

Worship

December 4, 2011
Second Sunday of Advent

Expressing Our Love and Praise: Worship in Song

Declaring What We Believe: Confession of Faith

Welcoming Each Other (Kids may go to Sunday School)

Giving Back to God: Offering

Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb 12.5)

(Gifts to Grace Hill support the life and work of our church community. Our budget also reflects for twenty percent of gifts to go to works of local and global mission.)

Hearing God's Word: Scripture Reading Luke 1.26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!"

29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

34 And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

35 And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. 36 And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God."

38 And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Understanding God's Word and Our Lives: Sermon

The Surprising Way He Comes

1. Did He really Come for Someone like Me?
2. Responding to Him like Mary



Grace Hill Church

To live out a hopeful, credible, Biblical picture of God's grace and truth in Jesus Christ
and to grow together in maturity and mission.

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 most of us are deficient either in the reflectiveness Mary has to you and your word, or in the trusting faith she has to believe your call. She kept on pondering and seeking understanding, but we often don't protect or seek time to be still with you. She said "I am the servant to the Lord," but we often say "I'm not able; I'm not skilled enough." Forgive us. Strengthen our desire and ability to seek you; give us courage and faith to follow you.

Private Reflection

The Grace and Forgiveness of Christ

God the Father could have had his Son born to any family in any place, but Jesus was born in the most obscure village, to the most ordinary of parents. Why is the Savior, the Son of the Most High, born of Mary? Why does the King, the One whose throne will never end have his birthplace in Nazareth? Jesus comes through the ordinary and common to show us that he receives *all* who turn to him in faith and repentance. But even as he calls and receives us, he also changes our ordinariness into glory. This 13 year old girl from nowhere is "highly favored" by the Lord! Filled with the Holy Spirit and power, she becomes "the servant of the Lord." Could it be so for us too? In Jesus we are received and forgiven, but also our status, whether great or small, is transformed into a royal commission to worship and serve the King whose Kingdom will never end.

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.): \$14,000
- Ave. Monthly 2011 giving (thru Oct): \$11,146
- Oct 2011 Congressional giving: \$9,154
- Nov 2011 Congressional giving: \$8,261
- Starting January 2012, monthly external giving will be: \$1,667
- Projected monthly shortfall starting Jan 2012 based on Nov giving: \$4,072

Grace Hill Upcoming Events:

- December 4th: Birthday Party for Jesus. 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm. Crafts, singing and potluck for the whole family. Please RSVP at facebook.com/gracehillchurch.
- December 24: Christmas Eve Service. 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm. A family oriented time to remember Jesus' birth.
- December 25: Christmas Day. 10:00 am. A simple family worship service.
- Interested in joining the next cycle of Women's Tues pm study? Talk to Cathy Durham.
- Men's Tues am study, 6:30 am at Grace Hill.



**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 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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