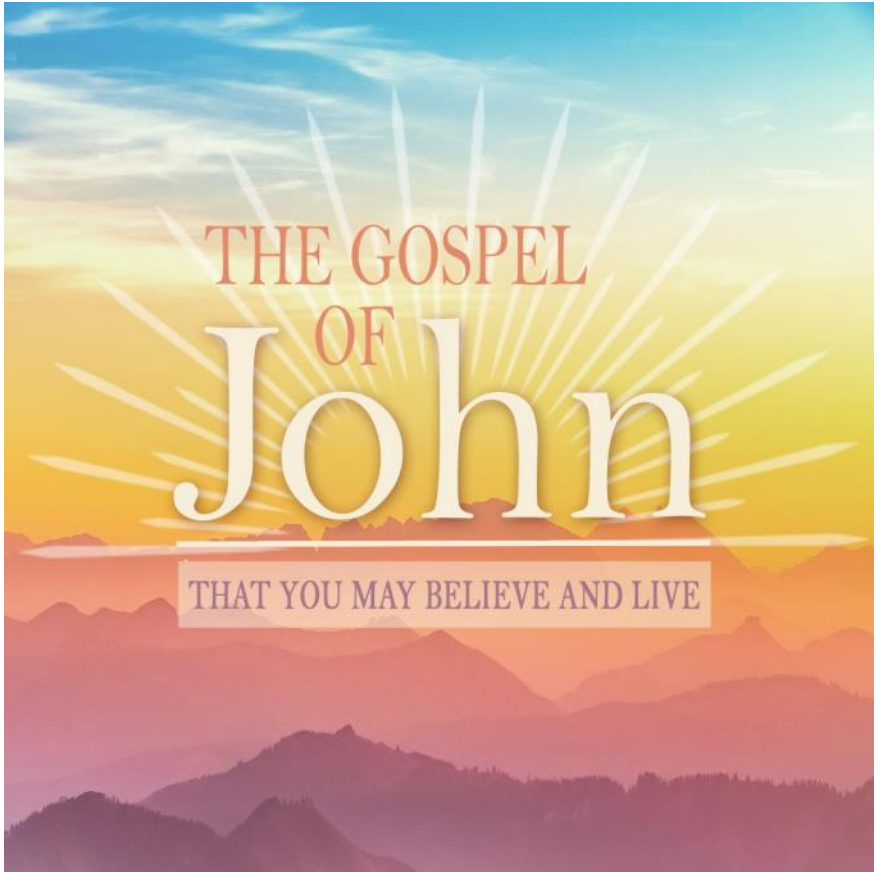




Ascension PCA

March 17, 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

May the strength of God pilot us,
may the wisdom of God instruct us,
may the hand of God protect us,
may the Word of God direct us.
Be always ours this day and for evermore.

~ Saint Patrick

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: The earth is the LORD's, for He made it:

P: Come, let us adore Him.

M: Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness:

P: Come, let us adore Him.

M: The mercy of the LORD is everlasting:

P: Come, let us adore Him.

M: LORD GOD, open our lips.

P: And our mouths shall proclaim Your praise.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION & ADORATION

SONGS OF PRAISE

This Is Our God

**God our Father, full of power,
Maker of the heavens, Maker of the world;
forming all things, seen and unseen,
truly the Almighty, beyond all measure worth;
Holy is His Name!**

*We believe the Lord our God is One,
Father, Spirit, Son; this is our God!
We believe forever He will reign.
Let the church proclaim: this is our God!*

**Our Lord Jesus sent to save us,
born unto a virgin, lived a perfect life;
greatly suffered, dying for us.
From the grave He's risen, seated now on high;
Holy is His Name!**

*We believe the Lord our God is One,
Father, Spirit, Son; this is our God!
We believe forever He will reign.
Let the church proclaim: this is our God!*

**Spirit, holy, One in glory,
speaking through the prophets,
empowering the Church;
life is given by and through Him,
with the Son and Father, worshipped and adored;
Holy is His Name!**

***We believe the Lord our God is One,
Father, Spirit, Son; this is our God!
We believe forever He will reign.
Let the church proclaim: this is our God!***

*Inspired by the Nicene Creed (325 A.D.)
Words and music by Dave Fournier, Doug Plank, George Romanacce,
Neil DeGraide, Zach Jones (2015).
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To God Be the Glory

**To God be the glory — great things He has done!
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate so we may go in!**

***Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father through Jesus, the Son,
and give Him the glory — great things He has done!***

**O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood —
to every believer the promise of God.
The vilest offender who truly believes
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives!**

***Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father through Jesus, the Son,
and give Him the glory — great things He has done!***

**Great things He has taught us, great things He has done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son.
But purer and higher and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.**

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father through Jesus, the Son,
and give Him the glory — great things He has done!

Words by Fanny J. Crosby (1875).
Music by William Howard Doane (1875).
PUBLIC DOMAIN

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 74:1-23

Elder Philip Suh

- 1 O God, why do You cast us off forever?
Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep
of Your pasture?
- 2 Remember Your congregation, which You have purchased of old,
which You have redeemed to be the tribe of Your heritage!
Remember Mount Zion, where You have dwelt.
- 3 Direct Your steps to the perpetual ruins;
the enemy has destroyed everything in the sanctuary!
- 4 Your foes have roared in the midst of Your meeting place;
they set up their own signs for signs.
- 5 They were like those who swing axes
in a forest of trees.
- 6 And all its carved wood
they broke down with hatchets and hammers.
- 7 They set Your sanctuary on fire;
they profaned the dwelling place of Your name,
bringing it down to the ground.
- 8 They said to themselves, "We will utterly subdue them";
they burned all the meeting places of God in the land.
- 9 We do not see our signs;
there is no longer any prophet,
and there is none among us who knows how long.

- 10 How long, O God, is the foe to scoff?
Is the enemy to revile Your name forever?
- 11 Why do You hold back Your hand, Your right hand?
Take it from the fold of Your garment and destroy them!
- 12 Yet God my King is from of old,
working salvation in the midst of the earth.
- 13 You divided the sea by Your might;
You broke the heads of the sea monsters on the waters.
- 14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan;
You gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.
- 15 You split open springs and brooks;
you dried up ever-flowing streams.
- 16 Yours is the day, Yours also the night;
You have established the heavenly lights and the sun.
- 17 You have fixed all the boundaries of the earth;
You have made summer and winter.
- 18 Remember this, O LORD, how the enemy scoffs,
and a foolish people reviles Your name.
- 19 Do not deliver the soul of Your dove to the wild beasts;
do not forget the life of Your poor forever.
- 20 Have regard for the covenant,
for the dark places of the land are full of
the habitations of violence.
- 21 Let not the downtrodden turn back in shame;
let the poor and needy praise Your name.
- 22 Arise, O God, defend Your cause;
remember how the foolish scoff at You all the day!
- 23 Do not forget the clamor of Your foes,
the uproar of those who rise against You,
which goes up continually!

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

P: Almighty God,

**You are holy and perfect in all Your ways,
yet You stoop to love us,
fallen and sinful rebels that we are.**

**You have set Your love on upon us
and pursue us with Your everlasting promise
to work all things for our good and Your own glory.
Thank You Father.**

Melt our hearts with wonder, love, and praise to You.

**Forgive us for the many sins that we daily commit.
We cast ourselves on Your mercy
and thank You for the blood of Christ,
 which cleanses us from all sin,
and for the obedience of Christ,
 which replaces our record of rebellion
 with the glory of His perfect holiness.**

**May Your great and mighty power,
 which raised Christ from the dead,
be at work in us, making us holy.**

In the excellent name of Jesus Christ 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

from Revelation 1:5-6

L: Christ Jesus loves us and has freed us from our sins
by His blood, and He has made us to be a kingdom
and priests to serve His God and Father.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

His Mercy is More

***Praise the Lord, His mercy is more!
Stronger than darkness, new every morn,
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more!***

**What love could remember no wrongs we have done?
Omniscient, all-knowing, He counts not their sum.
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore;
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more.**

**What patience would wait as we constantly roam?
What Father, so tender, is calling us home?
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor.
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more.**

***Praise the Lord, His mercy is more!
Stronger than darkness, new every morn,
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more!***

**What riches of kindness He lavished on us.
His blood was the payment, His life was the cost.
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford.
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more.**

***Praise the Lord, His mercy is more!
Stronger than darkness, new every morn,
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more!***

Music and words by Matt Boswell and Matt Papa
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Publishing,
Messenger Hymns

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 12:37-50

³⁷ Though He had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in Him, ³⁸ so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“Lord, who has believed what he heard from us,
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said,

⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes
and hardened their heart,
lest they see with their eyes,
and understand with their heart, and turn,
and I would heal them.”

⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke of Him. ⁴² Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed 'in Him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

⁴⁴ And Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. ⁴⁵ And whoever sees Me sees Him who sent Me. ⁴⁶ I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness. ⁴⁷ If anyone hears My words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸ The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on My own authority, but the Father who sent Me has Himself given Me a commandment — what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told Me."

GLORIA PATRI

**Glorify 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 Final Plea"

Pastor Nate Hitchcock

PRAYER

GIVING TO THE LORD

Colossians 3:1-2

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

SONG OF RESPONSE & THANKSGIVING

Jesus, Thank You

**The myst'ry of the cross
I cannot comprehend,
The agonies of Calvary.
You the perfect, Holy One,
crushed Your Son
Who drank the bitter cup reserved for me.**

***Your blood has washed away my sin;
Jesus, thank You.
The Father's wrath completely satisfied;
Jesus, thank You.
Once Your enemy, now seated at Your table;
Jesus, thank You.***

**By Your perfect sacrifice
I've been brought near;
Your enemy You've made Your friend.
Pouring out the riches
of Your glorious grace,
Your mercy and Your kindness know no end.**

***Your blood has washed away my sin;
Jesus, thank You.
The Father's wrath completely satisfied;
Jesus, thank You.
Once Your enemy, now seated at Your table;
Jesus, thank You.***

Words and music by Pat Sczebel
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SERVICE OF ORDINATION & INSTALLATION

Questions to the Candidates:

- Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
- Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
- Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?
- Do you accept the office of deacon and the office of elder in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the Church of which God has made you an officer?

- Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
- Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity, and edification of the Church?

Questions to the Congregation:

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive these brothers as elder and deacon, and do you promise to yield to them all that honor, encouragement and obedience in the Lord to which their offices, according to the Word of God and the Constitution of this Church, entitles them?

If you do, please raise your right hand.

Laying on of Hands and Prayer

Right Hand of Fellowship and Pronouncement

Exhortation

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

from Colossians 1:12-20

- P: We give thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has 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. 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 all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
making peace by the blood of His cross.**

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

When Peace Like a River

**When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."**

*It is well, (it is well)
With my soul; (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

**Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control:
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed His own blood for my soul.**

*It is well, (it is well)
With my soul; (with my soul)
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

**My sin — O the bliss of this glorious thought! —
my sin — not in part, but the whole —
is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more;
praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!**

*It is well (it is well),
With my soul; (with my soul);
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

**And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend;
even so, it is well with my soul.**

It is well, *(it is well)*
With my soul; *(with my soul)*
It is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well, *(it is well)*
With my soul; *(with my soul)*
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Words by Horatio Gates Spafford (1873). Music by Philip P. Bliss (1876)
PUBLIC DOMAIN

PRAYER

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)

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