

WELCOME TO GRACE CHURCH

A people gladly serving the Lord Jesus and neighbors near and far

BECAUSE OF THE LORD'S GREAT LOVE, WE ARE NOT CONSUMED, FOR HIS COMPASSIONS NEVER FAIL, THEY ARE NEW EVERY MORNING, GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS.

We Worship The Prince Of Peace

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The First Sunday In Advent December 1, 2024 (9 a.m.)

("Come as you are ... then go home different")

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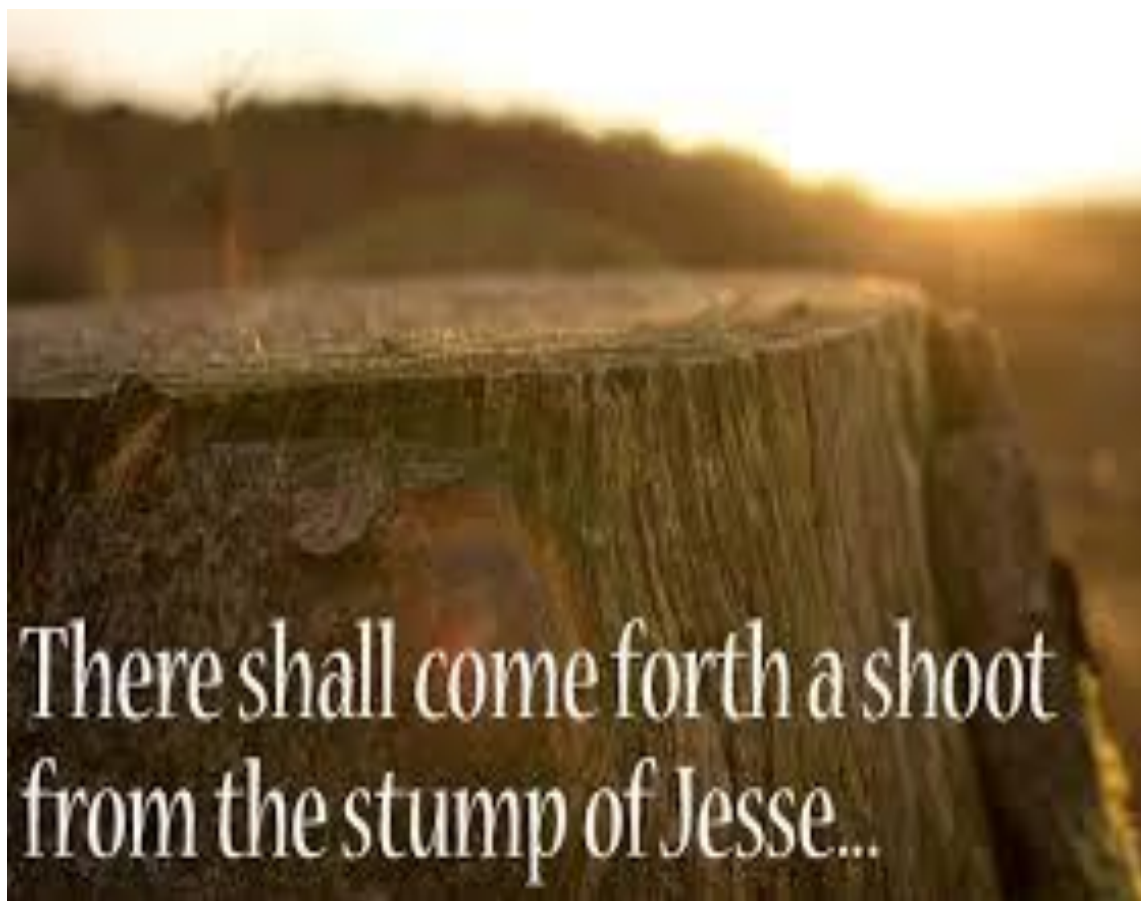
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PASTOR: *W. Michael Langford*

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: *Chris Peters (9 a.m.- 5 p.m. on Thursdays)*

MINISTERS: *All of us! (We are all ministers of God's grace and we're on-duty '24/7')*



GATHERING CAROL (U.M. # 242) “Love Came Down At Christmas”

(1) Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign.

(2) Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;
Worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign?

(3) Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and all men, love for plea and gift and sign.

CEREMONY OF THE ADVENT WREATH Our liturgist today is Susan Hockley

ADVENT HYMN (UM # 211) “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (verse 1)

(1) O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear

(refrain) Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel...shall come to thee, O Israel.

AN ADVENT LITANY

God told Abraham that through him all the nations of the world would be blessed.

That is because our ancient father had trusted and put his hope in God.

The Old Testament spoke of a coming Christ: a Savior to be born

This king in David’s line would rule the world wisely and bless all the nations.

Jesus Himself spoke of the Son of Man appearing in the clouds with great power and glory.

We long for the coming of the Lord. By this, our lives are established in hope.

We trust in God’s promise to send Jesus again to establish his kingdom upon the earth.

Believers await the Glorious One who one day will come to us. This is Advent hope.

THE CANDLE OF HOPE

PRAYER

OPENING HYMN (U.M. # 196) “Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus”

(1) Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.

Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

(2) Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

Please offer your own “GOD IS GOOD” greeting to those seated nearby!

Some "In-House Caroling" (selected verses)

CAROL (U.M. # 240) "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

(2) Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail th'incarnate Deity, pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. (refrain)
(refrain) **Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

CAROL "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen"

(1) God rest ye merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay, For Jesus Christ our Savior
Was born upon this day, To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray:
(refrain) **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: (ref.)
(5) Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place, And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace; This holy tide of Christmas all other doth deface: (ref.)

CAROL (U.M. # 241) "That Boy-child Of Mary"

(refrain) **That boy-child of Mary was born in a stable, a manger his cradle in Bethlehem**
(1) What shall we call him, child of the manger? What name is given in Bethlehem? (refrain)
(2) His name is Jesus, God ever with us, God given for us in Bethlehem. (refrain)
(6) Gladly we praise him, love and adore him, give ourselves to him of Bethlehem. (refrain)

CAROL (U.M. # 234) "O Come, All Ye Faithful" (refrain)

(refrain) **O come, let us adore Him, (REPEAT) ... O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

BODY BUILDING Joys, Announcements and testimonies of God's grace

PRAYER.... You are invited to share any prayer concerns as we lift our needs to God

GOD'S HOLY WORD Isaiah 11:1-10

**"In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples;
the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious."**

TODAY'S MESSAGE Pastor Mike Langford

"A Banner Day"

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

AN INVITATION, PRAYER of CONFESSION and BLESSING of the ELEMENTS

**You do not need to be a member of this church or any church to receive Holy Communion.
Thankful people who love God and neighbor, claiming Jesus Christ as Lord
and pledging to walk in His ways are invited to share in this act of devotion.
We come forward in a continuous line of humble believers, praying for ourselves and others.**

CLOSING HYMN (# 213) “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

- (1) Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold, the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here!
- (2) Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven’s employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.
- (3) Redeemer, come, with us abide; our hearts to thee we open wide;
Let us thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in us reveal.
- (4) Thy Holy Spirit lead us on until our glorious goal is won; eternal praise,
Eternal fame be offered, Savior, to thy name!

A BENEDICTION

We thank you for presenting your tithes and offerings in the plates found at the exits.

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This worship service is over. **NOW BEGINS** our Christian service in Jesus’ Name!



We are **not** on a “167-hour vacation from faith” after this worship ends. We show the grace daily!

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MINISTRY CHALLENGE...There are **MANY** ways we can bless others in the season of Advent. No training is needed! Let the Lord impress upon you ways that you might be serving His world. **THIS** is the gift that we give God, our neighbors and ourselves.

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LAST WEEK...Our offerings must reach ‘beyond midnight’ in a spirit of gratitude. Preachers often apologize for talking about **THANKFUL** giving. Jesus wasn’t shy about it! The New Testament talks “money” more than prayer! Paul encourages Timothy to help godly people to be content with what they have and to not be greedy. Living for wealth only plunges people into ruin. It is the **LOVE** of money that messes people up: that goes for both the rich and the poor. J.D. Rockefeller referred to his lifetime practice of tithing as a way of honoring God. God inspires us also to tithe. Our giving is always a witness to the love of God, who owns everything. We are only managers of the good things God ‘lends us’ in this lifetime. We regularly evaluate our giving to God through the church. We talk and pray about it, seeking to do good, rich in good deeds, and willing to share. Churches often miss the mark: calling people to give because of an immediate need which must be met. But we give because we were created to give, like God! The Bible shows us many people who were reluctant to give thankfully. It also notes those who demonstrated sacrificial giving. Let’s pray about our giving as we seek to honor God! Sharing freely is the life that is truly life. **(1 Tim. 6:6-19)**

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