

# Worship

January 9, 2011

What good is religion if it collapses under calamity? (H. G. Wells - The War of the Worlds, 1898)

I returned to these sacred cities ..., the sanctuaries of which have been in ruins for a long time, the images which (used) to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I (also) gathered all their (former) inhabitants and returned (to them) their habitations ... May all the gods whom I have resettled in their sacred cities ask daily Bel and Nebo for a long life for me ... (Cyrus Cylinder, as quoted in Kidner, Ezra and Nehemiah)

Grace Hill Mission Statement: To communicate a hopeful, credible, Biblical picture of God's grace and truth in Jesus Christ and to grow together in maturity and mission.

## Welcome

## Prelude and Time for Reflection

## Expressing Our Love and Praise: Worship in Song

## Declaring What We Believe: Confession of Faith (Apostle's Creed, 4<sup>th</sup> c.)

## Welcoming Each Other (Kids may go to their classrooms)

## Community Together: Prayers of the People

## Giving Back to God: Offering

Please complete the section on the back and give it during the offering so we can let you know about upcoming events. Gifts to Grace Hill support the ongoing life and work of our community under the oversight of the church session; in addition to expenses, our budget maintains a goal for twenty percent of gifts to go to works of mission locally and globally.

## Hearing God's Word: Scripture Reading Nehemiah 1

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.

Now it happened in the month of Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the capital, 2 that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. 3 And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

### Nehemiah's Prayer

4 As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. 5 And I said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned. 7 We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses. 8 Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, 9 but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.' 10 They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. 11 O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

Now I was cupbearer to the king.

## Understanding God's Word and Our Lives: Sermon *True Faith Cares, Prays, Acts*

Outline:

1. What is Biblical faith's character? (v.1-3, 11)
2. What does Biblical faith do? (v.4-11)
3. What does our faith do? (v.6, 10)



Grace Hill Church

## Recognizing our Brokenness: Confession of Sin

### Public Reading

Father, Nehemiah excites us of what faith can do and convicts us. His faith is engaged in work, and then it bursts into fresh expression in need. We confess sometimes we would rather stay in the comforts of Susa, not asking about troubles far off. But other times we act, rashly, in our strength, forgetting the work of prayer: praise, confession, remembering, request. Forgive us. Nehemiah will have a hard road ahead, but for something that is worth risk, labor, endurance. Grow our faith to be at work in our current callings. Give us eyes to see what you are doing around us and the needs you would show us. Confirm to us the right quests to be on. Help us to stop and pray. Teach us to long to see your strength working through us for your purposes.

### Private Reflection

#### Words of Forgiveness

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. (Ps 103.11,12)

## 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.

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.*

## Responding with Song

### 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.

### Prayer for Covenant Children (Not Yet Confirmed)

Lord Jesus, thank you for placing me inside your family, the church. Help me more and more to know you, to love you, and to follow you as your faithful disciple. Amen.



**Grace  
Hill  
Church**

Grace Hill is a church that seeks to live by and testify to the grace and truth of Jesus Christ (see John 1.14-18). We are affiliated with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, a denomination with a rich history of Christ's grace and truth. Our pastor is Ross Durham; he can be reached by email at [ross@gracehillchurch.net](mailto:ross@gracehillchurch.net) or by cell phone at 919.593.2169. Our Worship Director is Michael Musser and our Children's Ministry Co-Directors are Robyn Musser and Kaylyn Fernandez.

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Grace Hill.

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