

WORSHIP GATHERING

November 28, 2021

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: HOPE

Pre-service reflection:

...the notion that everything began with an impersonal something is the [current] consensus of the Western world...but...an impersonal beginning explains neither the form of the universe nor the personality of man...the Judeo-Christian tradition begins with the opposite answer. And it is upon this that our whole Western culture has been built. The universe had a personal beginning—a personal beginning on the high order of the Trinity. That is, before “in the beginning” the personal was already there. Love and thought and communication existed prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth.

Modern man is deeply plagued by the question “Where do love and communication come from?” Many artists who pour themselves out in their paintings, who paint bleak messages on canvas, many singers, many poets and dramatists are expressing the darkness of the fact that while everything hangs upon love and communication, they don’t know where these come from and they don’t know what they mean.

The biblical answer is quite otherwise: Something *was* there before creation. God was there; love and communication were there; and therefore, prior even to Genesis 1:1, love and communication are intrinsic to what always has been.

-Francis Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time*, 21-22.

Call to Worship

Isaiah 40:1-8

Leader

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that her warfare is ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

Congregation

A voice cries:

**“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”**

Leader

A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”
All flesh is grass and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the Lord blows on it;
surely the people are grass.

Congregation

**The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.**

O Come O Come Emmanuel

John Mason Neale and Kurtis Parks

O come O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

CHORUS

Rejoice, Rejoice
Emmanuel shall come to thee O Israel

O come thou rod of Jesse free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave

CHORUS

O come thou Day-spring come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine Advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight

CHORUS

O come Thou Root of Jesse's tree
An ensign of Thy people be
Before Thee rulers silent fall
All peoples on Thy mercy call

CHORUS

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

Confession of Sin

Leader

God of grace and truth, long ago your prophets told of your promises – a promise of restoration and salvation.

Congregation

But we confess that we have not believed your promise, that we have preferred brokenness to restoration, and have lingered with disease of sin rather than welcome salvation.

We have remained steadfast in the ease of the status quo, not wanting to face the hard work of repentance and change, often not willing to face the remaining darkness, sin, and self-protection in us.

Forgive our stiff necks and renew our strength, so that we may receive the fullness of your promise, honor you, treasure others, and live in your joy. Amen.

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

Declaration of Pardon

Jeremiah 23:5-6

Leader

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’

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

I Will Sing Praise to God

Nathan Partain

I will sing praise to God
He has lifted me up
He heard my cry for help
And He filled my cup

CHORUS

His favor extends for a lifetime
His grace gives me strength each day
My soul shall sing his praise forevermore

I'll put my trust in him
God my refuge and strength
For when my life seems lost
He will show me the way

CHORUS X2

My soul shall sing his praise forevermore

Confession of Faith

EACH WEEK WE CONFESS TRUTH SHARED BY CHRISTIANS AROUND THE WORLD AND THROUGHOUT HISTORY. WE ARE CURRENTLY WORKING FROM THE LAUSANNE COVENANT, AN INTERNATIONAL 20TH CENTURY WORK

THE UNIQUENESS OF JESUS, PART 1

Congregation

We affirm that there is only one Savior and only one gospel, although there is a wide diversity of evangelistic approaches. We recognize that everyone has some knowledge of God through his general revelation in nature. But we deny that this can save, for people suppress the truth by their unrighteousness. We also reject as derogatory to Christ and the gospel every kind of syncretism and dialogue which implies that Christ speaks equally through all religions and ideologies.

Leader

Jesus Christ, being himself the only God-man, who gave himself as the only ransom for sinners, is the only mediator between God and people. There is no other name by which we must be saved. All men and women are perishing because of sin, but God loves everyone, not wishing that any should perish but that all should repent.

In the Beginning, God

November 28, 2021 | Genesis 1:1-2:3 | Pastor Roger Williams

Genesis is God-inspired scripture written by Moses to Israel in the wilderness, within their framework of understanding, to communicate theological truth about historical events.

And then...it is for us.

Before the beginning was a God who is personal, powerful, generous, intentional, delighting, moral, and life-giving.

Genesis 1

¹In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

²The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. **And there was evening and there was morning, a first day.**

⁶And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸And God called the expanse Heaven. **And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.**

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. **And God saw that it was good.** ¹¹And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. **And God saw that it was good.** ¹³**And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.**

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. **And God saw that it was good.** ¹⁹**And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.**

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” ²¹So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. **And God saw that it was good.** ²²And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³**And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.**

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ²⁵And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. **And God saw that it was good.** ²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

²⁸And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹**And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.**

2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³So God blessed **the seventh day** and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Formless & Empty ^(v. 2)	
<i>Creates the Form</i>	→ <i>Fills the Form</i>
Day 1. light & dark ⁽³⁻⁵⁾	→ Day 4. greater & lesser light ⁽¹⁴⁻¹⁹⁾
Day 2. sea & sky ⁽⁶⁻⁸⁾	→ Day 5. fish & birds ⁽²⁰⁻²³⁾
Day 3. fertile earth ⁽⁹⁻¹³⁾	→ Day 6. land animals & man ⁽²⁴⁻³¹⁾
Day 7. Rest & Enjoyment ^(2:1-3)	

Prayer

Sermon & Communion

During Communion today we ask you to go to a nearby table and receive the bread and (red) wine or (white) grape juice. You do not have to hurry through the line. Bring the bread and wine back to your seat and we will all partake together. We are intentionally using slightly larger samples of bread and wine than are normal in most Protestant churches. This is an attempt to slow down the process a bit and savor the taste while reflecting on the meaning.

Should you take Communion?

This is a “means of grace”— a method of encouragement and spiritual nourishment from God for those who entrust themselves to Jesus Christ and have received the sign of baptism. This is not for perfect people, it’s for broken people who are honest about their sin and trust in the mercy of Jesus. However, if you are harboring secret or unrepented sin or are in unaddressed conflict with another Christian, we ask that you first repent or go and be reconciled before coming to the table.

New City is happy to be a community where people are in process with what they believe and honestly struggle with sin and reconciliation. For this reason, it is not uncommon for folk to refrain from taking communion.

If not participating in Communion today, we encourage you to pray through one of the prayers on the next page.

Children

Children who profess faith in Christ and have been approved to receive communion by the Elders of New City Church or the leaders of your home church are welcome to partake. Children not receiving communion are heartily welcomed to go through the line with their parents to observe what is happening.

Prayers During Communion

For those searching for truth:

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me the ability to follow you no matter what it might cost me. Give me an understanding for you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

For those who desire to profess faith in Christ:

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead and are now representing me at the Father's right hand in heaven, I turn from my sins and receive you as my savior. Amen.

A prayer for those struggling against sin:

Lord Jesus, give me the ability to see in you the fulfillment of all my needs and desires, and help me to turn from every false source of satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely to me and run with perseverance the race that you have set before me, looking only to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

A prayer for children of the Church:

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving me the opportunity to grow up in a Christian family where I am surrounded by the good news of the gospel. Help me to grow in my understanding of who you are and what you have done for me on the cross. Help me learn what it means for me to turn from my sins and trust in you alone for my salvation. Teach me what it means to follow you as one of your disciples. Amen.

Unto Us

David Heller, Jennifer Heller

Love wrapped in swaddling clothes
Born to bind up our wounds
All weary souls will rejoice
When they hear the good news

CHORUS

Unto us a child is born
Unto us a son is given
Unto us a child is born
And he shall be called
Emmanuel

There in a manger He lies
Peaceful and pure
He is the ember of hope
Giving light to the world

CHORUS

Wonderful
Counselor
More perfect than we could dream
Bringer of all good things
Bringer of all good things

CHORUS X2

*DURING THIS LAST SONG, WE INVITE KIDS TO GRAB SHAKERS FROM THE BACK
OF THE GYM AND PLAY ALONG WITH US.*

Build Your Kingdom Here

Chris Llewellyn, Gareth Gilkeson

Come, set Your rule and reign in our hearts again
Increase in us, we pray, unveil why we're made
Come, set our hearts ablaze with Hope
Like wildfire in our very souls
Holy Spirit come invade us now

We are Your church
We need Your power in us

We seek Your kingdom first, we hunger and we thirst
Refuse to waste our lives, for You're our joy and prize
To see the captive hearts released
The hurt, the sick, the poor at peace
We lay down our lives for heaven's cause

We are Your church
We pray, 'revive this earth'

CHORUS

Build Your kingdom here, let the darkness fear
Show Your mighty hand, heal our streets and land
Set Your church on fire, win creation back
Change the atmosphere, build Your kingdom here, we pray

Unleash Your kingdom's power, reaching the near and far
No force of Hell can stop your beauty changing hearts
You made us for much more than this, awake the kingdom seed in us
Fill us with the strength and love of Christ

We are Your church

We are the hope on earth

CHORUS X2

Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

Leader

The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Go in peace.

ACTIVE DEACONS & DEACONESSES (“DIACONATE”)

Tom Abbett, Katie Blodgett, Megan Flahive, Dave Ostendorf,
Rich Scott (Chairman), Emily Taylor, Paul Taylor, Rebekah Torzewski, Chris
Vincent, Teresa Wedges

ACTIVE ELDERS (THE “SESSION”)

Michael Erler, Ben Flack, Daryl Kapp, John McAllen, Mark Moss, Joe Sugimura,
Dustin Sutherland, Caleb Winter (Clerk)

STAFF

Taylor Bradbury — *Associate Pastor*

Ben Flack — *Director of Liturgy*

Rebekah Torzewski — *Church Administrator*

Roger Williams — *Senior Pastor*

Erin Winders — *Director of Nursery Ministries*

Emily Winter — *Director of Children’s Ministries*

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