



**December 22, 2024**

**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**  
*Free Grace Presbyterian Church*

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

Peace means the defeat of evil. Peace means breaking down the barrier between man and God. Peace means the presence of God's rich and abundant blessing. Peace means positiveness; it is not the absence of anything—the barrier that separated us from God or anything else. Peace is presence, the presence of God. Christ 'is our peace'.

Leon Morris  
Australian NT scholar

All we could ever imagine, could ever hope for, He is.... He is the Prince of Peace whose first coming has already transformed society but whose second coming will forever establish justice and righteousness. All this, and infinitely more, alive in an impoverished baby in a barn.

Michael Card  
Presbyterian singer-songwriter

Therefore,  
since we have been  
justified by faith, we  
have peace with God  
through our Lord  
Jesus Christ.

**Romans 5:1**

For in him  
all the fullness of God  
was pleased to dwell, and  
through him to reconcile to  
himself all things, whether on  
earth or in heaven, making  
peace by the blood of his  
cross.

**Colossians 1:19-20**

Ascribe to the  
Lord, O heavenly  
beings, ascribe to the Lord  
glory and strength. Ascribe to  
the Lord the glory due his  
name; worship the Lord in  
the splendor of  
holiness.

**Psalms 29:1-2**

He is the radiance of  
the glory of God and the  
exact imprint of his nature, and he  
upholds the universe by the word of  
his power. After making purification for  
sins, he sat down at the right hand of the  
Majesty on high, having become as  
much superior to angels as the name  
he has inherited is more excellent  
than theirs.

**Hebrews 1:3-4**

Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD from the  
heavens; praise him in the  
heights! Praise him, all his angels;  
praise him, all his hosts!... Let them  
praise the name of the LORD, for his  
name alone is exalted; his majesty is  
above earth and heaven. He has raised  
up a horn for his people, praise for all  
his saints, for the people of Israel  
who are near to him. Praise the  
LORD!

**Psalms 148:1-2, 13-14**

The truth is, despite all the political promises, despite all the government programs, despite all the sincere efforts of all the decent, well-intentioned people everywhere; the human race is never going to achieve peace by itself, through its own unaided efforts. It's beyond the capacity of human nature to make the world a place of universal blessing.

David Silvernail  
Presbyterian pastor

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## GOD SUMMONS US BY HIS GRACE

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Leader: Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Hebrews 1

**People: He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.**

Leader: 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...And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

John 1

**People: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"**

Luke 2

Our coming to worship God is a response to his gracious coming to us in Jesus Christ. Only by his coming are we able or willing to come and worship. So every worship service starts with God calling us to come to him through Jesus Christ.

# Confronted by Christ at Christmas, we sing glory to God

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

1. An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
 2. Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
 3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.  
 Say what may the tid - ings be, which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

## REFRAIN

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Luke 2

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# GOD SANCTIFIES US BY HIS GRACE

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## **God declares that we fall short of his glory because of our sin**

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 John 1

## **We confess our sin**

*We use this time in God's presence to confess our sins and our need for God's grace, silently, personally, before him alone. We invite you to join us in sorrow over your sin and joy in his grace and mercy in Jesus Christ.*

To the world, repentance is looking backwards in shame, remorse, and regret at what our sin and failures cost us. For the Christian, repentance is looking forward to the one who took all that as his own and gave us himself instead. To the world repentance is about sorrow; to the Christian it is the joy of Christmas.

## **God promises joy: grace upon grace as we receive peace through Jesus Christ**

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2

From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

John 1

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1

And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.  
Luke 2

**We rejoice in the fullness of time and the coming of the Son, who redeemed us**

“Away in a Manger (All Glory to Jesus)”



1. A - way in a man-ger a ba - by is\_\_ born. The Sov - reign of heav-en whom  
 2. A - way in a man-ger a Ser-vant is\_\_ born, made noth - ing to raise up the  
 3. A - way in a man-ger a Sav - ior is\_\_ born. The crown he'll be giv - en will



an - gels a - dore is wrapped in the weak - ness of our mor - tal frame. The  
 hope - less and poor. With grace as his bur - den and love as his yoke, the  
 pierce him with thorns. The King will be cursed with our sin and our shame. The



lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 gen - tle Lord Je - sus will shep - herd our souls.  
 blame - less Lord Je - sus will die in our place.

*To Chorus  
To Chorus*

**CHORUS**



All glo - ry to Je - sus for - ev - er. We lift high the name\_\_ of our



Sav - ior. All glo - ry to Je - sus for - ev - er. We lift high the name



— of our Sav - ior. 4. A - way in a man-ger a

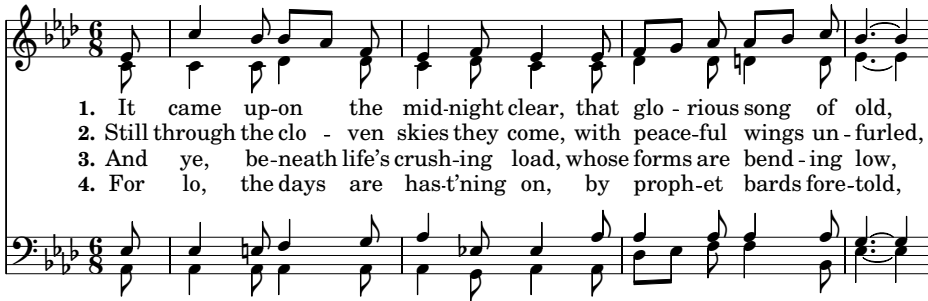


Li - on is\_\_ born. The dark - ness will trem - ble at his might - y roar. His mer - cy will

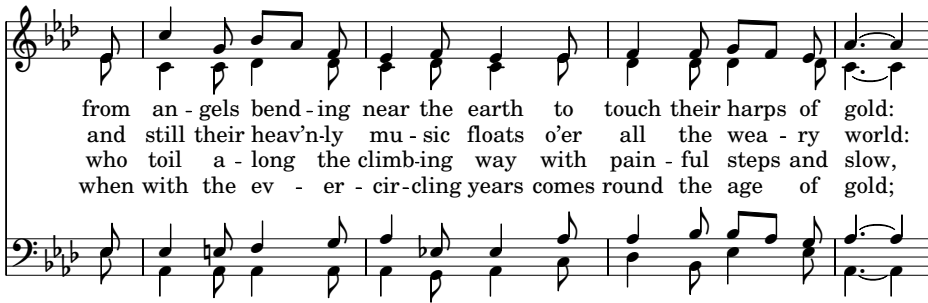


tri - umph and death will be slain! The ris - en Lord Je - sus for - ev - er will reign.

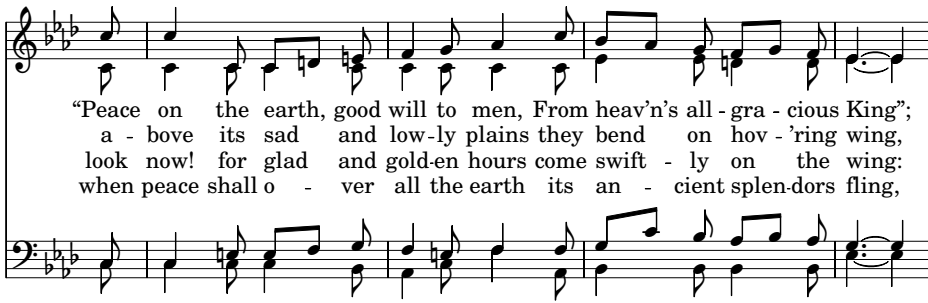
"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"



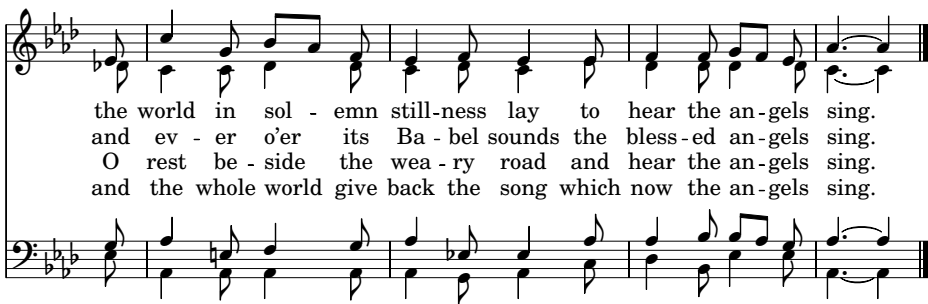
1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo - rious song of old,  
2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,  
3. And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,  
4. For lo, the days are has-t'ning on, by proph-et bards fore-told,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
and still their heav'n-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years comes round the age of gold;



"Peace on the earth, good will to men, From heav'n's all - gra - cious King";  
a - bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,  
look now! for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing:  
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



the world in sol - emn still-ness lay to hear the an-gels sing.  
and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing.  
O rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an-gels sing.  
and the whole world give back the song which now the an-gels sing.

And suddenly  
there was with the  
angel a multitude  
of the heavenly  
host praising God  
and saying,  
"Glory to God in  
the highest,  
and on earth  
peace among  
those with whom  
he is pleased!"  
Luke 2

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# GOD SPEAKS WITH US BY HIS GRACE

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Luke 2:8-14

<sup>8</sup>And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup>And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

**Sermon**

Rev. Dr. Per Almqvist

## Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Songs of the Season

The Savior comes to bring

1. Glory to God in the highest (**14**)

In the beginning  
was the Word, and  
the Word was with  
God, and the  
Word was God...  
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... No one has  
ever seen God;  
the only God, who  
is at the Father's  
side, he has made  
him known.

John 1

2. And on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased (**14**)



## We join the heavenly host in praising God

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;  
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!  
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righ - teous - ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
Late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,

with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.  
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec - ond birth.

REFRAIN  
Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King."

"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"  
Luke 19

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# GOD STRENGTHENS US BY HIS GRACE

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Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the Lord's Supper; it is all Christ and Him crucified. [This] gives a peculiar sweetness to the broken bread and poured-out wine.  
Robert Murray M'Cheyne

## **We celebrate the Lord's Supper, proclaiming the glory and peace of God in Jesus Christ**

*We celebrate God's free grace to us in Jesus Christ by observing the Lord's Supper each Sunday. We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized followers of Jesus Christ under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the cup, you are acknowledging that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. If you have any doubts about your participation, please speak to one of the elders after the service.*

"Mary Consoles Eve"

Eve, my sister, the one who took the fall.  
Eve, my sister, mother of us all.  
Lift up your head, don't hide your blushing face.  
The promised One is finally on his way.  
Almost, not yet, already. Almost, not yet, already.

Eve, it's Mary, now I'm a mother too.  
The child I carry, a promise coming true .  
This baby comes to save us from our sin.  
A servant King, his kingdom without end.  
Almost, not yet, already. Almost, not yet, already.

He comes to make his blessings flow,  
As far and wide as the curse is found.  
He comes to make his blessings flow.  
Almost, not yet, already. Almost, not yet, already.

Eve, my sister, the one who took the fall.  
Eve, my sister, mother of us all.  
Lift up your head, don't hide your blushing face.  
The promised One is finally on his way.

**We join the heavenly host in praising God for the Savior who came by giving our tithes, our offerings, and our faith in him**

Elder: God fulfilled the promise of Christmas, which he had made to the early fathers by the mouth of his holy prophets when he sent his only and eternal Son into the world at the time set by him.

**People: This Son took the “form of a servant” and was made in “human form,” truly assuming a real human nature, with all its weaknesses, except for sin; being conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Elder: And he not only assumed human nature as far as the body is concerned but also a real human soul, in order to be a real human being:

**People: Born of a woman; the seed of David; a shoot from the root of Jesse; the offspring of Judah; from the seed of Abraham; made like his brothers and sisters, yet without sin. In this way Christ is truly our Immanuel—that is: “God with us.”**

Elder: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, by whom all things were created, and in him all things hold together.

**People: And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.**

from the Belgic Confession,  
article 18

Colossians 1

**We pray for God’s work in us to rest in his peace and proclaim his glory in all of life**

*During this time we live in faith, trusting in the power of his grace,  
placing our lives and our church in his hands.  
We ask that he would work in us and through us for his glory.*

Written by an itinerant pastor in the Sixteenth Century as a defense of churches being severely persecuted, the Belgic Confession expresses biblical doctrine with a warm, experiential, and personal spirit.

# GOD SENDS US BY HIS GRACE

We join the herald angels in proclaiming glory to God and peace on earth through the child of Christmas

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

*Unison*

(Ref.) Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev-ery-where;

go, tell it on the moun-tain that Je-sus Christ is born.

1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si-lent flocks by night, be-  
2. The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo! a-bove the earth rang  
3. Down in a low-ly man-ger our hum-ble Christ was born, and

hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho-ly light.  
out the an-gel cho-rus that hailed our Sav-ior's birth.  
God sent us sal-va-tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.  
Luke 2

**We receive the promise of peace from God through the One who came at Christmas**

Leader: Depart in peace, according to God's word; for your eyes have seen his salvation that he has prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to his people Israel.

Luke 2

**People: Amen**

*Please stay and join us for a time of enjoying each other's company.*

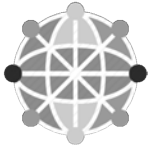
*This is a time to share in life together as the gospel calls us  
as we reconnect with those we know, and as we meet someone new.*



## Welcome to Free Grace

We are a broken church full of broken people. We know we need God's free grace. Some of us have accepted this grace, some are exploring what it's all about. All of us are still trying to understand it. We are a church that seeks to proclaim this free grace of God with both our words and our lives. Not satisfied with simply talking about it, we want to live it out. We invite you to come, explore, and live God's free grace with us.

## Our Connections



Free Grace is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a family of churches that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

## Our Leadership

Free Grace is lead by her elders, men called by God and set apart by the church to care and lead her as individual members, families, and as a whole. Our elders are:

Rev. Dr. Per Almquist  
Brian Cosgrove  
Rev. Adam Lee  
Ken Morris  
Ben Van Dyke



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Meredith Stevens, *voice*; Shane Stevens, *percussion*; Beth Almquist, *piano*

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"Go, Tell It on the Mountain" Pubic Domain. Words and Music: Traditional spiritual.

Everyone was looking for the King in all his glory and they missed the King in all his lowliness. For Christmas is not the celebration of my glory that caused Jesus' birth, but the good news in the midst of my poverty, failure, and brokenness that God remembers his promise and gives peace.

broken people  
bound together in Christ  
for God's glory