



THE
BLESSING
OF *Hope*



Gracehill
CHURCH

The logo for Gracehill Church features a stylized graphic of a church building with a steeple, composed of white outlines. Below the graphic, the name "Gracehill" is written in a white, elegant script font, and the word "CHURCH" is written in a smaller, white, all-caps sans-serif font.

December 13, 2020

ORDER OF WORSHIP
December 13, 2020
Third Sunday of Advent

Song of Gathering *Hope is Alive*

After the silence of waiting so long
We hear a baby's first cry
And into our midnight
A heavenly song
Whispers that hope is alive
Oh joy to the world on this holy night

Chorus:

So sing with the angels that fill up the sky
Heaven broke through and now hope is alive
He is right here among us
Our god is with us tonight
And hope is alive

In an old stable beneath the bright stars
A young mother is holding her son
Oh the beauty of feeling the beat of God's heart
That tells us that we are not alone
Oh, our Emmanuel has come

Into our aching, into our breaking
Into our longing to be made whole
Your arms are reaching, Your love is holding us close
Into our suffering, into our weeping
Into this need we have to be known
Your arms are reaching, Your love is holding us close

Welcome and Announcements

Song of Gathering: This first song of the service is meant to prepare our minds and hearts for worship. Feel free to sing along or simply meditate as we begin our time worshiping God.

Advent Reading *Luke 2:8-14*

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Song of Praise

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:

Saints before the altar bending
Watching long in hope and fear
Suddenly the Lord descending
In his temple shall appear

Refrain:

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

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by
night,
God with man is now residing;
yonder shines the infant light:

Call to Worship: We worship because we are called to do so. This call, usually taken from a psalm, is an invitation into the presence of God; to worship and praise him.

Song of Praise: We enter into God's presence praising him for who he is, and delighting in his desire to be in relationship with us.

Prayer of Adoration

(concluding with the Lord's Prayer)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Call to Confession *Jeremiah 2:11b-13*

But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Prayer of Confession

(followed by Silent Confession)
Adapted from John Knox's Liturgy of 1560

Almighty God, we are unworthy to come into your presence, because of our many sins. We do not deserve any grace or mercy from you, if you dealt with us as we deserve. We have sinned against you, O Lord, and we have offended you. And yet, O Lord, as we acknowledge our sins and offenses, so also do we acknowledge you to be a merciful God, a loving and favorable Father, to all who turn to you.

And so we humbly ask you, for the sake of Christ your Son, to show mercy to us, and forgive us all our offenses. Forgive the sins of our youth, and the sins of our old age. By your Spirit, O God, take possession of our hearts, so that, not only the actions of our life, but also the words of our mouths, and the smallest thought of our minds, may be guided and governed by you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Prayer of Adoration: Praying is essential to worship. As we pray, we begin by adoring God for who he is and what he has done through his son Jesus. We conclude this prayer by reciting together the Lord's Prayer.

Call to Confession: As we praise God, and through the Spirit showing us, we become aware of our own imperfections in light of our perfect God. In love, God calls us to freely and openly confess our sins before him.

Confession of Sin: Sin is not only something that we've done wrong. Rather, it's a state of being that we're born into, and that we need saving from. It is impossible to conquer sin on our own, or make amends for it by our own actions. Our only hope is to turn to Christ, asking that he forgive and conquer sin for us, and - by grace alone and through faith alone - save us.

Assurance of Forgiveness *Isaiah 54:7-8*

For a brief moment I deserted you,
but with great compassion I will gather you.
In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you,
but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,"
says the Lord, your Redeemer.

Song of Thanks *Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming*

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore to men a Savior
When half-spent was the night.

This Flower, whose fragrance
tender
With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
The darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us
And lightens every load

O Savior child of Mary
Who felt our human woe
O Savior King of Glory
Who dost our weakness know
Bring us at length we pray
To the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.

Assurance of Forgiveness: As we confess our sin, God offers us the assurance that, in Jesus, we are forgiven and loved regardless of what we've done in the past. Because of Jesus, we are no longer condemned by our sin, but are brought into new life by the Spirit.

Song of Thanks: Knowing that we are forgiven, and knowing that Jesus has reconciled us with God the Father, we sing with thankful hearts.

Sermon The Cost of Rest

Central text *Ruth 3*

¹Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you? ²Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. ³Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do." ⁵And she replied, "All that you say I will do."

⁶So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. ⁷And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! ⁹He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer." ¹⁰And he said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman. ¹²And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. ¹³Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."

Sermon: Though spoken by a person, we are to hear the sermon as God speaking to us. A sermon is a study in God's Word, the announcement of the good news in Christ, and an invitation to apply the truth of God's Word to our daily lives. At Gracehill, our sermons are not generally based on certain themes; rather, we study through individual books of the Bible.

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. ¹⁶ And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, ¹⁷ saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" ¹⁸ She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."

Communion

Song of Response

What Child is This?

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through;
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh
The babe, the son, of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high
The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy for Christ is born
The babe, the son, of Mary.

Song of Response: We sing in response to the hearing of God's faithfulness and love for his people, as revealed in his son Jesus.

Benediction

Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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.

Benediction: As we conclude the service, the benediction is a blessing by God, as found in Scripture, for us individually and as a united church. We take this blessing with us as we - carrying the light of the gospel - go out into a dark world, that others may see the Light.

Doxology: In the Greek - doxologia, a word (logos) of glory (doxa). The doxology is an ancient hymn of praise, and has been part of the worship service in many churches for centuries. It is sung in response to the Lord's abundant grace for us and his church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Combined Christmas Eve service with Christ Church: We will be having a combined Christmas Eve service with Christ Church. The service will begin at 6:30pm, and you are invited to attend either in-person (register online through their website, www.christ-churchgr.org), in Christ Church's parking lot via radio broadcast, or by watching the live-stream on Gracehill's YouTube channel (link provided at www.gracehillgr.church). Please note that if you attend in-person, there will be singing outside, so please dress accordingly.

Get Connected: If you would like to be added to the weekly email list, schedule a time to meet with Ben, or would like to submit prayer requests, please send an email to office@gracehillgr.church

If you'd like to meet to find out more about Gracehill, or ways to get connected, please contact Ben Seneker at: 828.656.3453, or email benseneker@gracehillgr.church; or contact elder Ken Morse at gkmorse60@gmail.com

