

Order of Worship for at Home Use

August 23, 2020

Welcome to worship with Grace@Home!

We pray that you are healthy and well as you worship this week.

If you wish to worship via the video, click this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2Ny1hV7LUY>

We continue to navigate this difficult time of social distancing, a term that is getting harder and harder to hear. For many of us this waiting time is disheartening and difficult. Yet, with hope in our loving God we continue to worship and look to our holy God Who is walking alongside us and with us every step of the way.

The session of Grace Presbyterian Church of Las Vegas is continuing to work on plans for our safety as we prepare to come back to in-person worship. A part of that work is discernment of the right time to resume and how to do so as we also continue to provide quality online worship services. Many thanks to all who made their thoughts, prayer requests and struggles known by filling out the survey we recently sent out. Please know that we are prayerful in our decision making and request that you continue to pray alongside us in the discernment process. Please, join us in prayer, and keep your leadership in prayer in this process. We are separate, but together, even in this.

Worship is both what we do and who we are. Therefore we continue to do so with intentionality and reverence. Today as we gather, I encourage you to light a candle and create a silent space in your heart and in your home, or wherever you might be this weekend. Enter into worship with the intention of hearing a word from our Lord, and feeling the unity and communion of all the saints as we gather together at God's throne.

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

Pastor Dana

We Gather as God's Family to Worship

Introit & Candle Lighting "Aria" J. Dixon
Dr. David Dorway, Ms. Mya Krier, acolyte
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEppc2b94Z0>

Welcome Pastor Dana Pope
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz-y4LDTrpw>

As we gather in worship each week, as we continue to be separated in this season, we gather our hearts and minds to worship our God. I don't know if it is the same for you, but so often when we sit down as a family to worship we are easily distracted. Maybe more so at home, than when we gather in the sanctuary. We are distracted people. It takes intentionality and effort to focus our hearts and minds in worship. So, today and everyday, we gather at God's throne of grace to seek God's face and the light of Christ. We do so in the stillness of our hearts and minds. Today you might want to light a candle and set up your worship space in a way that helps you to draw near to our Holy God. Let us prepare our hearts and go to our God in worship.

Call to Worship (Psalm 124) Pastor Dana Pope
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPWaGryjkaQ>

Our Great God is the Maker of the heavens and the earth.
We belong to God.
Our help is in the name of the Lord!
When we feel overwhelmed or afraid
Our God is on our side and will never leave us.
In Jesus name we cry out, and in His name we pray
Blessed be the Lord! Let us worship God!

Hymn "The Eye of the Storm"
Kathy Koch, Georgia and Grayson Scarlett
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kz4tzn0M_Ds

Sharing the Peace of Christ **not in video**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you...
and also with you.

In this time of social distancing it is important for us to remember that in Christ we are connected to all who believe in Jesus in every time and place. As the world continues to be isolated, and many are feeling anxious, as Christians we share the peace of Christ as a way to offer hope and the joy of Christ. Again today we use the familiar words, "The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you... and also with you."

Now, or after your time of worship, reach out via text, email, phone or video call, to someone outside of your home extending the invitation to enter into the peace of Christ with our faith community.

Praise God, that His peace is with us, always!

Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Pastor Dana Pope

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuO3h9yIsFU>

As we reflect on the words written so long ago by king David in Psalm 124, let us pray together: As we turn back to You on this day, we rest in the knowledge that You are our help, our hope, and our life. We praise Your holy name today, as we draw near to You, and we count the ways we have seen You at work in these days and moments. You have been with us. Each moment a gift, each breath a blessing, each time You look lovingly upon us a grace upon grace. Help us to feel Your touch and know Your presence even more deeply.

You, O God, have been on our side, by our side, and we are grateful. Grateful for Your hand of protection and the joy we share as Your children. We are grateful for Your love and Your grace. As we pray, we look upon Your holiness and we can't help but shrink away and hide ourselves as we remember the ways in which we have failed You, neglected ourselves and others, and refused to serve Your kingdom with attention, imagination, energy and love. Grant us Your forgiveness and mercy as we confess in the silence of our hearts the ways in which we have sinned against You and one another.

Forgive us great God, put us on right paths, help us to be first and foremost a people of love and light, both in word and deed. Set us in motion that we might be Your hands and feet and a reflection of the love and light of Christ. Help us to become more Christ-like with every passing moment that we might be the people You have created us to be in Jesus' name. A people of love and grace, hope and the joy of the Lord. Help us to walk with one another and be a word of truth and grace as we navigate these frustrating waters where life is anything but normal.

As we pray today we lift up to You the teachers and students that are preparing to begin an unprecedented school year. Open pathways of learning and friendship, bless them with wisdom, perseverance, ingenuity and grace. As the new school year begins we ask for Your hand to be upon students of all ages, all of their teachers and school administrators, as well as all who are working to make the on-line component run smoothly, and the parents who most often feel inadequate and torn between their own responsibilities and the new ones of children learning at home.

We humbly pray for protection from illness, frustration, and anger; for strength for the journey, and for quick minds to learn and open hearts to provide space and grace as all begin to learn new things in new ways. Open all of us Lord, to new possibilities and opportunities, that this season might be a blessing and provide innovation and a new way to move forward together.

In this time of distance learning and separation we pray for Your hand of healing be upon our land, Your church, each of our families and this world. We pray and long for Your shalom to penetrate deep into our bones. We ask for healing for the many who are sick, seeking treatments, and struggling with health issues. Open doors, grant favor upon them and provide Your miracles and abundance for each one. Cast out this COVID virus, cancers, mental illnesses, and autoimmune diseases. Ease the pain of illnesses, loneliness and grief. Remind us in powerful ways of Your faithfulness, Your love for each of us and for this world. Energize us to be Your hands and feet, and reveal the next step each one of us must take to be light and life to our families, Your church, and our world.

Thank You O God, for allowing us to come into Your presence once again. Hear our prayers as we pray in the name of Jesus Christ who taught us to pray saying,

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.

We Listen to God's Word

Hymn/Praise

“Jesus Loves Me”

not in video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C63z5hCd7bc>

Children's Message

Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vfcGOmrJHIE>

Special Music

“Rocking Song”

D. and J. Perry

Quarantine Quintet + One, Becky Aldridge, Flutist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApEMmp2NyC0>

Reading of the Word

Exodus 1:8-22

Pastor Dana Pope

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l82IPOMcax4>

⁸ Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt.

⁹ “Look,” he said to his people, “the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. ¹⁰ Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.”

¹¹ So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites ¹³ and worked them ruthlessly. ¹⁴ They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, ¹⁶ “When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.” ¹⁷ The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. ¹⁸ Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, “Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?”

¹⁹ The midwives answered Pharaoh, “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.”

²⁰ So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

²² Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: “Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.”

Message

“A Baby in a Basket”
Exodus 2:1-10

Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XDG_XKs3Dg

2:23 The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. ²⁴ God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.

²⁵ So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

Today we are starting a new fall theme for our preaching in worship and online. Throughout the summer we have been looking at the beginning of things, Genesis and how God revealed Himself to the world and through a particular dysfunctional family. Today we kick off our fall theme which is looking at one of God's greatest miracles for His people. We are going to be studying the Exodus and look at its parallels for today. The Exodus is the second book of the Bible. It is the story of God's people looking for a place to live, oppressed by the government, seeking to be a witness in the desert, during a hostile time, and led by a dynamic and handsome leader. Sound like anyone you know? If only Egypt had a freeway expansion project, a virus, riots, and an election in the 14th century BC, then the Jews would be us, or we would be them!

It seems appropriate to learn from the Jews at a time when they were trying to figure God's plan. When they were called to move and change in a time when being faithful to God was very risky they learned that God was in charge. Similarly, this is where we are today, both socially and as a church. We are painfully aware that things cannot stay the same. Our world is changing and so is the environment where we live and have our ministry. Our only hope is in our God who promises not to abandon us no matter how bad it gets. Just like the Israelites in their time of Moses and the Exodus.

So, let's dive in,

Our second text today is the continuation of the story of Moses' birth, Exodus 2:1-10.

The Birth of Moses

2 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, ² and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. ³ But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket^[a] for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵ Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. ⁶ She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

⁷ Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

⁸ "Yes, go," she answered. So, the girl went and got the baby's mother. ⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So, the woman took the baby and nursed him. ¹⁰ When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses,^[b] saying, "I drew him out of the water."

So here is the story; the people of God had gone to Egypt to escape a famine in the time of Jacob. There was food in Egypt because the Nile valley had water when there was a drought in all the Middle East approximately, 1878 BCE. After the drought, the Jews lived in Egypt for 300 years. They entered as Jacob's family looking for a lost son and hungry and thirsty. 300 years later they are a force to be reckoned with. They number in the millions, maybe 2-3 million people. They are overwhelming the locals and the government wants them out. The pharaoh wants to remove this problem by using his power of life and death and have the male Israelite children killed in childbirth.

Two women, midwives, refuse to do it. There are just some laws that should not be obeyed. If a law or government or social action goes against the very law of God, do not do it! That is what Shiphrah and Puah do, they refuse. These two women save Israel before they even know what they are doing.

You see, because of the action of these two faithful women a leader arises and he will save his people. This child will become Israel's priest, prophet, and lawgiver. This future leader is born, but he cannot survive on his own or with his people at this moment in history. As a result, his family does what can only be described as one of the most painful things in all creation. They give up their child to an uncertain fate. They give him to God in the most dangerous of situations. Moses' mother puts him in a basket and floats him in the river toward the daughter of the evil king with the hopes the princess will not just have him killed as one of those unwanted people.

That is the story of the coming of Moses. He is a child given up by his family in hopes he will survive and find a better life. Can you imagine having such a bad life that you would do something like this? It tells you how bad it must have been.

Our story gets a second start in chapter 2 verse 23. It is not part of today's text, but you need to hear it to understand what is happening.

2:23 The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. ²⁴ God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. ²⁵ So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

The Israelites groaned under their slavery, their oppression. They groaned and God heard them. In fact, already there was a Moses, and the women of Israel, Shiphrah and Puah. Already God had done something. This is explained in the rest of the Exodus story we will study in the weeks ahead. But for now, suffice it to say that God was already working before the people knew they needed help. There was a baby in a basket, a princess, and a family willing to sacrifice before the people of God had even asked for help.

This is how God is. He hears us when we call even before we call. God is acting in preparation for what we will need.

One of the things we know about God is that He is all powerful and all knowing. He knows what we are going to need, and He knows what is best for us. God has a plan. You could say, God has all his dominos in place. He knows how they will fall.

That is how it was with the people of Israel. He knew they would starve as a small family in Palestine, so he found a home for them in Egypt. He knew that the Egyptians would eventually turn on them, and He knew they would need to be saved by a strong leader who would speak truth to power. Even before the people cried for help, Shiphrah and Puah were standing up for what is right, human life. Even before the people cried out Moses was born, given to the river where God led him to a royal upbringing giving him the pedigree he needed to accomplish the rescue of his people.

This is how God is. He is working on your behalf, even before you call for help! When you think of this you can see this to be true. It was said that Moses only saw the backside of God when God passed by. That is often how we see God, in hindsight. But if we take time to look you can see the hand of God has been in your life for a long time. He is guiding you. He has set the dominos.

Let me give you an example. On Monday I saw a message from a man whose wife I did the funeral for about 4 years ago. I did this funeral as a favor to someone at the Veteran's Cemetery in Boulder City. I don't normally do funerals for people who are not part of our church, but this was a veteran who needed help. The husband was disabled, and they did not have much money to do a "real" funeral. So, I performed the service and it was nice and they did not have to pay. An honor for me to serve a veteran's family and a gift for them.

Well, I saw the message that I had missed from last week that said this man had called. His daughter had died, and he didn't know what to do. I called him on Monday when I got the message and he said that he could not afford a funeral, he was hoping that I could do the service at the gravesite. Since he had not heard from me, he was planning on doing it himself. I said of course I will do the service. I had 15 hours' notice to prepare a memorial for someone's daughter who deserved so much more.

When I got there, I saw that the man who had called had recently fallen, broken his back, and was just trying to honor his daughter who was taken tragically young by a heart disorder. This retired marine was going to find a way to stand up in a body cast to honor his daughter as she was buried in a pauper's grave. We talked and I learned that we had connections going back to my childhood. This retired marine had lived in my hometown of Carmichael. His daughter and son had been part of the youth ministry based at the church where I grew up. Although they were there after I had left for college.

When our short little COVID-19 ceremony was over the family was overwhelmed that the church, a pastor, would reach out to them when they had nothing to give. They were thanking God for His faithfulness even as they grieved. In this moment, I realized, once again, that God was working His grace, years before I could see it. Volunteering to help a veteran bury his wife years ago, set things in motion to call this family back to faith with grace years later.

It was said of Queen Esther who also saved her people, "for such a time as this you were born." Maybe God brought me to this man's life for this moment. Maybe God was working all along for this moment.

I can assure you that God is like that. He is doing things for you now that you are unaware of. He is bringing people to your life that will make a difference and He is using you in ways that you cannot imagine. You may be Shiphrah or Puah who simply stood up to do what is right and the question is, are you faithful enough to see what God is doing? Are you faithful enough to see how God has set the dominos in your life?

We Respond to the Voice of God

Presentation of our Tithes & Offerings

Pastor Dana Pope

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Q_166skTqE

Romans 12 says: I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship - do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - His good, perfect and pleasing will.

As we continue to worship today we remember that we are urged in scripture to continue our worship of God by using our whole bodies, heart, mind and soul. We give back to God as a response to His mercy and love. I urge you as part of our worship to think about how you might work for God's kingdom in these moments and days. Sharing not only your finances but your time and talent, encouraging others and showing love.

Let us now participate in God's kingdom by returning God's tithes and our offerings. <https://onrealm.org/gracepclv/-/give/now>

Offertory

“Seek the Lord and Micah 6:8”

Kathy Koch and Rosa Gonzales

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt-yWpM8ocI>

Offertory Prayer

Pastor Dana Pope

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qn8OfEYlpo>

Holy God we offer to our bodies as a living sacrifice as part of our worship. We pray that all that we offer is pleasing to You. Bless the money, and resources, the talent, the time and grant that by Your power it would be multiplied and used to bless Your holy kingdom. Use us and all of these offerings to bring grace, peace, light and life to our world. We ask that these gifts would be of use to provide for worship, service and a word of hope - the message of the gospel - all for Your glory. Amen.

We Go with God to Love and Serve

Closing Hymn

“Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated”

Quarantine Quintet + One, Becky Aldridge, Flutist

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTCi9-uQ_3o

Benediction

Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxwvDr_Jeqk

Postlude

“Trumpet Recessional”

J. Dixon

Dr. David Dorway, Organist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAJ7kv9HSdU>

As you continue to worship this week, please keep the following people in prayer, and reach out to one another in word or deed.

In Need of Prayer

Dolores Harris (Merrill Gardens)

Alice Black (Skilled Nursing at Las Ventanas)

Gary Oiler (Hospital)

Judy Aitken, Becky Aldridge, Bill Carlston, Bernard Busswell, Bob & Joan Clark, Carol Daniel, Phil Debo, Ann Donithan, Rosamaria Duenas, Joice Franklin, Mary Gafford, Terry Glaser, Mary Phillips, Pam Kodey, Lara Kolberg, Dorell Koon, Carole McKinnis, Sherrie Miles, Pennie Everhart, Maggie O'Donnell, Alice Oiler,

Dodi Palmer, Russ & Pat Reid, Aminta & Jorge Santanilla, Marty Swartout, Mike Walsh,
Sharon Wilson, Dick Wohletz

In Memoriam:

Jack Crockett 3/18/2020

Randy Innis 3/18/2020

Clark Trapp 3/18/2020

Ruthy Stull 3/19/2020

Ted Phillips 4/1/2020

Violet Cross 4/4/2020

Bill Franklin 5/4/2020

Greg Holt 5/7/2020

Carol Mohr 5/25/2020

Louis Romero 8/8/2020

Bettye Hodgkins 8/11/2020