

**Drawn Up Into God's Presence:
Reading the Book of Common Prayer through the lens of Hebrews 12:22-25**

What is happening when we worship God? Hebrews 12:22-25 sheds some light on this subject:

You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Themes from that rich Biblical text shape and inform the prayerbook's theology of worship.

In this four-week series, the Rector will seek to demonstrate how Cranmer utilized the theology of passages like Hebrews 12:22-25 to shape the theology of worship that we find in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Our objective will be to mature in our capacity to "set forth (God's) most worthy praise" through a prayerful study of this portion of God's Word. Our tentative outline is as follows:

10/9 – A Spiritual Fellowship: In the Company of an Invisible World (Hebrews 12:22a)

- ... *you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem ...*
- ... *we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son* (BCP)

10/16 – An Immortal Fellowship: In the Company of Angels and Archangels (Heb 12:22b)

- *(you have come) ... to innumerable angels in festal gathering*
- *Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name ...* (BCP)

10/23 – A Universal Fellowship: In the Company of the Great Cloud of Witnesses (Heb 12:23a & c)

- ... *you have come to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven ... and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect*
- ... *the blessed company of all faithful people* (BCP)

10/30 – A Divine Fellowship: In the Company of the Holy Trinity (Heb 23b, 24a)

- *(you have come) ... to God, the judge of all ... and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant*
- *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts ... Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High* (BCP).

11/6 – NO CLASS (Parish Potluck Lunch)

11/13 – NO CLASS (Special Parish Event)

11/20 – A Redeemed Fellowship: In the Company of His Sons & Daughters (Heb 12:24b)

- *(you have come) ... to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel*
- ... *heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of (Christ's) most precious death and passion.* (BCP)

11/27 – NO CLASS (Advent Wreath Making)