

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

December 24, 2017

*To protect the Worship environment,
please, no drinks in the Sanctuary, and remember to turn off cell phones.*

THE GATHERING

*Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.

(chorus)

Glo- - -ria in excelsis Deo,

Glo- - -ria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heav'nly song?

(repeat chorus)

Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

(repeat chorus)

See within a manger laid Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth!
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, with us sing our Savior's birth.

(repeat chorus)

TEXT: Traditional French carol MUSIC: Traditional French melody

*THE ANNOUNCEMENT

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and he shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. Isaiah 9:6,7a

*THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION

*THE LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE

Steven and Grace Greene and family

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP: Micah 5:2-5

***The Solid Rock**

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, His covenant, His blood support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found,
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand, all other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

TEXT: Edward Mote MUSIC: William B. Bradbury

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH: The Nicene Creed

**ALL: We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only –begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;
by whom all things were made;
who for us and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary,
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried;
and the third day he rose again according to the Scripture,
and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.**

**And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets;
and we believe in the one holy catholic and apostolic church;
we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;
and we look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ALL: Gracious Father, we acknowledge and confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed; we have not loved you with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength; we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. Deepen within us our sorrow for the wrong we have done, and the good we have left undone. Lord, you are full of compassion and grace, slow to anger, and rich in mercy; there is always forgiveness with you! Restore to us the joy of your salvation. Bind up that which is broken. Give light to our minds, strength to our wills, and rest to our souls. Speak to each of us through your word, and may it abide with us, until it has produced in us, your holy will. Amen.

PRIVATE (Silence is kept for private confession)

LEADER: Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Hebrews 2:14-18

ALL: We know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: He was rich and yet for our sake he became poor so that by his poverty we might become rich. (based on 2 Corinthians 8.9)

*THE READING FROM 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

*Faithfulness to Generations

Loud may the ocean roar
Our God still calms her shores
No sorrow shakes, no sadness will sway
For He is good

Dark is the swelling tide
Our God is still her guide
Though pain surrounds, our Shepherd is near
For He is good

(chorus)
The Lord is gracious, He is slow to anger
He abounds in love; our God is rich in mercy
God holds goodness for His people,
Glory for His kingdom; faithfulness to generations.

Close may our sin pursue
Our God makes all things new
No promise He gives can Satan undo
Our God is good

(repeat chorus)

For neither height nor depth
Nor powers of hell nor sin
Can separate the love of God [from us] (2x)

(repeat chorus 2x)

Faithfulness to generations (2x)

***You Alone Can Rescue**

Who, oh Lord, could save themselves, their own soul could heal?
Our shame was deeper than the sea, Your grace is deeper still

(repeat)

(chorus)

You alone can rescue, You alone can save
You alone can lift us from the grave
You came down to find us, led us out of death
To You alone belongs the highest praise

You, oh Lord, have made a way, the great divide You healed
For when our hearts were far away Your love went further still
Yes, Your love goes further still

(repeat chorus 2x)

To You alone belongs the highest praise (2x)

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THE DEDICATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Although giving is a significant part of worship, we do not collect the offering during our service. Two boxes are placed by the doors to receive your offering. Tithes and offerings for the General Fund are placed in the box without the “steeple.” Offerings for the Building Fund are to be placed in the box with the “steeple,” with check payable to Grace EPC Building Fund.

THE WELCOME

At this time, please fill out the friendship register found at the side aisle. As the register is passed, please note those with whom you are worshipping so that you can greet one another after the service. If this is your first Sunday at Grace, please accept our invitation to worship with us again soon. If you would like information about Grace EPC, please take one of our brochures from the table in the narthex. If you are looking for a church home, please let us know and we will be happy to visit with you.

(CHILDREN ARE DISMISSED FOR THEIR CLASSES AT THIS TIME:
K-4TH GRADE — LINE UP IN THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE SANCTUARY.

(THOSE WHO ARRIVE AFTER THE SERVICE HAS BEGUN MAY BE SEATED AT THIS TIME)

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE READING OF SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 40:12-31

RESPONSE TO THE READING OF THE WORD

**All: The grass withers and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord remains forever.**

THE MESSAGE FROM SCRIPTURE

Bill Vogler

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Table of the Lord is open to each person who acknowledges himself/herself to be a sinner in the sight of God and without hope for salvation except in His sovereign mercy; who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of sinners; who receives and depends upon Christ alone for salvation as He is offered in the gospel; and who promises and resolves in humble reliance upon the Holy Spirit, to endeavor to live as becomes a follower of Christ.

If this is your profession of faith, you are welcome at the Lord's Table. As you come, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup and eat. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him.

Peace Has Come

Behold the star of Bethlehem, the Word of God has become flesh
Unto us a child is born, the Savior of this broken world

(chorus)

Oh, hear the angel voices, sing come let us adore Him
Peace has come for our King is with us

Fully God and fully man, He comes for all with open hands
He rules with love on David's throne, all praise belongs to Christ alone

(repeat chorus)

Holy, holy, holy, Jesus, we adore Thee
Peace has come for our King is with us
Holy, holy, holy, Jesus, we adore Thee
Peace has come for our King is with us

O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord
We'll give him all the glory, we'll give him all the glory,
We'll give him all the glory, Christ the Lord.

(repeat chorus)

Rock of Ages
(When the Day Seems Long)

Rock of Ages, when the day seems long
From this labor and this heartache, I have come
The skies will wear out, but you remain the same
Rock of Ages, I praise your name

Rock of Ages, you have brought me near
You have poured out your life-blood, your love, your tears
To make this stone heart come alive again
Rock of Ages, forgive my sin.

(chorus)

Rock of Ag - es, Rock of Ag - es.
Bind your children until the kingdom comes.
Rock of Ages your will be done

Rock of Ages, when in want or rest,
My desperate need for such a Savior I confess
Pull these idols out from my heart embrace.
Rock of Ages, I need your grace.

Rock of Ages, broken scorned for me.
Who am I that you would die to make me free?
To give me glory, you took the death and pain.
Rock of Ages, my Offering.

(repeat chorus)

Rock of Ages, "It is done!" you cried.
The curtain's torn and I see justice satisfied
Now write your mercy, on my heart and hands.
Rock of Ages, in faith I stand.

Rock of Ages, my great hope secure.
Your promise holds just like an anchor to my soul
Bind your children with cords of love and grace.
Rock of Ages, we give you praise.
Rock of Ages, we give you praise.

Words by Sandra McCracken / Music by Kevin Twit.CCLI245668

Your Great Name

Lost are saved, find their Way
At the sound of Your great name.
All condemned, feel no shame
At the sound of Your great name.

Every fear has no place
At the sound of Your great name.
The enemy, he has to leave
At the sound of Your great name.

(chorus)

Jesus, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain for us,
Son of God and Man, You are high and lifted up
That all the world will praise Your great name.

All the weak find their strength
At the sound of Your great name.
Hungry souls receive grace
At the sound of Your great name.

The Fatherless, they find their rest
At the sound of Your great name.
The sick are healed and the dead are raised
At the sound of Your great name.

(repeat chorus)

Redeemer, My Healer, Lord Almighty
My Savior, Defender, You are my King. (2x)

(repeat chorus 2x)

Your great name

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THE PRAYER ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ALL: Lord, stir up, we pray, your power, and come among us, and with great might help us; that though our sins and wickedness hinder us in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of your Son our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer, 1928)

THE SENDING

***THE BENEDICTION**

***THE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

ALL: Christ has come. Christ is coming again. Hallelujah!

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER

It is our sincere desire to pray effectively for the particular needs of those worshipping with us this morning. If you have a prayer concern that you want shared with the congregation during the prayers of the people, please call the church office or one of the elders prior to the service with your request. If you desire prayer on a personal matter, we invite you to meet with the elders in the front pews after the Benediction.

Available for prayer after worship: Darby Ritter & Joe Harvey

*Congregation will stand.