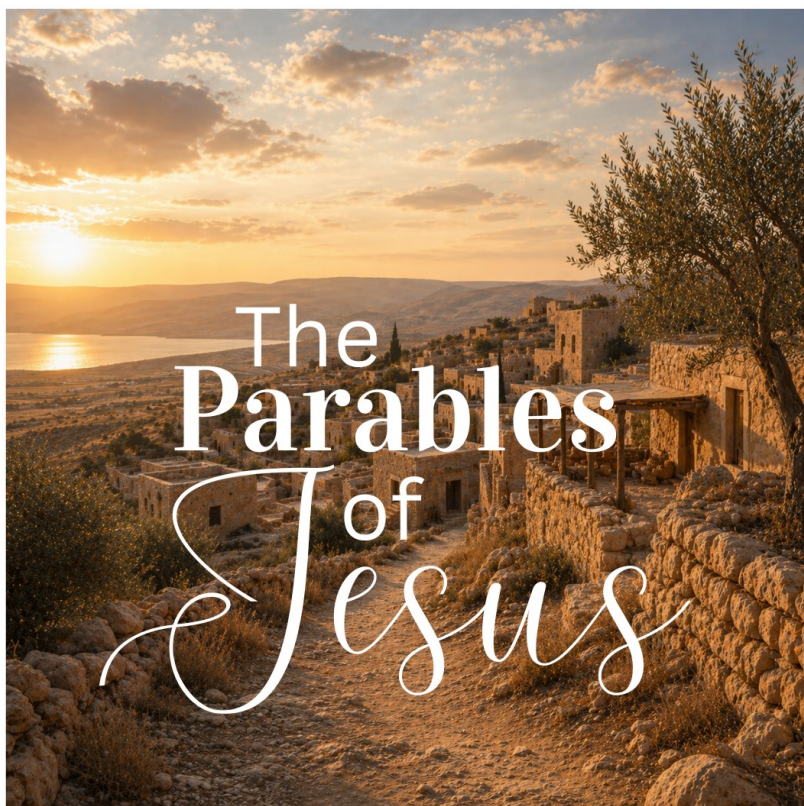




Ascension PCA

August 2, 2026



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!

Feel free to sit up front where your child can more easily see and hear what is happening.

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.

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

*Though ... we sometimes complain,
that the gospel is preached without effect,
there is in reality no possibility that it can be without effect.*

An effect it must and will have upon all who hear it.

*Happy [are] they who receive and embrace it
as a joyful sound, the unspeakable gift of God's love.*

To these it will be "a savour of life until life".

~ John Newton, *Jewels from John Newton*

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

Elder Theo Vander Wel

CALL TO WORSHIP

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

- L: Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
Love the LORD your God with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your strength.

SONGS OF PRAISE

All Creatures of Our God and King

**All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing,**

O praise Him! Alleluia!

**Thou, burning sun with golden beam,
Thou, silver moon with softer gleam,**

O praise Him! O praise Him!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Let all things their Creator bless,
and worship Him in humbleness,**

O praise Him! Alleluia!

**Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three-in-One,**

O praise Him! O praise Him!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**All the redeemed washed by His blood,
come and rejoice in His great love,**

O praise Him! Alleluia!

**Christ has defeated every sin,
cast all your burdens now on Him,**

O praise Him! O praise Him!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**He shall return in pow'r to reign,
Heaven and earth will join to say,**

O praise Him! Alleluia!

**Then who shall fall on bended knee?
all creatures of our God and King,**

O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Original words (v. 1–2) by St. Francis of Assisi,
translated by William Henry Draper (1926).
Additional words (v. 3–4) by Jonathan Baird and Ryan Baird.
16th Century German tune, adapted by Jonathan Baird and Ryan Baird.
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Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

**Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.**

**Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might.
Thy justice, like mountains high soaring above;
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life Thou livest, the true Life of all;
We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
then wither and perish, but naught changeth Thee.**

**Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight.
All praise we would render, O help us to see
‘tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!**

Words by Walter Chambers Smith (1867).
Traditional Welsh hymn melody.
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

Psalms 119:145–168

Elder Theo Vander Wel

- 145 With my whole heart I cry; answer me, O LORD!
I will keep Your statutes.
- 146 I call to You; save me,
that I may observe Your testimonies.
- 147 I rise before dawn and cry for help;
I hope in Your words.
- 148 My eyes are awake before the watches of the night,
that I may meditate on Your promise.
- 149 Hear my voice according to Your steadfast love;
O LORD, according to Your justice give me life.
- 150 They draw near who persecute me with evil purpose;
they are far from Your law.
- 151 But You are near, O LORD,
and all Your commandments are true.
- 152 Long have I known from Your testimonies
that You have founded them forever.
- 153 Look on my affliction and deliver me,
for I do not forget Your law.
- 154 Plead my cause and redeem me;
give me life according to Your promise!
- 155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
for they do not seek Your statutes.
- 156 Great is your mercy, O LORD;
give me life according to Your rules.
- 157 Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,
but I do not swerve from Your testimonies.
- 158 I look at the faithless with disgust,
because they do not keep Your commands.
- 159 Consider how I love Your precepts!
Give me life, O LORD, according to Your steadfast love.
- 160 The sum of Your word is truth,
and every one of Your righteous rules endures forever.
- 161 Princes persecute me without cause,
but my heart stands in awe of Your words.
- 162 I rejoice at Your word
like one who finds great spoil.
- 163 I hate and abhor falsehood,
but I love Your law.
- 164 Seven times a day I praise You
for Your righteous rules.
- 165 Great peace have those who love Your law;
nothing can make them stumble.
- 166 I hope for Your salvation, O LORD,
and I do Your commandments.
- 167 My soul keeps Your testimonies;
I love them exceedingly.
- 168 I keep Your precepts and testimonies,
for all my ways are before You.

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN READING

From Romans 3:19-23

- L: Now we know that whatever the law says,
it says to those who are under the law,
so that every mouth may be silenced
and the whole world held accountable to God.
Whoever among us who has been declared righteous
by obedience to the law may speak up now and be heard.
Therefore, no one will be declared righteous in God's sight
by observing the law;
rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

P: We have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

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

Romans 8:1-2

There is therefore now no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus.
For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus
from the law of sin and death.

SONG OF ASSURANCE

How Firm a Foundation

**How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He has said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

**"Fear not, I am with you; O be not dismayed,
for I am your God, and will still give you aid.
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand."**

**"When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
My grace, all sufficient, shall be your supply;
The flame shall not hurt you; I only design
your dross to consume, and your gold to refine."**

**"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes.
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."**

Words from Rippon's Selection of Hymns (1787; alt.; mod.)

Traditional American melody;

J. Funk's A Compilation of Genuine Church Music (1832)

PUBLIC DOMAIN

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

READING OF THE WORD

Rev. Barry McWilliams

Matthew 17:22-27; 18:1-5

²² As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed.

²⁴ When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the tax?"

²⁵ He said, "Yes."

And when He came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?"

²⁶ And when he said, "From others,"

Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷ However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for Me and for yourself."

¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

² And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them

³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ Whoever receives one such child in My name receives me..."

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 Hard Life"

SERMON NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

PRAYER

GIVING TO THE LORD

Today is the monthly offering for our DEACON FUND and MERCY MINISTRIES.

Hebrews 13:16

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING

Holy, Holy, Holy!

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

**Early in the morning
our song shall rise to Thee.**

Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!

God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

**Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
casting down their golden crowns
around the glassy sea.**

**Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.**

**Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
though the eye of sinful man
Thy glory may not see.**

**Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.**

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

**All Thy works shall praise Thy name
in earth and sky and sea.**

Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!

**God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!**

Words by Reginald Heber (1783–1826). Music by John B. Dykes (1861).
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 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,
born of the Virgin Mary,**

**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

Behold the Lamb

**Behold the Lamb who bears our sins away,
slain for us — and we remember:
The promise made that all who come in faith
find forgiveness at the cross.
So, we share in this Bread of Life,
and we drink of His sacrifice,
as a sign of our bonds of peace
around the table of the King.**

**The body of our Saviour Jesus Christ,
torn for you — eat and remember:
The wounds that heal, the death that brings us life,
paid the price to make us one.
So, we share in this Bread of Life,
and we drink of His sacrifice,
as a sign of our bonds of love
around the table of the King.**

**The blood that cleanses every stain of sin,
shed for you — drink and remember:
He drained death's cup that all may enter in
to receive the life of God.**

**So, we share in this Bread of Life,
and we drink of His sacrifice,
as a sign of our bonds of grace
around the table of the King.**

**And so with thankfulness and faith we rise
to respond — and to remember:
Our call to follow in the steps of Christ
as His body here on earth.**

**As we share in His suffering
we proclaim Christ will come again!
And we'll join in the feast of heav'n
around the table of the King.**

Words and music Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, Stuart Townend.
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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.**

RECESSIONAL SONG

Across the Lands

**You're the Word of God the Father
from before the world began;
Every star and every planet
has been fashioned by Your hand.**

**All creation holds together
by the power of Your voice.
Let the skies declare Your glory;
let the land and seas rejoice!**

***You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord of every man,
and Your cry of love rings out across the lands.***

**Yet You left the gaze of angels,
came to seek and save the lost,
and exchanged the joy of heaven
for the anguish of a cross.**

**With a prayer You fed the hungry,
with a word You calmed the sea.
Yet how silently You suffered,
that the guilty may go free.**

***You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord of every man,
and Your cry of love rings out across the lands.***

**With a shout You rose victorious,
wresting vict'ry from the grave,
and ascended into heaven,
leading captives in Your way.**

**Now You stand before the Father,
interceding for Your own.
From each tribe and tongue and nation
You are leading sinners home.**

***You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord of every man,
and Your cry of love rings out across the lands.***

***You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord of every man,
and Your cry of love rings out across the lands.***

***You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord of every man,
and Your cry of love rings out across the lands.***

***You're the Author of creation,
You're the Lord of every man,
and Your cry of love rings out across the lands.***

Words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend
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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
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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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