



the
servant
kingdom

Gracehill
CHURCH

April 18, 2021

ORDER OF WORSHIP

April 18, 2021

Song of Gathering *Dear Refuge of my Weary Soul*

Dear refuge of my weary soul,
On Thee, when sorrows rise
On Thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies
To Thee I tell each rising grief,
For Thou alone canst heal
Thy Word can bring a sweet relief,
For every pain I feel

But oh! When gloomy doubts prevail,
I fear to call Thee mine
The springs of comfort seem to fail,
And all my hopes decline
Yet gracious God, where shall I flee?
Thou art my only trust
And still my soul would cleave to Thee
Though prostrate in the dust

Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face,
And shall I seek in vain?
And can the ear of sovereign grace,
Be deaf when I complain?
No still the ear of sovereign grace,
Attends the mourner's prayer
Oh may I ever find access,
To breathe my sorrows there

Thy mercy seat is open still,
Here let my soul retreat
With humble hope attend Thy will,
And wait beneath Thy feet,
Thy mercy seat is open still,
Here let my soul retreat
With humble hope attend Thy will,
And wait beneath Thy feet

Song of Gathering: This first song of the service is meant to prepare our minds and hearts for worship. Feel free to sing along or simply meditate as we begin our time worshipping God.

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship *Psalm 62:1-2, 5-7*

Leader: For God alone my soul waits in silence;
From him comes my salvation.
He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress;
I shall not be greatly shaken.

**All: For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence;
For my hope is from him.
He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress;
I shall not be shaken.
On God rests my salvation and my glory;
My mighty rock, my refuge is God.**

Call to Worship: We worship because we are called to do so. This call, usually taken from a psalm, is an invitation into the presence of God; to worship and praise him.

Song of Praise

Only a Holy God

Who else commands all the hosts of heaven
Who else could make every king bow down
Who else can whisper and darkness trembles
Only a Holy God

What other beauty demands such praises
What other splendour outshines the sun
What other majesty rules with justice
Only a Holy God

Chorus:

Come and behold Him
The One and the Only
Cry out, sing holy
Forever a Holy God
Come and worship the Holy God

What other glory consumes like fire
What other power can raise the dead
What other name remains undefeated
Only a Holy God

Who else could rescue me from my failing
Who else would offer His only Son
Who else invites me to call Him Father
Only a Holy God
Only my Holy God!

Prayer of Adoration *(concluding with the Lord's Prayer)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Song of Praise: We enter into God's presence praising him for who he is, and delighting in his desire to be in relationship with us.

Prayer of Adoration: Praying is essential to worship. As we pray, we begin by adoring God for who he is and what he has done through his son Jesus. We conclude this prayer by reciting together the Lord's Prayer.

Call to Confession *from Hosea 14:1-2*

Leader: Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

All: **Take with you words and return to the Lord; say to him, "Take away all iniquity; accept what is good."**

Prayer of Confession from Isaiah 64:5-6, 8a, 9 (followed by Silent Confession)

Leader: Lord, we come confessing. You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways.

All: **Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?**

Leader: We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment.

All: **We fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.**

Leader: But now, O Lord, you are our father.

All: **Be not so terribly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Please look upon your people, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ.**

Call to Confession: As we praise God, and through the Spirit showing us, we become aware of our own imperfections in light of our perfect God. In love, God calls us to freely and openly confess our sins before him.

Confession of Sin: Sin is not only something that we've done wrong. Rather, it's a state of being that we're born into, and that we need saving from. It is impossible to conquer sin on our own, or make amends for it by our own actions. Our only hope is to turn to Christ, asking that he forgive and conquer sin for us, and - by grace alone and through faith alone - save us.

Assurance of Forgiveness *Isaiah 54:8, 10*

"In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the Lord, your Redeemer. "The mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

Song of Thanks *Abide with Me*

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers, fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, abide with me.

Thou on my head, in early youth didst smile;
And, though rebellious, and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, though I oft left Thee,
On to the close Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless
Ills have no weight, tears lose their bitterness
Where is thy sting death? Where grave thy victory?
I triumph still, abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross, before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, Lord, abide with me.

Assurance of Forgiveness: As we confess our sin, God offers us the assurance that, in Jesus, we are forgiven and loved regardless of what we've done in the past. Because of Jesus, we are no longer condemned by our sin, but are brought into new life by the Spirit.

Song of Thanks: Knowing that we are forgiven, and knowing that Jesus has reconciled us with God the Father, we sing with thankful hearts.

Statement of Faith *Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**That is, the true Christian church of all times and all places.*

Sermon

A Wasteland, but Not Wasted

Central text *Mark 1:1-8*

¹The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way,

³the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

⁴ John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Reader: The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon: Though spoken by a person, we are to hear the sermon as God speaking to us. A sermon is a study in God’s Word, the announcement of the good news in Christ, and an invitation to apply the truth of God’s Word to our daily lives. At Gracehill, our sermons are not generally based on certain themes; rather, we study through individual books of the Bible.

Communion

Song of Response *The Lord is My Salvation*

The grace of God has reached for me
And pulled me from the raging sea
And I am safe on this solid ground
The Lord is my salvation

I will not fear when darkness falls
His strength will help me scale these walls
I'll see the dawn of the rising sun
The Lord is my salvation

Chorus:

Who is like the Lord our God?
Strong to save, faithful in love
My debt is paid and the vict'ry won
The Lord is my salvation

My hope is hidden in the Lord
He flow'rs each promise of His Word
When winter fades I know spring will come
The Lord is my salvation

In times of waiting, times of need
When I know loss, when I am weak
I know His grace will renew these days
The Lord is my salvation

And when I reach my final day
He will not leave me in the grave
But I will rise,
He will call me home
The Lord is my salvation

Bridge:

Glory be to God the Father, Glory be to God the Son
Glory be to God the Spirit, The Lord is our salvation

Song of Response: We sing in response to the hearing of God's faithfulness and love for his people, as revealed in his son Jesus.

Benediction

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

If you'd like to meet to find out more about Gracehill, or ways to get connected, please contact Ben Seneker at: 828.656.3453, or email benseneker@gracehillgr.church; or contact elder Ken Morse at gkmorse60@gmail.com

Benediction: As we conclude the service, the benediction is a blessing by God, as found in Scripture, for us individually and as a united church. We take this blessing with us as we - carrying the light of the gospel - go out into a dark world, that others may see the Light.

Doxology: In the Greek - doxologia, a word (logos) of glory (doxa). The doxology is an ancient hymn of praise, and has been part of the worship service in many churches for centuries. It is sung in response to the Lord's abundant grace for us and his church.

Announcements:

New Small Group Starting: A new small group, hosted and led by Paul and Merideth Kuiper, will start on April 28th, will go for 7 weeks, and will meet in-person on Wednesday evenings. The focus of the study will be on the book of Amos. If interested, or if you have any questions, please email Paul at paulkuiper@outlook.com

Get Connected: If you would like to be added to the weekly email list, learn of ways to serve, schedule a time to meet with Ben, or would like to submit prayer requests, please send an email to office@gracehillgr.church

Sermon Discussion Questions - Mark 1:1-8

1. One of the main characteristics of Mark's gospel is that he doesn't waste any time getting to the point. We see this in the opening verse, for example. Looking at verse 1, discuss the significance of the following words (biblically, theologically, etc): beginning, gospel, Christ, and Son of God.
2. Even though he only cites Isaiah, Mark is also referencing Malachi 3 and Exodus 23 in verses 2 and 3. Why does Mark believe it's so important for his readers to know that Jesus' coming was the fulfillment of OT prophecy? (cf. Lk 24.27)
3. Describe a 'wilderness' you've experienced in your own life. How did God use that experience to expose idols in your heart? Was there a 'voice crying in the wilderness' from a friend or mentor (or song, movie, book, etc) that God used to provide comfort or encouragement during that time?
4. Notice that John was not calling the people out into the wilderness to "try harder" or "do better" but to merely repent. When seeing this in light of Jesus coming as the Messiah, why is this truly the best news anyone could ever hear?