

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

If the new man, made in the likeness of sinful flesh, had not taken our old nature; if he, one in substance with the Father, had not accepted to be one in substance with the mother; if he who was alone free from sin had not united our nature to himself—then we would still have been held captive under the power of the devil. We would have been incapable of profiting by the victor's triumph if the battle had been fought outside our nature.

But, by means of this marvelous sharing, the mystery of our rebirth shone out upon us. We would be reborn in newness of spirit through the same Spirit through whom Christ was conceived and born.

Consequently, the evangelist speaks of those who believe at as those *who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

~ Leo the Great (5th cent.),
Letter to the Empress Pulcheria

DECEMBER 15, 2024
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

WELCOME

We are glad you decided to come and worship our God and Father through his Son Jesus Christ by His Spirit with us today! We are a mission church of the Presbyterian Church in America, with deep roots in the reformed catholic¹ tradition. Our mission is to glorify and enjoy God through faithful worship and proclamation of the Gospel, and our goal is to embody the love of God in Christ through our words and deeds, including practical, generous acts of love and service.

We want you to feel welcome, and we've prepared this guide to help you enter body and soul into worship. We deeply believe that worship is not just watching and listening; we are called to be active and engaged in the dialog between the covenant God who speaks and his people who respond. Please note:

- the words of Scripture are in *italics*,
 - **boldface type** indicates congregational participation,
 - words in *red* are guides to what's happening, and
 - the † symbol means everyone stands, as able.
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We have coffee and snacks in the fellowship hall following worship. We hope you will stay for a while so that we can get to know one another a little bit.

If you would like to seek prayer or physical help for any need; if you have questions about anything you have heard or about

- who Jesus is,
- what he has done, or
- why that matters;

or if you would simply like to connect with our pastor, feel free to reach out after the service, or email Pastor Frank at gracepreswt@gmail.com.

gracepcawatertown.org

¹We are catholic Christians because we are in communion with that Church from which the Gospel is spread throughout the world (St. Augustine, 2nd Homily on 1 John).

LORD'S DAY DIVINE SERVICE

The Welcome and Announcements

*You have not come to what may be touched...
You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...
~ Hebrews 12:18a, 22a*

The Prelude

*Take a moment to prepare in silence for worship
and to pray for God's assistance to worship him rightly.*

GOD CALLS US | WE GATHER TOGETHER AND PRAISE HIM

The Apostolic Greeting

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

†The Call to Worship

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Matthew 28:19

Amen!

The LORD be with you! Ruth 2:4

And with your spirit!

Behold, God is my salvation; Isaiah 12:2

I will trust, and will not be afraid;

for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song,

and he has become my salvation.

Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, Isaiah 12:6

for great in our midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth. Let us worship God.

†The Hymn of Praise, p. 10

Of the Father's Love Begotten

† Please stand, as able

†The Opening Prayer

God of grace, ever faithful to your promise: We your people and all the earth rejoice in the hope made manifest in the Savior's first coming. We look forward with longing to his return at the end of time, when he will rend the heavens and come down, and all things will be restored in your Kingdom of peace, happiness, and salvation. Prepare our hearts even now to receive him when he comes, and keep us safe for him in the way of truth, who together with you and the Holy Spirit are Lord forever. AMEN.

O RADIANT DAWN, brightness of the light eternal, and Sun of Righteousness: Come, and give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

†The Response

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O Come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by Thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of light,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

GOD CLEANSSES US | WE CONFESS OUR SINS

The Call to Confession

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8-10
If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

The Confession of Sin, *in unison*

Eternal God, our Father, in whom we live and move and have our being; whose face is hidden from us by our sins, and whose mercy we forget in the blindness of our hearts: Cleanse us, we beseech you, from all our offenses, and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires, that with lowliness and meekness we may draw near to you, confessing our faults, confiding in Your grace, and finding in you our refuge and our strength. Through Jesus Christ Your Son. AMEN.

Take a moment of silence to confess your particular sins to God through Jesus Christ our Advocate and Shield who sits at the God's right hand.

The Proclamation of Forgiveness

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:5-7

The Prayer for Grace, *in unison* Order of Worship for the Reformed Church in the U.S.

Let us lift up our hearts to God in heaven.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

Let us pray together to the Lord:

O Lord, we beseech you: Incline your ear to our prayers, and visit the darkness of our mind with the dayspring from on high; that at the second coming of your Son to judge the world, we may hurry with joy to meet him, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. AMEN.

GOD CONSECRATES US | WE RESPOND IN PRAYER AND OFFERING

The Offering Prayer and Collection of Tithes and Offerings

The Offertory

GOD SPEAKS TO US | WE HEAR IN FAITH

The Scripture Readings for the Third Sunday of Advent

The Old Testament Reading: *Genesis 22:15-18*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

The Epistle Reading: *2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

† The Gospel Reading: *Matthew 16:13-19*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

The Hymn, p.11

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

The Sermon Text: *Revelation 21:9-27*

The Prayer for Illumination

The Sermon

GOD COMMUNES WITH US | WE EAT AND DRINK
WITH THE LORD AND ONE ANOTHER

The Invitation to the Meal and Fencing of the Table

†The Hymn of Preparation, p. 12

Joy to the Word! The Lord is Come, vv. 1, 2

†The Confession of Our Faith, p. 13, *in unison*

The Nicene Creed

†The Passing of the Peace

1 Corinthians 6:11; Romans 5:1

You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

†The Words of Institution

Matthew 26:26-28

† The Prayer of Humble Access, *in unison* *The Book of Common Prayer, 1552*

We do not presume to come to this your table, O Merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your many and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord who ever loves to show mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink his cup, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. AMEN.

The Prayer of Consecration

The Serving of the Elements

Brothers and sisters, lift your eyes from the visible elements and lift up your heart to heaven, where Christ is now, seated at the right hand of the Father, from where he will come again to complete our redemption. In him alone are all the promises of God fulfilled and all Spiritual blessings found.

Come to the Table now in joy of heart, in Spirit-wrought unity, in holy love, and partake of the Feast of Christ, giving thanks for the great love that God has shown us.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!*

† The Hymn of Response, p. 12 Joy to the Word! The Lord is Come, vv. 3,4

The Prayer of Intercession

The Lord's Prayer, *in unison*

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.

GOD COMMISSIONS AND BLESSES US | WE GO OUT TO SERVE GOD

† Closing Hymn, p. 14

May the Grace of Christ our Savior

† The Song of Simeon, p. 14, *in unison*

Luke 2:29-32

† The Commission

Matthew 28:18-20

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

† The Benediction and the People's Amen *Revelation 22: 12-13; Numbers 6:24-26*

Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

So be it! Come, Lord Jesus!

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. AMEN.

Sermon Notes

The Second Vision: The New Jerusalem—the Church

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Unison

1. Of the Fa-ther's love be-got-ten, ere the worlds be-gan to be,
 2. O that birth for-ev-er bless-ed, when the Vir-gin, full of grace,
 3. O ye heights of heaven, a-dore him, an-gel hosts, his prais-es sing,
 4. Christ, to thee with God the Fa-ther, and, O Ho-ly Ghost, to thee,

he is Al-pha and O-me-ga, he the source, the
 by the Ho-ly Ghost con-ceive-ing, bore the Sav-ior
 powers, do-min-ions, bow be-fore him, and ex-tol our
 hymn and chant and high thanks-giv-ing and un-wea-ried

end-ing he, of the things that are, that have been,
 of our race; and the Babe, the world's Re-deem-er,
 God and King; let no tongue on earth be si-lent,
 prais-es be: hon-or, glo-ry, and do-min-ion,

and that fu-ture years shall see, ev-er-more and ev-er-more!
 first re-vealed his sa-cred face, ev-er-more and ev-er-more!
 ev-ery voice in con-cert ring, ev-er-more and ev-er-more!
 and e-ter-nal vic-to-ry, ev-er-more and ev-er-more!

How Deep the Father's Love for Us



1. How deep the Fa-ther's love for us, how vast be-yond all meas - ure that
 2. Be - hold the Man up - on a cross, my sin up - on His shoul - ders. A -
 3. I will not boast in an - y-thing: No gifts, no pow'r, no wis - dom. But



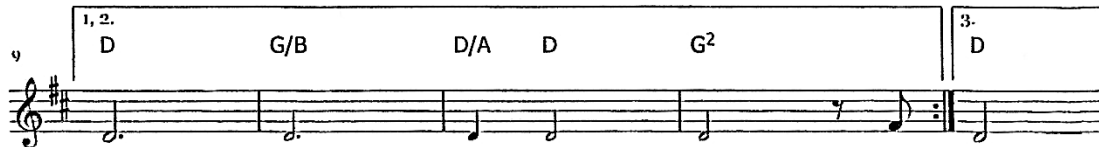
He should give His on - ly Son to make a wretch His treas - ure. How
 -sbamed, I hear my mock - ing voice call out a-mong the scof - fers. It
 I will boast in Je - sus Christ: His death and res - ur - rec - tion. Why



great the pain of sear - ing loss. The Fa - ther turns His face a - way as
 was my sin that held - Him there un - til it was ac - com - plished; His
 should I gain from His - re - ward? I can - not give an an - swer. But



wounds which mar the Cho - sen One bring man - y sons to glo -
 dy - ing breath has brought me life. I know that it is fin -
 (this I know with all my heart: His wounds have paid my ran -



-ry.
 -ished.

2. Be - som.
 3. I

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns: let men their songs em -
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions

King; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him room,
 ploy; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

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

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.
 heav'n and na - ture sing,

The Nicene Creed

WE BELIEVE IN one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and 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 Ghost 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 Scriptures,
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 Ghost, the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son
together is worshipped and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets;

AND WE BELIEVE IN 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.

May the Grace of Christ our Savior

1. May the grace of Christ our Sav - ior and the
2. Thus may we a - bide in un - ion with each

The first system of music consists of a treble and bass staff in G major and 3/4 time. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

Fa - ther's bound - less love, with the Ho - ly Spir - it's
oth - er and the Lord, and pos - sess, in sweet com -

The second system of music continues the melody and bass line from the first system. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

fa - vor, rest up - on us from a - bove.
mun - ion, joys which earth can - not af - ford. A - men.

The third system of music concludes the piece with a double bar line. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff.

The Song of Simeon – Luke 2:29-32

Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel. AMEN.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Men's Bible study on the book of Job will meet this Thursday evening at the Harrymans'. Supper will be at 6:p.m. and the Bible study at 7.

WHAT SWEETER MUSIC CAN WE BRING, THAN A CAROL,
FOR TO SING THE BIRTH OF THIS OUR HEAVENLY KING?

We will have a Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary on Tuesday, December 24 at 6:00 p.m. This lovely celebration to remember our Lord's Incarnation and birth will feature readings from the Old Testament and the Gospels and congregational carol singing. There will be light refreshments in the fellowship hall after the service. Please put it on your calendar now, and consider inviting friends!

NOTES ON COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, is one of the means by which Christ graciously blesses his people. We believe that the whole Christ—body, soul, and divinity—is present to the believer by the power of his Spirit. In it, our Lord assures us of his atonement for us, the forgiveness of our sins, even as he strengthens and nourishes us in our life of faithful discipleship. We welcome all who have been baptized, have publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ, and have been received as members in a church that proclaims the true Gospel of God in Christ. Children who have not yet publicly professed faith and been received should not eat or drink but are encouraged to come with their parent(s) up to the table.

- The inner rings of cups contain wine, the outer ring grape juice.
- Gluten-free bread (rice and corn flour based) is available.
- Our custom is to wait until everyone has been served, whereupon we eat and drink together.
- After the service, please place your empty cup in the basket provided near the entrance.

*We are God's people.
We proclaim Christ,
who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
In him we are
Taught by the Truth and
Liberated by the Life to
Walk in the Way.
The goal of our instruction is love
for God and neighbor
that flows from a pure heart and
a clear conscience and
a sincere faith.*



A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America

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