

WORSHIP GATHERING

December 20, 2020
Advent, week 4

Welcome

New City Church is a spiritual family defined by the good news that God has taken loving initiative in Jesus Christ to bring salvation to sinners and a sin-marred world. Through Jesus's life, death, and resurrection, the restoration of all things has begun, beginning with those who admit their need and trust his gracious provision. This restoration will eventually reach to the ends of the earth and touch every part of creation.

This is our joyful confession
and the life-giving hope of our community.

Gathering Song

Feel free to join in as you find your seat and prepare for worship

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

John Francis Wade, C. Frederick Oakeley

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, To Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;

CHORUS

O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens Of heaven above!
Glory to God, Glory in the highest;

CHORUS

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing.

CHORUS X2

Call to Worship

John 1

Leader

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Congregation

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

Leader

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Congregation

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Rowland Hugh Prichard and Charles Wesley

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 saints Thou art
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart

Joy to those who long to see thee, day-spring from on high appear
Come thou promised Rod of Jesse, of Thy birth we long to hear
O'er the hills the angels singing news glad tidings of a birth
Go to him your praises bringing Christ the Lord has come to earth

Come to earth to taste our sadness, He whose glories knew no end
By his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer Shepherd Friend Leaving
riches without number, born within a cattle stall
This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born Lord of all

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

O Holy Night

Adolphe Charles Adam, Placide Cappeau, John S. Dwight

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope--the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

CHORUS

Fall on your knees!

O hear the angel voices!

O night divine, O night when Christ was born! O night divine, O night,

O night divine!

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother,
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we;
Let all within us praise His holy name.

CHORUS 2

Christ is the Lord

O praise His name forever

His power and glory Evermore proclaim

His power and glory Evermore proclaim

O night divine,

O night, O night divine!

Confession of Sin

Leader

Father of Lights and Bright Morning Star, we confess that the light of your love has been obscured by the darkness of our sin. Thoughts, words, and actions of our own devising hang over us like black and foreboding clouds.

Congregation

Grant us to hate our sin with a holy hatred and to turn from it with all our might.

Leader

We give you thanks, you who cause sun to shine through the storm, that you have dispersed the storm clouds of your judgment, and have made the light of your love and mercy shine into our lives, through the work of your dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation

Forgive us for his sake, and enable us to know of the peace and comfort of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

*WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US ON YOUR KNEES, OR BOWING
IN YOUR SEAT, FOR PRIVATE CONFESSION OF SIN.*

Declaration of Pardon

From Romans 5

Leader

“But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners
Christ died for us.”

In Christ you are forgiven, free, and restored!

Congregation

In Christ, we are forgiven, free, and restored!

Hope for Everyone

Matt Maher and Jason Ingram

Hear the angels sing, there's hope for everyone
To announce our King, there's hope for everyone
What good news they bring, there's hope for everyone
Angels sing there's hope for everyone

They came from afar, there's hope for everyone
Wise men saw the star, there's hope for everyone
Shepherds heard the choir, there's hope for everyone
From afar, there's hope for everyone

CHORUS

We are waiting on the promise
For the One who lights the darkness
Bending low to be among us
Bring Your glory in the highest, Jesus

Come let us adore, there's hope for everyone
On the manger floor there's hope for everyone
What are you waitin' for, there's hope for everyone
Come adore, there's hope for everyone

CHORUS

Come then, on the clouds, there's hope for everyone
Hear the trumpets sound, there's hope for everyone
All of heaven shouts, there's hope for everyone
On the clouds, there's hope for everyone

CHORUS X2

All of heaven shouts, there's hope for everyone
Heaven shouts, there's hope for everyone
Heaven shouts, there's hope for everyone
Heaven shouts, there's hope for everyone

Confession of Faith

NEW CITY CATECHISM - QUESTION #10

(The underlined portions correspond to the Children's Catechism studied at home this week by New City families.)

Leader

What does God require in the fourth and fifth commandments?

Congregation

Fourth, that on the Sabbath day we spend time in public and private worship of God, rest from routine employment, serve the Lord and others, and so anticipate the eternal Sabbath. Fifth, that we love and honor our father and our mother, submitting to their godly discipline and direction.

Prayer

Sermon

SEE ACCOMPANYING INSERT

The Generous Heart of the Father

December 20, 2020 | Luke 15:11-32 | Pastor Roger Williams

The heart of the Father is generous toward his people in their sin.

Luke 15:11-32

¹¹ And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. ¹³ Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴ And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

The gift of sad release

¹⁷ “But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’” ²⁰ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³ And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴ For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

The gift of full embrace

²⁵ “Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, ²⁹ but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹ And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’”

The gift of genuine invitation

You will never make yourself feel that you are a sinner, because there is a mechanism in you as a result of sin that will always be defending you against every accusation. We are all on very good terms with ourselves, and we can always put up a good case for ourselves.

– Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Seeking the face of God*, 34.

If you are part of Christ’s own body, your sins evoke his deepest heart, his compassion and pity. He “takes part with you” —that is, he’s on your side. He sides with you against your sin. He hates sin. But he loves you. We understand this...when we consider the hatred a father has against a terrible disease afflicting his child—the father hates the disease while loving the child. Indeed, at some level the presence of the disease draws out his heart to his child all the more.

– Dane Ortlund, *Gentle and Lowly*, 71.



My final vocation is indeed to become like the Father and to live out his divine compassion in my daily life. Though I am both the younger son & the elder son, I am not to remain them, but to become the Father.

– Henry Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, 127.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Traditional

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

CHORUS

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire
Your heavenly song?

CHORUS

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

CHORUS X2

Benediction

Colossians 1:11–12

Leader

May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

ACTIVE DEACONS & DEACONESSES (“DIACONATE”)

Tom Abbett, Megan Flahive, Rich Scott (Chairman), Emily Taylor, Rebekah Torzewski, Chris Vincent, Teresa Wedges

ACTIVE ELDERS (THE “SESSION”)

Michael Erler, Ben Flack, Blake Williams, Caleb Winter (Clerk)

STAFF

Taylor Bradbury — *Director of Ministries*

Ben Flack — *Director of Liturgy*

Rebekah Torzewski — *Church Administrator*

Roger Williams — *Senior Pastor*

Emily Winter — *Director of Children’s Ministries*

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