

Order of Worship for at Home Use

October 11, 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=VOpdxKen2Dc>

Welcome to worship with Grace Presbyterian Church in Las Vegas. We are thrilled you are worshipping with us. We believe that whenever we gather for worship, whether it be here in church or at home, that God is with us. We are the community of faith, the family of God and so we are united with sisters and brothers in Christ this day.

As you know, Governor Sisolak has allowed for churches to meet with up to 250 people using up to 50% of their building's capacity as long as they continue to follow social distancing protocols. As a result, we have increased our attendance capacity to 130 for those who would like to attend at the Central Campus. We are also opening worship at the West Campus on November 8th at 10:30 am. We will be limiting attendance at the West Campus to 50 persons.

As you worship at home, create a comfortable space. Surround yourself with the symbols of our faith. Maybe light a candle to signify God light in our world, have your Bible as it is God's revealed word to us. Above all, open your heart this morning to the very real presence of God.

Pastor Jim

We Gather as God's Family to Worship

Prelude/Candle Lighting "Come, Now is the Time to Worship" B. Doerksen
Kathy Koch & Savannah Scarlett
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1rNJw8Urw8>

Welcome Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLOCoKBXVWw>

Call to Worship (Psalm 106) Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGO9sH1MO9k>

One: Praise the Lord.

All: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His love endures forever.

One: Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord
or fully declare His praise?

All: Blessed are those who act justly,
who always do what is right.

One: Let us worship God

Hymn "Breathe" M.W. Smith Kathy Koch & Pastor Dana
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWbbpYcvAkA>

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 Jim Houston-Hencken
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r18LPJXBiz8>

Holy God this day we come before you and confess that are not ready for the holy lives you have called us to. You are the one who has saved us; but we make false gods for ourselves. We think an election can save us. We think possessions can heal us. We think accomplishments make us worthy. Please forgive us our lack of faith in this time of need.

Gracious God it seems that we too often fail to see your goodness and we wander in darkness seemingly unable to open our eyes to your grace. Help us to see the goodness in our neighbors who reach out to care for us in our times of need. Help us to see your blessing in those who serve us and protect us in today's climate of hostility and mistrust. God open our hearts to the blessing of your creation from sunsets to sea sides, from majesty of mountains to the autumn leaves that fall with colorful beauty. God open our eyes to the gifts of your hand. Give us appreciation for all you do in our world and help us to remember this is your creation, we are the visitors.

God as we journey through the season of Halloween, let us not celebrate death but rather realize the blessing of life that conquers death through our Lord Jesus Christ. Prepare our hearts for the coming All Saints Day reminding us of those who have gone on ahead to life eternal having lived faithfully with us. In this autumn season help us to see that as leaves fall you continue to prepare your creation of the wonder of new life.

Finally, God, in this moment we lift those who you have placed on our hearts. We pray for those struggling with issues of health and wholeness. Bring healing and peace. We pray for direction for all who are lost, and we pray for opportunity and resources for all who struggle. Give us hearts of compassion and grace for others in the days ahead. We pray this in the name of our Lord 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. 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>

32 When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, “Come, make us gods^[a] who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.”

² Aaron answered them, “Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me.” ³ So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, “These are your gods,^[b] Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord.” ⁶ So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

⁷ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. ⁸ They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.’

⁹ “I have seen these people,” the Lord said to Moses, “and they are a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation.”

¹¹ But Moses sought the favor of the Lord his God. “Lord,” he said, “why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will

be their inheritance forever.”¹⁴ Then the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

Message

“A Pain in the Neck”

Pastor Dana Pope

Please pray with me... Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us, Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us... Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us... Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on us...

As we continue to worship today we focus on the continued journey of Israel in the wilderness. Today we find them at the foot of Mt Sinai. This wilderness experience has been a wild ride for these settled but persecuted people. Moses led them out of slavery, through the parted waters of the red sea, and straight into the wilderness. As they traveled, things gradually began to change for them.

Moses led them toward the promised land, they grew hungry, and God provided manna and quail. They grumbled and complained and they little by little began to trust God.

When they were thirsty God provided water from a rock, and when they felt lost, God led them with fire and smoke... Throughout this wilderness wandering they have been slowly formed into a people... God’s people... Last week God spoke the words of covenant to Moses, giving the people the 10 commandments, rules and laws to live by in order to be in right relationship with God and with one another. By doing so strengthening their community and faith formation...but

There continues to be real struggle to walk by faith.

They continue to grumble... question... struggle... fear...

They ask things like: Are we doing the right thing?

Is this God really with us?

Can we even trust this God?

In the Ancient Near East there were many gods to choose from. We see them mentioned throughout scripture. Dagan, Baal, “the unknown god” in the NT... and many others.

With many gods available to them... many paths and choices on how to live... they wonder:

Is THIS God, truly our God? Is THIS God, good?

Their questions, fears and anxieties only increase when Moses goes up the mountain and then stays there... for 40 days... When they don't see Moses coming down, and no sign of him for weeks... they panic. The people try to figure out plan B... because doing something seems better than doing nothing. And when we are waiting on an answer from God, sometimes it feels as if we are doing nothing.

I wonder if we all haven't felt that impulse throughout our lives, and even in new ways in the past months of quarantine...

Physically staying home more than we ever have, I wonder how many of us took on projects that we might not normally have tackled... just to do something. I read one article that said that 70% of those polled ... did just that. Gardens were planted, closets cleaned out, patio decks put in, swimming pools dug, bathrooms and kitchens remodeled... (I am a sucker for those remodeling shows with the before and after shots – so if you have them I would love to see!)

The thing is, spiritually, we do the same thing. When fears and anxieties and questions come which shake our faith or cause us to question... when what we had been doing to connect with God no longer works, or when silence and stillness seems too daunting or too empty... we choose to DO SOMETHING ... and we often choose the wrong thing...

Israel chose the wrong thing. They chose to make a god to follow that they could hold, see, even follow... a golden calf seems safe enough. It certainly wouldn't be difficult to follow in the desert...(unless you wanted to get somewhere I guess) it seems undemanding... benign... And it was something to DO... maybe even to control...

God of course isn't amused. *He tells Moses, Get down there and do something about that pain-in-the-neck (stiff necked) people. WE JUST TALKED about this in chapter 20. The people agreed to the covenant...*

NO other gods before me. no idols... it was a clear

And that's the thing.

God doesn't want to take a back seat, second place in the hearts or lives or actions of His people. Period. Not Israel, not us.

God loves us enough to want our whole heart – mind – soul - and strength.

We must ask ourselves what idols do we follow that we have put in God's place?

God's people are short sighted. We are difficult. We are easily distracted.

We tend to think we know better...

We ARE A PAIN In THE NECK.

I do wonder what idols we have created to fill the emptiness in these COVID times. When we are separated from our brothers and sisters of faith, have we turned to a lesser god to find connection?

I wonder what gods we have made with our hands or fashioned in our hearts... that we now turn to more easily than the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses... the God of our salvation. What do we hope will save us from these troubled times?

A vaccine? A new president? A return to “normal?” A vacation? A remodel? Opening up of COVID restrictions – back to Church or school? Or maybe it's something we use to dull the pain, alcohol or chocolate, or entertainment... or???

Today, as we worship, I am actually encouraged by this part of our Exodus story for two reasons:

First: the people at the foot of the mountain made a choice...and it is a choice we make all too often. And the good news is, we can learn from their choice, and from our own past choices.

It boils down to this: Israel gave up looking to God and instead looked to themselves, their own ideas and ingenuity...to make it through. They looked to Aaron to make a cheap imitation. They looked high and low and everywhere but at the God of their salvation. This caused them pain. A stiff neck... as it were.

We can learn from them.

We can notice our own idols, the things we allow to get between us and God...

The things we gather up and re-fashion... that we pay more attention to and show more allegiance to than the gospel message or the person of Jesus Christ... and we can remove them.

We can ask our loving God to reveal to us the ways we are stubborn and impatient... doing things ourselves, taking things into our own hands – instead of waiting for our God’s help and salvation... and we can make a different choice.

We can notice our own stubbornness and ask God to relieve the stiffness in our necks, and the posture of unrepentance from our hearts and minds.

The second thing that encourages me is this: Moses interceded for the people... and in the end God was merciful. God, in fact, gave Moses instructions to make two sets of tablets, on which God wrote the covenant of the 10 commandments...something for the people to see and hold onto.

We have something to hold onto... the Word given to us in Scripture...

And we have the privilege to intercede for one another and our world...asking for God’s mercy and the grace to help one another look to our loving God instead of creating our own idols.

And, in the words of Paul in Philippians... finally Brothers (and sisters) whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about these things...and the God of peace will be with you. Amen

We Respond to the Voice of God

Presentation of our Tithes & Offerings

Pastor Jim Houston-Hencken

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gf6-m8nCYNY>

Offering is not fund raising for the church. Offering is not given out of obligation or even generosity. Offering in the church of Jesus Christ is an act of gratitude. As Christians we are aware of the blessing of God each and every day. The sun shining warmly on your face, your health, your family, the resources that allow you to live your life, your talent, your time on earth, everything you have and experience is a gift from God. Offering is an act of gratitude. Our way of saying thank you God. today as we call for the offering please consider how you might give back to God by furthering his mission and ministry in this world. Consider how you might help to make this world a better place. That, my friends, is an offering of gratitude.

We are blessed with many opportunities to give of our time talents and our resources... Let us now participate in God's kingdom by returning God's tithes and our offerings to the church via mail or online giving, using text to give or the following link: <https://onrealm.org/gracepclv/-/give/now>

We Go with God to Love and Serve

Closing Hymn

“The Blessing”

Elevation Worship
Kathy Koch & Family

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0liDUGmJlg>

Benediction

Pastor Dana Pope

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z3WcrQOIGNM>

Postlude

“We Fall Down”

C. Tomlin
Kathy Koch & Savannah Scarlett

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGbJo2hq-I4>

**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)

Judy Aitken, Becky Aldridge, Bill Carlston, Joy Boes, Bernard Busswell,
Bob & Joan Clark, Carol Daniel, Ann Donithan, Rosamaria Duenas,
Pennie Everhart, Joice Franklin, Mary Gafford, Donna Gibson, Terry Glaser,
Pam Kodey, Lara Kolberg, Dorell Koon, Carole McKinnis, Sherrie Miles,
Maggie O'Donnell, Alice Oiler, Dodi Palmer, Taylor Palmer, Mary Phillips,
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
Priscilla Taylor 7/4/2020
Louis Romero 8/8/2020
Bettye Hodgkins 8/11/2020
Gary Oiler 8/23/2020