!"
You are lifted high, Holy!
Holy forever!***

**If you've been forgiven and if you've been redeemed,
sing the song forever to the Lamb.
If you walk in freedom and if you bear His name,
sing the song forever to the Lamb.
We'll sing the song forever and amen.**

**Your name is the highest,
Your name is the greatest,
Your name stands above them all.
All thrones and dominions,
all powers and positions,
Your name stands above them all.**

***And the angels cry, "Holy!"
All creation cries, "Holy!"
You are lifted high, Holy!
Holy forever!***

***Hear Your people sing, "Holy!"
to the King of Kings, "Holy!"
You will always be Holy!
Holy forever!***

***Hear Your people sing, "Holy!"
to the King of Kings, "Holy!"
You will always be Holy!
Holy forever!***

***You will always be Holy!
Holy forever!***

Words and music by Brian Johnson, Chris Tomlin, Jason Ingram,
Jenn Johnson, Phil Wickham.

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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

Psalms 69:16–36

Elder Brett Chase

- 16 Answer me, O LORD, for Your steadfast love is good;
according to Your abundant mercy, turn to me.
- 17 Hide not Your face from Your servant,
for I am in distress; make haste to answer me.
- 18 Draw near to my soul, redeem me;
ransom me because of my enemies!
- 19 You know my reproach,
and my shame and my dishonor;
my foes are all known to You.
- 20 Reproaches have broken my heart,
so that I am in despair.
I looked for pity, but there was none,
and for comforters, but I found none.

21 They gave me poison for food,
and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.
22 Let their own table before them become a snare;
and when they are at peace, let it become a trap.
23 Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see,
and make their loins tremble continually.
24 Pour out Your indignation upon them,
and let Your burning anger overtake them.
25 May their camp be a desolation;
let no one dwell in their tents.
26 For they persecute him whom You have struck down,
and they recount the pain of those You have wounded.
27 Add to them punishment upon punishment;
may they have no acquittal from You.
28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living;
let them not be enrolled among the righteous.
29 But I am afflicted and in pain;
let Your salvation, O God, set me on high!
30 I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify Him with thanksgiving.
31 This will please the LORD more than an ox
or a bull with horns and hoofs.
32 When the humble see it they will be glad;
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.
33 For the LORD hears the needy
and does not despise His own people who are prisoners.
34 Let heaven and earth praise Him,
the seas and everything that moves in them.
35 For God will save Zion
and build up the cities of Judah,
and people shall dwell there and possess it;
36 the offspring of His servants shall inherit it,
and those who love His name shall dwell in it.

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

**P: Almighty God, our Heavenly Father,
You are faithful in all Your ways.
Not one word has failed of all Your promises.**

**But we have not been so loyal to You.
We have cherished sinful thoughts,
disowned You with deceitful words,
and behaved contrary to Your Word.**

**In Your mercy,
again show Yourself faithful and just
to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

For Jesus' sake, 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.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: Hear the gracious words of our Lord Jesus Christ
unto all who truly repent and turn to Him:

*"Come unto Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden,
and I will give you rest."*

Now, may that grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
Amen.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

O Love that Will Not Let Me Go

**O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
that in Thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.**

**O Light that follow'st all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.**

**O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain
and feel the promise is not vain,
that morn shall tearless be.**

**O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.**

Words by George Matheson (1882). Music by Christopher Miner (1997)
Words: PUBLIC DOMAIN; music: ©1997 Miner, Christopher

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

John 11:1-44

¹ Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, he whom You love is ill." ⁴ But when Jesus heard it He said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So, when He heard that Lazarus was ill, He stayed two days longer in the place where He was. ⁷ Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." ¹¹ After saying these things, He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." ¹² The disciples said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." ¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He meant taking rest in sleep.

¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, ¹⁵ and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶ So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

¹⁷ Now when Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰ So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, but Mary remained seated in the house. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You."

²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

²⁸ When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

²⁹ And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to Him.

³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met Him. ³¹ When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³² Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in His spirit and greatly troubled. ³⁴ And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ So the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" ³⁷ But some of them said, "Could not He who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

³⁸ Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that you have heard Me. ⁴² I knew that You always hear Me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent Me." ⁴³ When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." ⁴⁴ The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

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

"Jesus and Death "

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

GIVING TO THE LORD

Today is the monthly offering for our Deacon Fund and Mercy Ministries.

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 THANKSGIVING & 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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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.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

CONFESSING OUR FAITH TOGETHER

adapted from "Every Moment Holy"

M: You have made all things well, O Christ!

P: You have made all things well!

M: What once was lost, You have reclaimed.
What had been harmed, You will remake.
What was unwell, You now restore.

P: You make all things well!

M: All praise to You, Lord Christ!
For it was Your intention from creation's dawn,
not only to make all things, but to make all things right.
When Your works were despoiled and wrecked by sin and death,
You undertook to save and reclaim
what You had first made good.
You entered into this — our space and time —
to act on our behalf.

**P: You took on body, blood, and breath,
that You, clothed in our condition,
might move in sympathy to save and shelter us.
For in the living temple of Your flesh,
perfect justice and perfect mercy met and there —
in the shedding of Your blood —
they were forever reconciled in love.
So You subdued the sting of sin.**

M: By death, You conquered death.

**P: You rescued us from the fear of death,
and from its power.**

**You have made all things well, O Christ!
You have made all things well.**

M: The grip of death already slips.
It cannot slow the steady progress of the resurrection,
now advancing,
one day to be made visible in the full outworking
of its infinite glad implications.

**P: The door that led to death has been remade by Christ
into the door that opens into everlasting life.
You have made all things well!**

M: We who live in the shadowland of death's last stand,
await Your appearance and command, O Lord!

**P: The victory is Yours, O King!
Now claim what is Your own!
Now let Your resurrection at last be worked through
all the fabric of creation,
till every fiber, every atom, every particle in play,
is bathed in holy light,
consecrated forever as Your own.
Till every sorrow we've sustained
is redeemed, restored, renamed;
till ones we've loved and lost and grieved
are joined to us again;
till all the brokenness that breaks our world
is by Your Word made whole.**

M: O Christ, Who gives us life, we give You praise!
Crush this age-old darkness,
in the winepress of Your everlasting light.
Trample this old darkness
and from it draw the wine of everlasting life.

**P: Upend all works of death.
Make all things new.
Make all things right.
You have made all things well, O Christ! 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

I Come By the Blood

You are the perfect and righteous God

Whose presence bears no sin;

You bid me come to Your holy place;

How can I enter in,

when Your presence bears no sin?

Through Him who poured out His life for me,

the atoning Lamb of God,

Through Him and His work alone,

I boldly come.

I come by the blood, I come by the cross,

Where Your mercy flows from hands pierced for me.

For I dare not stand on my righteousness,

My every hope rests on what Christ has done,

and I come by the blood.

You are the high and exalted King,

the One the angels fear;

So far above me in every way,

Lord, how can I draw near

to the One the angels fear?

Through Him who laid down His life for me,

and ascended to Your side,

Through Him, through Jesus alone

I boldly come.

I come by the blood, I come by the cross,

Where Your mercy flows from hands pierced for me.

For I dare not stand on my righteousness,

My every hope rests on what Christ has done,

and I come by the blood.

I come by the blood, I come by the cross,

Where Your mercy flows from hands pierced for me.

For I dare not stand on my righteousness,

My every hope rests on what Christ has done,

and I come by the blood.

Words and music by Steve & Vikki Cook (1994).

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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

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

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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 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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