



Ascension PCA

December 8, 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

*Big and glossy and loud and fast —
that's how this bent-up world turns.*

But God, when He comes — He shows up in this fetal ball.

*He who carved the edges of the cosmos
curved Himself into a fetal ball in the dark,
tethered Himself to the uterine wall of a virgin,
and lets His cells divide, light splitting all white.*

*He gave up the heavens that were not even large enough
to contain Him and lets Himself be held in a hand.*

*The mystery so large becomes the Baby so small,
and infinite God becomes infant.*

The Giver becomes the Gift, this quiet offering.

~ Ann Voskamp

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

Hebrews 1:1-4

M: Long ago, at many times and in many ways,
God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,
but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son,
whom He appointed the heir of all things,
though whom He also created the world.
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.
After making purification for sins,
He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
having become as much superior to angels
as the name He has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

SONGS OF PRAISE

Behold Our God

**Who has held the oceans in His hands?
Who has numbered every grain of sand?
Kings and nations tremble at His voice.
All creation rises to rejoice.**

Behold our God, seated on His throne.

Come, let us adore Him.

Behold our King! Nothing can compare.

Come, let us adore Him!

**Who has given counsel to the Lord?
Who can question any of His words?
Who can teach the One who knows all things?
Who can fathom all His wondrous deeds?**

Behold our God, seated on His throne.

Come, let us adore Him.

Behold our King! Nothing can compare.

Come, let us adore Him!

**Who has felt the nails upon His hands,
Bearing all the guilt of sinful man?
God eternal, humbled to the grave,
Jesus, Savior, risen now to reign!**

Behold our God, seated on His throne.

Come, let us adore Him.

Behold our King! Nothing can compare.

Come, let us adore ...

Behold our God, seated on His throne.

Come, let us adore Him.

Behold our King! Nothing can compare.

Come, let us adore Him!

Words and music by Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird,
Stephen Altrogge (2011)
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Angels From the Realms of Glory

**Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth.**

***Come and worship,
come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.***

**Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light.**

***Come and worship,
come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.***

**All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son;
Evermore your voices raising
to th'eternal Three in One.**

***Come and worship,
come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.***

Words by James Montgomery (1816, 1825).
Music by Henry T. Smart (1867).
PUBLIC DOMAIN

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT READINGS

Isaiah 11:1-10

- ¹ There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from His roots shall bear fruit.
- ² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- ³ And His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what His eyes see,
or decide disputes by what His ears hear,
- ⁴ but with righteousness He shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
and with the breath of His lips He shall kill the wicked.
- ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His waist,
and faithfulness the belt of His loins.
- ⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.
- ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
- ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy
in all My holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
- ¹⁰ In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples — of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious.

Romans 15:4-13

⁴ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷ Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

⁸ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will praise You among the Gentiles,
and sing to Your name."

- ¹⁰ And again it is said,
 "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people."
- ¹¹ And again,
 "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
 and let all the peoples extol Him."
- ¹² And again Isaiah says,
 "The root of Jesse will come,
 even He who arises to rule the Gentiles;
 in Him will the Gentiles hope."
- ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

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.

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN

**P: O Lord, You have promised to deliver us;
 and have purchased our salvation through Jesus.
You have promised to restore and guide us;
 and have given us Your Spirit as our Counselor
 and Your Word as our instruction.
You have promised never to leave us nor forsake us —
 to be more faithful than a mother to her child...
Yet we have failed to trust You.
We have grumbled at hardship.
We have pursued and worried about material needs,
 as if we had no Father.
We have busied ourselves with things of this world,
 while neglecting Your priorities.
Lord, have mercy on us;
 forgive our faithless striving
 forgive our unfaithful neglect.
Renew in us a desire to be true to You,
 and diligence for the long faithfulness.
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 FORGIVENESS

from Romans 3:22 & Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 21

M: Righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

P: **By faith we have a deep-rooted assurance, created in us by the Holy Spirit through the gospel, that, out of sheer grace earned for us by Christ, not only others, but we too, have had our sins forgiven, have been made forever right with God, and have been granted salvation.**

SONGS OF ASSURANCE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
our spirits by Thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Thou Wisdom, from on high,
and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and cause us in her ways to go.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Latin Hymn (1710), translated by John Mason Neale (1851).
Music: Plainsong (13th century).
PUBLIC DOMAIN

Prepare Him Room

**O behold, the mystery now unfolds;
See the star shine on the virgin foretold.
Angels sing and light up the sky,
hope rings out in a newborn's cry;
Swing wide, you ancient gates,
for Christ is born today!**

***Prepare Him room,
Prepare Him room,
Let the King of glory enter in.***

**God with us, the promise has come to be;
This, the One, the prophets were longing to see.
In the darkness a blazing light,
to the hungry the words to life;
His kingdom now is near,
for those with ears to hear.**

***Prepare Him room,
Prepare Him room,
Let the King of glory enter in.***

**Oh, our hearts, as busy as Bethlehem,
hear Him knock; don't say there's no room in the inn.
Through the cradle, cross, and grave,
see the love of God displayed;
Now He's risen and He reigns.
Praise the Name above all names!**

***Prepare Him room,
Prepare Him room,
Let the King of glory enter in.***

***Prepare Him room,
Prepare Him room,
Let the King of glory enter in.***

Words and music by Rebecca Elliot & Dave Fournier
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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

Matthew 1:1-5a & Joshua 2:1-21 / 6:20-23

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³ and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴ and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵ and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab ...

¹ And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there. ² And it was told to the king of Jericho, "Behold, men of Israel have come here tonight to search out the land." ³ Then the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land." ⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. And she said, "True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. ⁵ And when the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them." ⁶ But she had brought them up to the roof and hid them with the stalks of flax that she had laid in order on the roof. ⁷ So the men pursued after them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. And the gate was shut as soon as the pursuers had gone out.

⁸ Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof ⁹ and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. ¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og,

whom you devoted to destruction. ¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. ¹² Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father's house, and give me a sure sign ¹³ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death."

¹⁴ And the men said to her, "Our life for yours even to death! If you do not tell this business of ours, then when the LORD gives us the land we will deal kindly and faithfully with you."

¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was built into the city wall, so that she lived in the wall.

¹⁶ And she said to them, "Go into the hills, or the pursuers will encounter you, and hide there three days until the pursuers have returned. Then afterward you may go your way." ¹⁷ The men said to her, "We will be guiltless with respect to this oath of yours that you have made us swear. ¹⁸ Behold, when we come into the land, you shall tie this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and you shall gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's household. ¹⁹ Then if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we shall be guiltless. But if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head. ²⁰ But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be guiltless with respect to your oath that you have made us swear." ²¹ And she said, "According to your words, so be it." Then she sent them away, and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²⁰ So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. ²¹ Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

²² But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her."

²³ So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel.

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 THANKSGIVING

Be Thou My Vision

**Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that Thou art —
Thou my best thought by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.**

**Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my true word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one.**

**Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art.**

**High King of heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all ...
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.**

Ancient Irish Poem, translated by Mary E. Byrne (1905),
versified by Eleanor H. Hull (1912)
Traditional Irish melody, arranged by David Evans (1927)
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

Romans 5:1-6

**P: Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Through Him we have also obtained access by faith
into this grace in which we stand,
and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings,
knowing that suffering produces endurance,
and endurance produces character,
and character produces hope,
and hope does not put us to shame,
because God's love has been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
For while we were still weak,
at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.**

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

As A Beggar I Come To Thee

**As a beggar, I come to Thee.
As a beggar, I come to Thee.
With empty hands, without one plea.
As a beggar, I come to Thee.

At Thy table I find a feast.
At Thy table I find a feast.
Here come the poor, the lame, the least.
At Thy table I find a feast.

Precious Savior, how can it be?
Precious Savior, how can it be?
Thine own dear blood was shed for me!
Precious Savior, how can it be?**

**All my days, Lord, Thy will be done.
All my days, Lord, Thy will be done.
Long I to see Thy kingdom come.
All my days, Lord, Thy will be done.**

**Come, Lord Jesus, O quickly come!
Come, Lord Jesus, O quickly come!
With lifted hearts our prayer is sung:
Come, Lord Jesus, O quickly come!
With lifted hearts our prayer is sung:
Come, Lord Jesus, O quickly come!**

Music and words by Luke Morton (2012).
© 2012 Walk Out of the Grave Music

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-PCA.ORG

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