

GRACE COMMUNITY

Presbyterian Church, PCA

ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

December 22, 2024

10:30am

Reflection: “This miracle is recorded, in an unusual grouping of Gospels: in Matthew, Mark (6:45–52), and John (6:16–21) but not in Luke. Of the three, Matthew alone describes Peter’s walk on water. Devout readers are captivated by the courage or audacity of Peter, but they commonly reduce the event to a moral tale. Tellingly, when teachers use Peter as a moral example, they draw opposite lessons from him. Some say Peter exemplifies the man of faith who risks great things for God and tastes glory by walking in Jesus’ steps. Others chide Peter for foolhardy bravura: he takes his eyes off Jesus, and it nearly costs him his life. But for Matthew, Jesus is the main character.”

Dan Doriani

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 Matt 2, 1 Tim 3*

Minister: And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.

People: **He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.**

Hymn of Adoration.....*High King of Heaven*



1.High King of Heav-en, you stepped from your throne,
2.Je - sus my Sav - ior, I bow at your birth.
3.Gra - cious Re - deem-er, you looked up - on me.



took on our flesh and made this world your home.
Awed by the mer - cy that brought you to earth.
Long be - fore E - den, you knew my great need.



Trem - bling in rev-'rence, Lord, we look a - bove.
Leav - ing the an - gels in glo - ri - ous light
Wo - ven through his - 'try a rich crim-son thread:



O - ver - come by such un - mer - i - ted love.
for the deep sha-dows of Beth - le - hem's night.
Your planned sal - va - tion in this man - ger bed.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

Matthew 1:18-23

Prayer of Adoration

Hymn of Preparation.....O Come, All Ye Faithful (#208)



1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant,
2. God of God, Light of Light;
3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing:



O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
lo, he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove;
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry giv'n;



come and be - hold him born the King of an - gels;
ver - y God, be - got - ten, not cre - a - ted;
glo - ry to God in the high - est;
Word of the Fa - ther, late in flesh ap - pear - ing;



O come let us a - dore him, O come let us a - dore him, O



come let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

—————**WORSHIP IN CONFESSION AND PARDON**—————

Call to Confession

Words of Comfort and Promise.....Matthew 1

An angel of the Lord appeared to him, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Hymn of Response.....Joy to the World (#195)



1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns: let
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and



earth re - ceive her King; let ev - ery
 men their songs em - ploy; while fields and
 thorns in - fest the ground; he comes to
 makes the na - tions prove the glo - ries



heart pre - pare him room, and
 floods, rocks, hills, and plains re -
 make his bless - ings flow far
 of his right - eous - ness and



heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Isaac Watts wrote this text as a paraphrase of Psalm 98. He published it in his *Psalms of David Imitated* (1719) under the heading "The Messiah's Coming and Kingdom."

In stanzas 1 and 2 Watts writes of heaven and earth rejoicing at the coming of the king. An interlude that depends more on Watts' interpretation than the psalm text, stanza 3 speaks of Christ's blessings extending victoriously over the realm of sin. The cheerful repetition of the non-psalm phrase "far as the curse is found" has caused this stanza to be omitted from some hymnals. But the line makes joyful sense when understood from the New Testament eyes through which Watts interprets the psalm. Stanza 4 celebrates Christ's rule over the nations.

—————**WORSHIP AND THE MEANS OF GRACE**—————

Confession of Faith.....*Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A 76-78*
Ruling Elder, Doug Flowers

Elder: Which is the ninth commandment?

People: The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Elder: What is required in the ninth commandment?

People: The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbor’s good name, especially in witness-bearing.

Elder: What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

People: The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or neighbor’s good name.

The First Reading of God’s Word.....Psalm 18:1-19
pp 454-455

The Second Reading of God’s Word.....Matthew 14:22-36
p 820

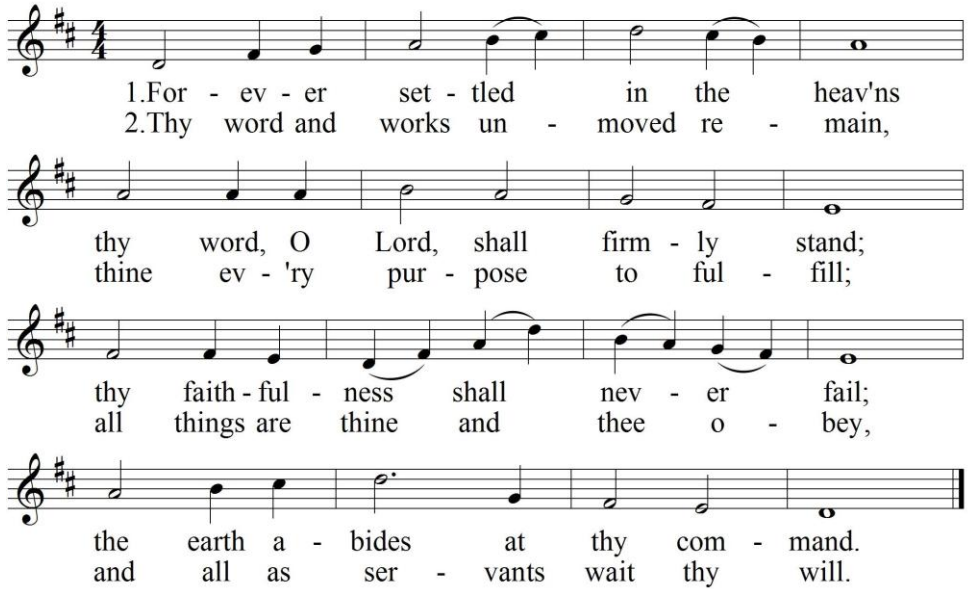
Reader: This is the Word of God.

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 14:22-36

Rev. Kyle Oliphint

Who Is This?

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

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

“God is at peace in himself, and in his presence there is peace. The most repeated negative command in Scripture is ‘fear not.’ It appears 365 times — one for each day of the year — and is usually followed by ‘for I am with you.’ God would have us understand that factoring in his presence always changes the equation.”

Ramon Presson

“Let us ever bear in mind that our blessed Saviour humbled and abased Himself, yielding even to the contemptuous death on the cross, for the comfort of us poor, miserable and damned creatures.”

Martin Luther

“If we regularly beheld the glory of Christ our Christian walk with God would become more sweet and pleasant, our spiritual light and strength would grow daily stronger and our lives would more gloriously represent the glory of Christ. Death would be most welcome to us.”

John Owen

“I have put my soul, as a blank, into the hands of Jesus Christ my Redeemer, and desired him to write upon it what he pleases. I know it will be his own image.”

George Whitefield

Communion Hymns

Good Christian Men, Rejoice – Medieval Latin Carol

1. Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today.
Earth and heav'n before him bow,
And he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

2. Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!

He hath opened heaven's door,
And man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

3. Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!.

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen (#211) – Traditional English Carol

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas Day;
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray.

*Chorus: O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

2. From God our heavenly Father
A blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born

The Son of God by name. *Chorus*

3. "Fear not, then," said the angel,
"Let nothing you afright
This day is born a Savior
Of a pure Virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in Him
From Satan's power and might." *Chorus*

4. The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway
The Son of God to find. *Chorus*

Wonderful Merciful Savior – Dawn Rodgers/Eric Wyse

1. Wonderful, merciful Savior,
Precious Redeemer and friend;
Who would have thought that a lamb Could
rescue the souls of men?
Oh, You rescue the souls of men.

*Chorus: You are the one that we praise,
You are the one we adore.
You give the healing and grace
Our hearts always hunger for,
Oh, our hearts always hunger for.*

2. Counselor, Comforter, Keeper,
Spirit we long to embrace;
You offer hope when our hearts have
Hopelessly lost the way,
Oh, we hopelessly lost the way.
Chorus

3. Almighty, infinite Father,
Faithfully loving Your own;
Here in our weakness You find us
Falling before Your throne,
Oh, we're falling before Your throne

—————**WORSHIP IN GRATITUDE**—————

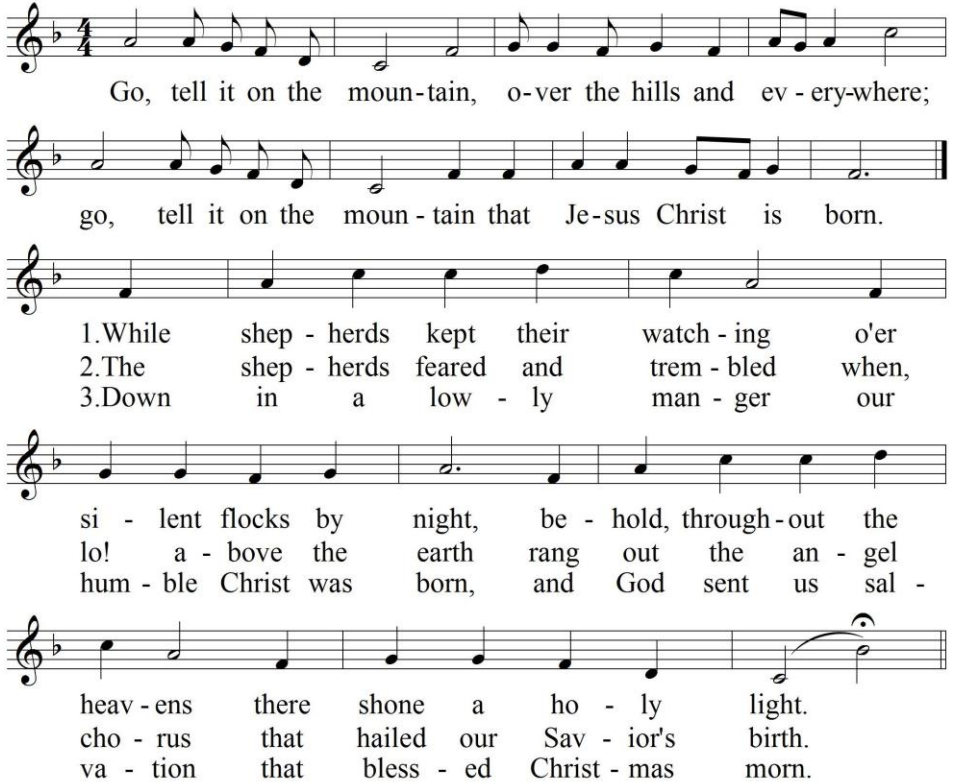
(Please consider filling out your prayer request **now** and dropping it in the offering plate.)

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.....*Go, Tell it on the Mountain (#224)*



Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev-ery-where;
go, tell it on the moun-tain that Je-sus Christ is born.

1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er
2. The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when,
3. Down in a low-ly man-ger our

si-lent flocks by night, be-hold, through-out the
lo! a-bove the earth rang out the an-gel
hum-ble Christ was born, and God sent us sal -

heav-ens there shone a ho-ly light.
cho-rus that hailed our Sav-ior's birth.
va-tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

The refrain comes from Old Testament passages in which praise to God for his acts of deliverance was often shouted, both literally and metaphorically, from the mountaintops (Isa. 42:11). While the three stanzas tell the essence of the Christmas story, the refrain underscores the missionary impetus of the Christian church: "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

Benediction

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Week's Sermon Passage

Matthew 15:1-20

Financials

First Three Quarters of 2024: \$599,354.51

Sunday School

No Sunday School classes next week, 12/29. Sunday School classes resume Sunday, January 5th.

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, Michael and Alexandra Amidon (Esther and Evelyn), 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 take New Year's Day off so they will meet **again Wednesday, January 15th 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 discipled 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.

