

ASCENSION

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome! Thank you for joining us. We are here to commune together with the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. "Worship is the gift of participating through the Spirit in the incarnate Son's communion with the Father" (J. B. Torrance; see Jn. 4:23-24; Eph. 2:18; 1 Jn. 1:3). We hope that you will hear clearly the Gospel, or Good News, about Jesus Christ, through whom we know God. We also hope that love and grace will characterize everything we do here. If you have children age three and under, you may use the nursery next door to the sanctuary, or keep them with you if you prefer. Please stay for refreshments and conversation after the service. We would be happy to field questions you might have about the faith or our church. (Visit ascensionpc.org/worship to learn more about our Worship.)

Please silence your electronic devices.

WORSHIP • JUNE 1, 2014 • ASCENSION SUNDAY



THE WORD



CALL TO WORSHIP • Psalm 117

Praise the LORD, all nations!

Extol him all peoples!

For great is his steadfast love toward us,

and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

Praise the LORD!

The flame symbolizes the holy presence of God and the light of his Gospel among us.

God has the first word as **he calls us to Worship**. He takes the initiative in our relationship; he makes himself known to us and moves toward us in love (1 John 4:19). By God's grace alone we are invited, called into his presence. He has brought you here to respond to his grace.

The Triune God is a singing God (Zeph. 3:14-17)! So it is fitting to respond to him with **singing...**

Rejoice, The Lord Is King

Text: Charles Wesley • Music: John Darwall • Public Domain

Tenor

8 Re - joice the Lord is King: your Lord and King a -
Je - sus the sav - ior reigns, the God of truth and
His king - dom can - not fail, he rules o'er earth and
He sits at God's right hand till all his foes sub -
4 Re - joice in glo - rious hope! Our Lord the Judge shall
8 dore! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing and tri - umph ev - er -
love; when he had purged our stains, he took his seat a -
heav'n; the keys of death and hell are to our Je - sus
mit, and bow to his com - mand, and fall be - neath his
8 come, and take his ser - vants up to their e - ter - nal
8 more. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Re - joice, a - gain I
bove.
giv'n.
feet.
home.
13
8 say re - - - - joyce!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

CALL TO CONFESSION OF SIN • Romans 7:18-19

I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

CONFESSION OF SIN

God of mercy, you are full of tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in mercy, and always ready to forgive. We confess that we have sinned against you, and have clung to evil rather than to Christ. Have mercy on us, and forgive our sin. Restore us to newness of life, and seat us at your table of grace, that we may feast with delight on all that satisfies the hungry heart; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Silent confession)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS • Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you!

OFFERING • Exodus 23:19

The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

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.*

NEW TESTAMENT READING • Acts 9:1-9

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

There is a sense in which all of Worship is **prayer**, a divine-human conversation.

It is actually God's *gracious* initiation in **calling us to confession** that enables us to do so (Lk. 5:1-11; Rom. 2:4). If not for the assurance of his love, we all would try to hide or deny our true guilt, for fear of his righteous anger. We cannot hide from God (Heb. 4:12-13), but the Good News is that we don't have to!

In Christ, we are free to be honest about who we are and to admit what we have done as rebels in God's sight. We **confess our sin** and our utter need for God's mercy and grace through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our reconciliation to God.

Because of what God has done for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, **we are assured that all our sins have been forgiven**. Our relationship with God has been completely restored forever! For many reasons, we need to be reminded of this Good News often.

Our grateful, joyful, loving response to our Savior is the giving of our very selves to him (Rom. 12:1). Our **Offering** is a real token of this (1 Cor. 16:1-2). And the **Doxology** gives expression to our new desire to praise him (Ps. 100).

As **God speaks to us**, we listen attentively with thanksgiving.

Because God is a Trinity—a Being in communion and dialogue—God is a God of **prayer**. While he was on earth, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was constantly praying to his Father, and he taught his disciples how to pray (Mt. 6:5-15; Lk. 11:1-13). And, now that Jesus has ascended into heaven, he continues to pray for his people (Heb. 7:25).

So we often pray together in the way Jesus taught us, using “The Lord’s Prayer.” We pray to God as our Father! We pray according to Jesus’ will, and in his name (Jn 14:13). We pray for all kinds of people (1 Tim. 2:1-8), especially for the work of the Gospel in the world and in the church.

Visit ascensionpc.org/sermons/the-lords-prayer to learn more about prayer.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray...

Holy Father, our great God, we praise you for your perfect holiness.

We thank you for not sparing your own Son but giving him up for us all.

We love you for adopting us as your children by your grace.

We trust you to use every circumstance for our good as your people.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, we praise you for taking our condemnation on yourself.

We love you for the pity you showed in rescuing us from our sins.

We rest in you because you are constantly interceding for us with the Father.

We thank you that absolutely nothing can separate us from your love.

Holy Spirit of God, we praise you for giving us new life and living with us constantly.

We thank you for the war you wage against sin in our lives.

We delight in the assurance you give us that we are God’s sons in Christ.

We love you for searching our hearts and helping us in our weakness.

Hear us, O Lord. We are happy to be under your care, Father.

Please hear us for the sake of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Music: William M. Runyan • Lyric: Thomas O. Chisolm • ©1923/1951 Hope Publishing Co.

Tenor

Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no
shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-
pas-sions they fail not; as thou hast been thou for - ev-er wilt
be. Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness!
Morn-ing by morn-ing new mercies I see: all I have
need-ed thy hand hath pro - vid-ed, Great is thy faith-ful-ness,
Lord, un - - - to me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above,
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.
Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten-thousand beside!
Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
all I have needed thy hand hath provided,
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

What Wondrous Love Is This

Text: American Folk Hymn • Music: Southern Harmony • Public Domain



1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my
2 When I was sin-king down, sin-king down, sin-king
3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will
4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing



soul, what won-drous love is this, O my soul! What
down, when I was sin-king down, sin-king down; when
sing, to God and to the Lamb I will sing! To
on, and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on! And



won-drous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to
I was sin-king down be - neath God's right eous frown, Christ
God and to the Lamb, who is the great "I AM," while
when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy - ful be, and



bear the dread - ful curse for my soul, for my
laid a - side his crown for my soul, for my
mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will
through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on, I'll sing



soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul!
soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul!
sing, while mil lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

OLD TESTAMENT READING • Jonah 3

¹ Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ² “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days’ journey in breadth.

⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

⁶ The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, ⁸ but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.

⁹ Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”

¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

The Word of the Lord.

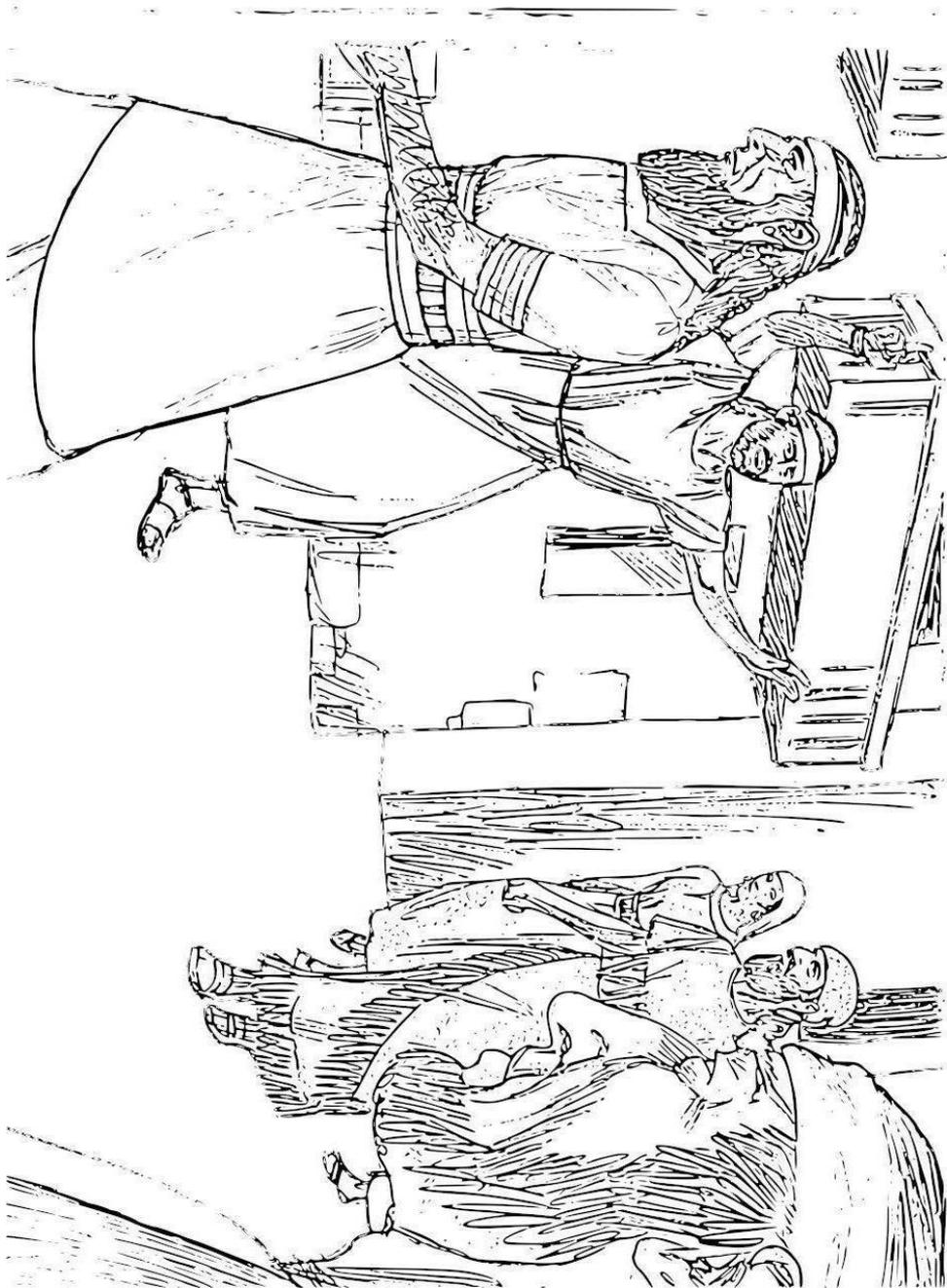
Thanks be to God!

SERMON • “The Gospel Can Change Anyone” (Rev. Eric Costa)

The Word of God is one of the chief Elements of our Worship. God reveals himself to us in the word of his grace (Acts 20:32) for our relationship and life with him. If he did not do this, we would have no hope of knowing him as he truly is, and no hope of our salvation.

But God loves us, so he sent his Son, the Word of God himself, into the world to make himself known to us (Jn. 1:1-18). God’s Spirit inspired the written Word that we have in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). And God has called teachers to build up his people in his Word for love and service (Eph. 4:11-16).

God is a speaking God, and his Word to us is Good News (Rom. 15:4). It is a “Means of Grace” that he uses, by his Spirit, to grow us in our faith. We listen in prayerful anticipation of his good work in our lives.





THE UPPER ROOM



VOWS FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving his displeasure, and without hope save in his sovereign mercy?
2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon him alone for salvation as he is offered in the Gospel?
3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?
4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?
5. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?

PASSING OF THE PEACE • Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

(Greet with the words, *"The peace of Christ be with you."*)

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE AND PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION • 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

THE MYSTERIUM FIDEI

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
 Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. (1 Cor. 5:7-8)
 The gifts of God for the people of God.

GIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

We respond to the Gospel with trust in God and in his work for us in Jesus Christ. We join with the Church throughout history and around the world as we publicly **confess faith** in Christ (Mt. 10:32).

Just as we are united to Jesus by faith, we are also united to one another in his Spirit (Eph. 2:11-22). We maintain and show our unity as we **share his peace** (Eph. 4:3).

The Lord's Supper (also called Communion or the Eucharist) is the high point of Worship. Communion with God is the whole purpose of our creation and salvation in Christ.

All who confess faith in Jesus Christ may partake of this Sacrament: baptized members of a congregation that proclaims the Gospel, who are at peace with God and with their brothers and sisters in Christ, and who seek God's grace to live more faithfully for him in this world.

Please come forward after the musicians. The cup with the ribbon contains grape juice for those who do not want wine. We partake by intinction; we dip the bread into the cup.

Before The Throne Of God Above

Text: Charitie Lees Bancroft • Music: Vikki Cook • ©1997 Sovereign Grace Worship

Alto

Be-fore the throne of God a - bove I have a
strong and per-fect plea A great High Priest whose name is
love Who ev-er lives and pleads for me My name is gra-ven on His
hands My name is writ - ten on His heart I know that
while in heav'n He stands No tongue can bid me thence de -
part No tongue can bid me thence de - part

The musical score is written for an Alto voice part. It consists of six staves of music in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

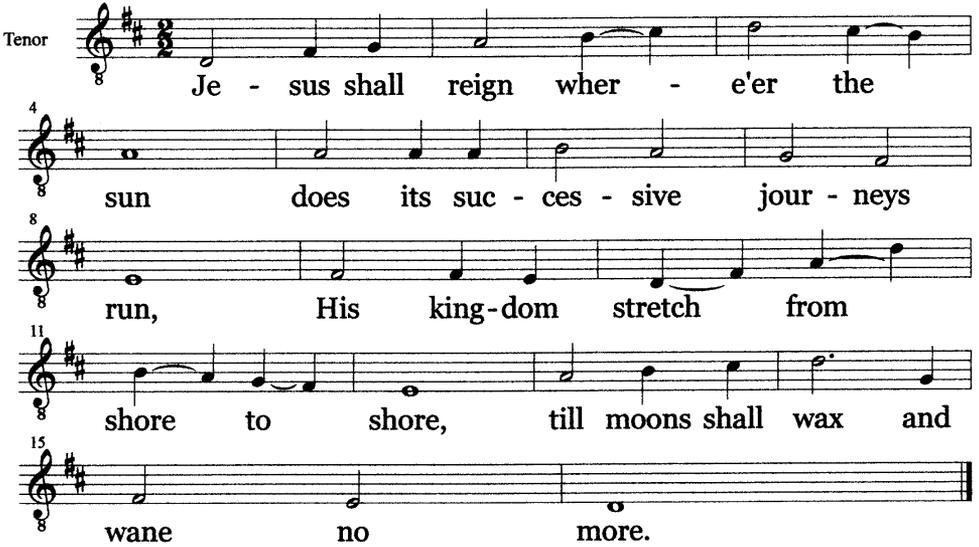
When Satan tempts me to despair, and tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look to see Him there, who made an end of all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free,
For God, the Just, is satisfied to look on Him and pardon me,
To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there! the risen Lamb, my perfect, spotless Righteousness,
The Great unchangeable I Am, the King of glory and of grace.
One with Himself I cannot die, my soul is purchased by His blood,
My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my Savior and my God,
With Christ my Savior and my God,
With Christ my Savior and my God.

Jesus Shall Reign Where'er The Sun

Text: Isaac Watts • Music: John Hatton • Public Domain

Tenor



Je - sus shall reign wher - e'er the
sun does its suc - ces - sive jour - neys
run, His king - dom stretch from
shore to shore, till moons shall wax and
wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made, and praises throng to crown his head.
His name like sweet perfume shall rise with every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue dwell on his love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim their early blessings on his name.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns: the prisoners leap to lose their chains,
The weary find eternal rest, and all who suffer want are blest.

Let every creature rise and bring the highest honors to our King,
Angels descend with songs again, and earth repeat the loud amen.

