

Worship

December 16, 2012
Third Sunday of Advent

Already in the eighth century BC enough foreigners would invade the north of Israel that the region could be called “Galilee of the Gentiles” (Oswalt 1986–1998: 2:237). “The road to the sea, beyond the Jordan” referred to the highway running from Damascus in Syria in a southwesterly direction, alongside the Jordan River, through Capernaum and part of the rest of the province of Galilee, and eventually cutting diagonally across to Caesarea on the Mediterranean (see Hagner 1993: 73). This is the road that the returning exiles would have followed, at least part way, to their various hometowns in Israel (Davies and Allison 1988–1997: 1:383). The light dawning on them in darkness and in the land of the shadow of death would thus refer initially to their return from exile. (Beale, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*.)

Expressing Our Love and Praise: Worship in Song

Declaring What We Believe: Apostle’s Creed

Welcoming Each Other (Kids may go to Sunday School)

Giving Worship to God: Offering

(Gifts to Grace Hill support the life and work of our church community. Twenty percent of gifts also go to local and global mission.)

Hearing God’s Word: Scripture Reading Isaiah 9.1-7; Matt 4.12-17; Luke 2.10-11

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

- 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.
- 3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
- 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- 5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.
- 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Mt 4.12 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: 15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

16 the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Luke 2.10 And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Understanding God’s Word and Our Lives: Sermon

1. God’s Declaration of Promised Hope
2. God’s Person of Promised Hope

Grasping Hold of God-Sized Hope



Grace Hill Church

Recognizing our Brokenness: Confession of Sin

Public Reading

Father, forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6.12,13)

Father, we confess that we build our personal hope on flimsy foundations, and we hunt after hope from mere earthly instruments. But you speak to us an undaunted promise of hope. One that is not grounded in an idea or an object but in the person of your Son and the plan that You and He agreed on to bring a radical redeeming restoration to all things. Help us live out of Your hope. Let us be so amazed that we can point others to the hope of Jesus, the coming King.

Private Reflection

The Grace and Forgiveness of Christ

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ... that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross.
(Eph 2.14-16)

Remembering Jesus with Bread and Cup: Lord's Supper

Jesus called those who find their life in His death and resurrection to receive the bread and cup as a tangible sign to remember and be strengthened by His Gospel. It is a spiritual meal for all who believe in Him. While Jesus spent time with everyone, he also shared the bread and cup only with those who followed him. Children who have not yet become *communing members* should not take the bread and cup but talk with our pastor or an elder about their personal faith.

On the first and third Sundays of the month, we come forward as families, groups and individuals to receive the bread and cup and for a prayer of blessing. The second, fourth and fifth Sundays, we remain seated, with time to personally remember Jesus' death and resurrection for us with the bread and cup. Whether you take the elements or not, we encourage you to either come forward for prayer or use the time for personal reflection about your relationship with Jesus.

**Juice is in the outer ring; wine is in inner rings.*

Taking hold of the Good Word: Benediction ("the good word")

"May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word." 2 Thess. 2:16, 17

Prayers for Those Not Taking the Bread and Cup

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reason for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me and open me to the reality of your identity. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am more wicked and sinful than I ever dared allow, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, to give me complete forgiveness and rightness with God. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, in joy I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

Grace Hill Financial Information:

- Ave. Monthly expenses (approx.): \$14,500
- November 2012 giving: 10,007
- 2012 monthly external giving (ends 12/12): 1,667
- November 2012 balance (\$2826)
- Average Monthly 2011 giving: 11,621
- YTD basic operating budget balance: (\$3048)

Grace Hill Upcoming Events and Opportunities:

- * Family Christmas Eve Service, 5:30 pm
- * Grace Hill Town Hall Meeting, Jan 13th 5:30 pm.
- * Small Groups in Churton Grove, Becketts Ridge, Orange County, and Chapel Hill. See Ross for details.
- * Recommendation for Family Interaction/ Teaching: <http://www.newcitycatechism.com>



**Grace
Hill
Church**

Grace Hill seeks to live by and testify to the grace and truth of Jesus Christ (John 1.14-18). We are affiliated with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, a denomination with a rich history of living in Christ's grace and truth.

Our pastor is Ross Durham. He can be reached by email ross@gracehillchurch.net or by cell phone at 919.593.2169.

Our Worship Director is Michael Musser (mike@gracehillchurch.net) and our Children's Ministry Directors are Robyn Musser and Kaylyn Fernandez (robyn@gracehillchurch.net and kaylyn@gracehillchurch.net)

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