

GRACE COMMUNITY

Presbyterian Church, PCA

ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

December 15, 2024

10:30am

Reflection: “The foes of the kingdom have long contemplated murder, but the execution of John proves that some, at least, will act. More unwelcome events follow John’s murder. During this stage of Jesus ministry, the crowds grasp nothing, the Jewish leaders threaten violence, and the disciples make painfully slow progress.” *Ian Duguid*

Prelude

Welcome

—————**WORSHIP IN PRAISE**—————

Silent Preparation

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.*

Call to Worship.....*from Psalm 115*

Minister: Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory,
for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!

People: **You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!**

Minister: May you be blessed by the Lord, who made heaven and
earth!

ALL: **We will bless the Lord from this time forth and
forevermore. Praise the Lord!**

Hymn of Adoration.....*God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen* (#211)



1. God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis -
2. From God our heav'n - ly Fa - ther, a bless - ed an - gel
3. "Fear not, then," said the an - gel, "let noth - ing you af -
4. The shep - herds at those tid - ings re - joic - ed much in



may, re - mem - ber Christ our Sav - ior was
came; and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought
fright; this day is born a Sav - ior of
mind, and left their flocks a - feed - ing, in



born on Christ - mas day, to save us all from
tid - ings of the same: how that in Beth - le -
a pure vir - gin bright, to free all those who
tem - pest, storm and wind; and went to Beth - le -



Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a - stray;
hem was born the Son of God by name.
trust in him from Sa - tan's pow'r and might."
hem straight - way, the Son of God to find.

REFRAIN



O tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy,



O tid - ings of com - fort and joy.

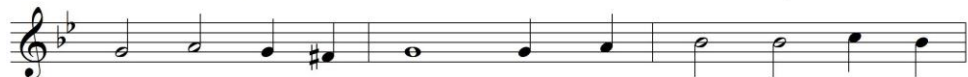
The exact origins of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" are somewhat shrouded in mystery, but it's believed to be one of the oldest Christmas carols, dating back to the 1500s or earlier. The carol likely originated in England and was originally sung by night watchmen as they patrolled the streets. The lyrics focus on the birth of Jesus Christ and the hope and joy it brings to humanity. The phrase "God rest you merry" is a traditional English blessing meaning "God grant you peace and happiness."

Prayer of Adoration

Hymn of Preparation.....*Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted* (#257)



1.Strick-en, smit - ten, and af - flict - ed, see him
 2.Tell me, ye who hear him groan - ing, was there
 3.Ye who think of sin but light - ly nor sup -
 4.Here we have a firm foun - da - tion, here the



dy - ing on the tree! 'Tis the Christ by man re -
 ev - er grief like his? Friends thro' fear his cause dis -
 pose the e - vil great here may view its na - ture
 ref - uge of the lost; Christ's the Rock of our sal -



ject - ed; yes, my soul, 'tis he, 'tis he! 'Tis the
 own - ing, foes in - sult - ing his dis - tress; man - y
 right - ly, here its guilt may es - ti - mate. Mark the
 va - tion, his the name of which we boast. Lamb of



long - ex - pect - ed Proph - et, Da - vid's
 hands were raised to wound him, none would
 sac - ri - fice ap - point - ed, see who
 God, for sin - ners wound - ed, sac - ri -



son, yet Da - vid's Lord; by his Son God now has
 in - ter - pose to save; but the deep - est stroke that
 bears the aw - ful load; 'tis the Word, the Lord's A -
 fice to can - cel guilt! None shall ev - er be con -



spo - ken: 'tis the true and faith - ful Word.
 pierced him was the stroke that Jus - tice gave.
 noint - ed, Son of Man and Son of God.
 found - ed who on him their hope have built.

Call to Confession

Words of Comfort and Promise.....*Hebrews 9*

Just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Hymn of Response.....*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (#203)*



1.Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the
 2.Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er -
 3.Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of



new - born King; peace on earth, and mer - cy mild,
 last - ing Lord! Late in time be - hold him come,
 Righ-teous-ness! Light and life to all he brings,



God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye
 off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the
 ris'n with heal - ing in his wings. Mild he lays his



na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies,
 God - head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,
 glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,



with th'an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"
 pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
 born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec-ond birth.

REFRAIN



Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King."

Confession of Faith.....Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A 73-75
Ruling Elder, Sean Henry

Elder: Which is the eighth commandment?

People: The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.

Elder: What is required in the eighth commandment?

People: The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others.

Elder: What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

People: The eighth commandment forbids whatsoever does or may unjustly hinder our own or our neighbor's wealth or outward estate.

The First Reading of God's Word.....Leviticus 18:1-6;16
pp 96-87

The Second Reading of God's Word.....Matthew 14:1-21
p 820

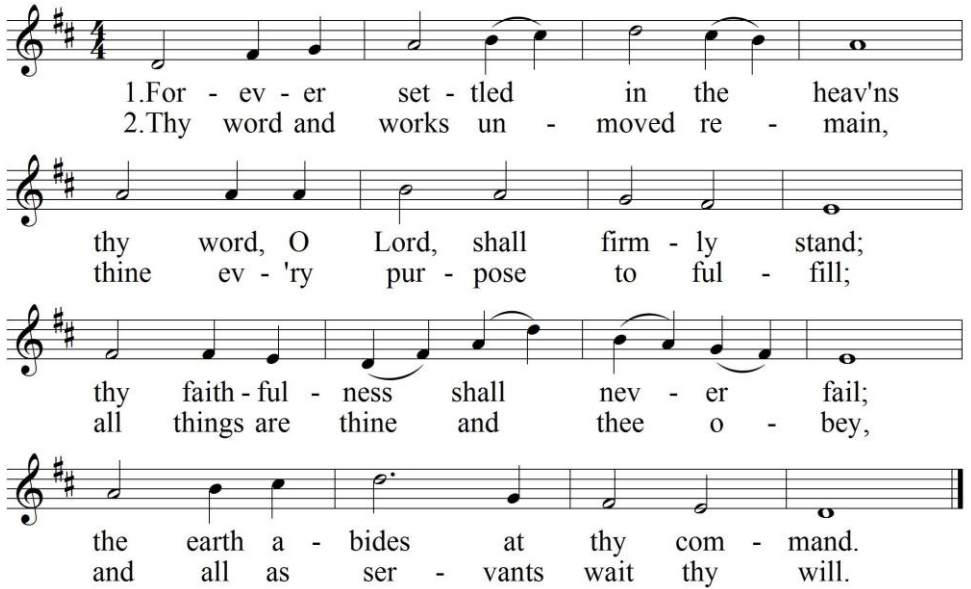
Reader: This is the Word of God.

People: Amen!

Prayer of Consecration and Illumination

We offer an optional **Children's Lesson** for children 4 years old through 1st grade. If you choose to have your children participate, you may dismiss them for CL as we sing the hymn of response. Please know we welcome and encourage your children to remain with you during the sermon. However, in the CL they will be hearing from the same text that the sermon is based upon, so you may discuss the message as a family after church if you wish to do so.

Hymn of Response.....*Forever Settled in the Heavens (#59)*



1. For - ev - er set - tled in the heav'ns
2. Thy word and works un - moved re - main,
thy word, O Lord, shall firm - ly stand;
thine ev - 'ry pur - pose to ful - fill;
thy faith - ful - ness shall nev - er fail;
all things are thine and thee o - bey,
the earth a - bides at thy com - mand.
and all as ser - vants wait thy will.

Hearing from God's Word.....*Matthew 14:1-21*
Rev. Kyle Oliphint *Death and Life*

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Please see instructions on the inside back cover of your bulletin.

“An expression which grated on my ear the other evening from the lips of a certain good man ran something in this fashion: ‘There is a Heaven prepared for all of you, but if you are not faithful you will not win it. There is a crown in Heaven laid up for you, but if you are not faithful it will be without a wearer.’

I do not believe it. I cannot believe it. That the crown of Eternal Life, which is laid up for the blessed of the Father will ever be given to anybody else or left without a possessor, I do not believe. I dare not conceive of crowns in Heaven and nobody to wear them. Do you think that in Heaven, when the whole number of saints is complete, you will find a number of unused crowns?

‘Ah, what are these for? Where are the heads for these?’ ‘They are in Hell.’ Then, Brother, I have no particular desire to be in Heaven. If all the family of Christ are not there, my soul will be wretched and forlorn because of their sad loss, because I am in union with them all. If one son that believed in Jesus does not get there I shall lose respect for the promise and respect for the Master, too. He must keep His word to every soul that rests on Him.”

Charles Spurgeon

Communion Hymns

O Jesus, We Adore Thee (#255) –*Arthur T. Russell/Welsh Melody*

1. O Jesus, we adore Thee,
Upon the cross, our King!
We bow our hearts before Thee,
Thy gracious Name we sing.
That Name hath brought salvation,
That Name in life our stay,
Our peace, our consolation,
When life shall fade away.

2. Yet doth the world disdain Thee,
Still passing by the cross;
Lord, may our hearts retain Thee;
All else we count but loss.

Ah, Lord, our sins arraigned Thee,
And nailed Thee to the tree;
Our pride, our Lord, disdained Thee;
Yet deign our Hope to be.

3. O glorious King, we bless Thee,
No longer pass Thee by;
O Jesus, we confess Thee
The Son enthroned on high.
Lord, grant to us remission;
Life through Thy death restore;
Yea, grant us fruition
Of life forevermore.

Sing We the Song of Emmanuel – *Boswell/Papa/Townend/Getty*

1. Sing we the song of Emmanuel,
This the Christ who was long foretold.
Lo in the shadows of Bethlehem,
Promise of dawn now our eyes behold
God Most High in a manger laid.
Lift your voices and now proclaim
Great and glorious, Love has come to us.
Join now with the hosts of heaven.

2. Come we to welcome Emmanuel,
King who came with no crown or throne.
Helpless He lay, the Invincible Maker of
Mary, now Mary's son.
O what wisdom to save us all,

Shepherds, sages, before Him fall.
Grace and majesty, what humility
Come on bended knee, adore Him.

3. Go spread the news of Emmanuel,
Joy and peace for the weary heart.
Lift up your heads,
For your King has come,
Sing for the Light overwhelms the dark.
Glory shining for all to see,
Hope alive, let the gospel ring.
God has made a way, He will have the
praise, tell the world His name is Jesus

Blessed Assurance (#693) – *Fanny Crosby/Phoebe Knapp*

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain:

*This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.*

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture

Now burst on my sight;
Angels descending,
Bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
Refrain

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with his goodness,
Lost in his love.
Refrain

WORSHIP IN GRATITUDE

(Please consider filling out your prayer request **now** and dropping it in the offering plate.)

Offertory.....*Thou Who Wast Rich Beyond All Splendor*

*Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor,
All for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor,
All for love's sake becomes poor.*

*Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising
Heavenwards by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man.*

Closing Hymn.....*Lift up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates (#198)*



1. Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates! Be -
2. A help - er just he comes to thee, his
3. O blest the land, the cit - y blest, where
4. Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make
5. Re - deem - er come! I o - pen wide my
6. So come, my Sov - ereign, en - ter in! Let



hold the King of glo - ry waits; the
char - iot is hu - mil - i - ty, his
Christ the Rul - er is con - fessed! O
it a tem - ple set a - part from
heart to thee; here Lord, a - bid! Let
new and no - bler life be - gin! Thy



King of kings is draw - ing near, the
king - ly crown is ho - li - ness, his
hap - py hearts and hap - py homes to
earth - ly use for heav'n's em - ploy, a -
me thy in - ner pres - ence feel; thy
Ho - ly Spir - it guide us on, un -



Sav - ior of the world is here.
sep - ter, pi - ty in dis - tress.
whom this King in tri - umph comes!
dorned with prayer and love and joy.
grace and love in me re - veal.
til the glo - rious crown be won.

Benediction

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Week's Sermon Passage

Matthew 14:22-36

Financials

First Three Quarters of 2024: \$599,354.51

Upcoming Events

- **GCPC Christmas Card Distribution Bins are here!** Sending Christmas cards to our fellow church members is a wonderful way to bless each other. If you usually give out 5 to 100 cards to our church family we hope this process will be helpful. Simply bring your written, ready-to-go cards to church and place them in the right folders (alphabetized by family last name). The bins are on the table in the entryway. Please make sure to check your folder and empty it out on a regular basis.
- **Membership at GCPC:** If you are interested in becoming a member of GCPC, please contact our Ministry Coordinator, Sherrie Hamby (officgcpcfw@gmail.com). She will coordinate a meeting with the elders and those interested in becoming members of our church. We will publicly receive our newest members during our worship service on **Sunday, April 6th, 2025**. But those who meet with the elders and are received into membership will be full members from that point on. The public reception is for our congregation to see our newest members.
 - **Our new members in 2024 and who were received in April, 2024:** Sara Sims; Stephen and Courtney Woods (Garrett, Hannah, Aaron), Jacob Edgar*, Lucy Hames*, Emma Richie
 - **Our new members in 2024 and who were publicly received in October, 2024:** Ron and Patti Hendricks; Jeff and Ginger Knutson; Jane Leuty; Ben, Lisbeth and Sylvana Urena; *Christine and Fynn Bentson*, Albert Harrelson*, Ella Herman*
 - **Our new members in 2024 who will be publicly received in April, 2025:** Jess and Judy Alonso, Gabriel and Kathryn Ingram, Kelly Proffit, Kevin and Bonnie Saunders, Sam and

Dorinda Wetselaar (Jeffery and Benjamin), Andrew White,
Nora Fickle*, Mia Lutz*, Lilly Thacker*

*Children becoming communing members (coming to the Lord's Table for the first time)

- We now have a **search committee** tasked with finding the person God has for us. Please pray for them as they undertake this work: Phil Bassett, Christine Bassett, Dan Bent, Rhett Bentson, Bethany Brooks, Jerry Hames, Sean Henry, Bob James, Ryan Lutz and Kathy Sheffield
- **Members of GCPC:** We are now in the process of nominating men for ordained office. Our nominations close on **January 12**. Ballots and booklets that explain the process are available in the foyer. Please pray for this process, for the minds and hearts of our members and for the clarity and wisdom of the men who may give permission to be nominated. Finally, begin to pray now for the many months of the training process that will begin in early 2025.

Guys of Grace (GoG) (text @guysofgr to the number 81010 for periodic updates on all things GoG related)

- **GoG Fellowship Nights:** These **bi-monthly fellowship** nights are meant as an informal time for our guys to get together and discuss/do the things that interest them—theological discussion, sports, fire pit, pipe smoking, etc. These events are BYOB (Beef, Brew), and we will have the grills running. Our next fellowship night will be **January 24th, 2025 at 6:00pm** at the church. Contact Jordan Sims for more information jorsim613@gmail.com.
- **Men's Group:** The Guys of Grace study will be meeting the **1st and 3rd Wednesdays each month**. They will meet **again this Wednesday, December 18th at 7pm**. The guys have been studying the books Esther and Ruth this year and meet in the conference room. Please contact Sean Henry for more information: seanph10@yahoo.com.
- **Tuesday Morning Men's Prayer Meeting:** 6:15am every Tuesday in the Conference Room.

Ladies of Grace (LoG) (text @loggr to the number 81010 for periodic updates on all things LoG related)

- **Ladies' Winter/Spring Bible Study:** Our new study begins on **January 21**. We will read *What a Royal Mess: A Study of 1 and 2 Kings* by Susan Tyner (\$13). Sign-ups have begun in the church foyer.
Tuesday morning in-person (with childcare): January 21-April 1
Thursday evening Zoom: January 23 - April 3
- **Ladies' Prayer Meeting:** Thursdays at 10:00am Please contact Robbi Parker for Zoom link: oarsinsailsup@gmail.com.

Missions of Grace (MoG)

- **Save the Date:** GCPC Missions Conference **March 1-2**.
- **Missions of Grace Spotlight for December is Jamie and Jen Burkemper:**
They are the team leaders in Madrid, Spain, for a new RUF work alongside a new church plant. Please pray that the Lord will provide the funds needed to renovate and run the new center for students and the church plant. Pray that God would draw many students to Christ and for them to be disciplined well. Jen has chronic illness; pray for the Lord to sustain her.

Student Ministries of Grace (SMoG) (text @smogrem to 81010 for periodic reminders of all things SMoG related)

- **All Events Listed:** Please see SMoG page on our website: <https://gcpcfw.org/resources/student-ministries-of-grace/> or scan the QR code for a full calendar of events for SMoG through December 2024.



- **SMoG will meet this Wednesday night, December 18th for their annual Christmas Party.**

