

GATHERING GROWING GLORIFYING

## Order Of Worship December 14, 2025

\*Call to Worship | Hebrews 12:22-24 | Rev. Blake Arnoult God invites and calls us into his presence to worship him.

<sup>22</sup> But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup> and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup> and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

\*Song of Adoration | Angels We Have Heard On High We begin by responding with praise to God for who he is and for what he does.

Angels we have on heard high, Sweetly singing ore the plains And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains

Gloria in excelsis Deo Gloria in excelsis Deo

Come to Bethlehem and see, Christ whose birth the angels sing Come adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord the newborn King

Gloria in excelsis Deo Gloria in excelsis Deo

See Him in a manger laid, Whom the choirs of angels praise Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, While our hearts in love we raise

Gloria in excelsis Deo Gloria in excelsis Deo

Music and Lyrics: James Chadwick

# \*Confession of Faith | Luke 1:46-55, "The Magnificat"

With the church in history we confess a basic statement of what Christians believe.

#### 46 And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

- 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
- 48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

- 49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
- 50 And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
- 51 He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

- 52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;
- 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.
- 54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
- 55 as he spoke to our fathers,

to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

# \*Song of Confession | He Who Is Mighty

Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are simply prayers that are sung. We respond in repentance and praise for God's redemptive work in Christ.

Oh, the mercy our God has shown
To those who sit in death's shadow
The sun on high, pierced the night
Born was the Cornerstone
Unto us a Son is given, unto us a Child is born

He Who is mighty has done a great thing Taken on flesh, conquered death's sting Shattered the darkness and lifted our shame Holy is His name

Oh, the freedom our Savior won
The yoke of sin has been broken
Once a slave, now by grace
No more condemnation
Unto us a Son is given, unto us a Child is born

/ Now my soul magnifies the Lord I rejoice in the God Who saves I will trust His unfailing love I will sing His praises all my days /

Music and Lyrics: Kate DeGraide, Rebecca Elliott

# Confession of Sin | Based on Romans 1 and 5

We fight the temptation to hide our sin and instead acknowledge it openly to God, but we do so in light of the grace offered in Jesus.

Our great God, we confess that although we have known you, we have not honored you as our God and King nor given you thanks as we should. We have been tempted and failed with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice, envy, strife, deceit, and craftiness. We are gossips, slanderers, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Yet we do also confess that at the right time, you sent your Son into the world to be born, live, and die for the ungodly. We most joyfully confess that you have proven your love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Forgive our sins, we pray, through him who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our salvation. Amen.

#### Assurance of Pardon 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 Rev. Blake Arnoult

The good news of the gospel is that we are forgiven in Jesus Christ. This assurance is based on God's words of promise and it is therefore certain.

<sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup> and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

## \*Song of Response | Go Tell It On The Mountain

We respond in repentance and praise for God's redemptive work in Christ.

Go tell it on the mountain Over the hills and ev'rywhere Go tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born

While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night Behold throughout the heavens There shone a holy light

#### Chorus

The shepherds feared and trembled When lo above the earth Rang out the angel chorus That hailed the Savior's birth

#### Chorus

Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn

#### Chorus

Music and Lyrics: John W. Work

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

We offer our gratitude to God in prayer in response to his gifts and blessings to his people and ask that he make us faithful managers of these gifts.

# Song of Thanks | We Three Kings Of Orient Are

As we offer our prayers so we also offer up our thanks in song.

We three kings of Orient are Bearing gifts we traverse afar Field and fountain moor and mountain Following yonder star

> O star of wonder star of night Star with royal beauty bright Westward leading still proceeding Guide us to Thy perfect light

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain Gold I bring to crown Him again King forever ceasing never Over us all to reign

#### Chorus

Frankincense to offer have I Incense owns a Deity nigh Prayer and praising all men raising Worship Him God on high

#### Chorus

Music and Lyrics: John Henry Hopkins

# Prayer for Christ's Church

We lift up our requests to God knowing that he hears us when we pray.

\*Reading of Scripture | Matthew 2:1-12 | Rev. Blake Arnoult God reveals himself and his work and speaks to us his people through his Word.

<sup>1</sup>Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men[a] from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose[b] and have come to worship him." <sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

6 "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." <sup>9</sup> After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>11</sup> And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Pastor: The Word of the Lord **People: Thanks be to God** 

The Preaching of the Word | Rev. Blake Arnoult

"Advent: The Morning Star Child" Matthew: The Gospel to the Church

Pastoral Prayer

## Sacrament of Communion

Sacraments are visible signs of the invisible grace of God - what Christ does by his Holy Spirit within us. Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist), as the distribution of the elements of bread and wine, symbolizes a meal. Communion is a sign of fellowship. That sign signifies more than just the future heavenly fellowship that is to come. The outward sign signifies the inner reality that sinners already experience fellowship with God in the Spirit because of Jesus. Communion is not a meal for good people. It functions as a renewing seal to desperate sinners of that fellowship we have with our holy and gracious God.

You will be invited to come forward. If you are not a Christian we encourage you to spend this time in reflection on what you've seen and heard in the worship. Children who have not received their first communion are welcome and encouraged to come forward with their families to witness their partaking. We invite children who are ready to make a public profession of faith in Christ to arrange a meeting with the elders, and thus become "communicants" at the Lord's Table.

Pastor: The Lord be with you. **People: And also with you.** Pastor: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.** 

<u>Prayer of Thanksgiving and Words of Institution</u> Pastor: Let us proclaim the mystery of the faith:

People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Hallelujah!

Pastor: Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us. Hallelujah!

**People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.**Pastor: The gifts of God for the people of God.

Please let an usher know if it is difficult for you to come forward. We would be happy to serve you at your seat. All communion bread is gluten-free. All communion wine is made from grape juice.

A communion prayer for those searching for the 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.

# Communion Song | O Come O Come Emmanuel

We celebrate our communion in faith and song.

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

# 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 O come Thou Lord of Might Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height In ancient times didst give the law In cloud and majesty and awe

#### Chorus

Music and Lyrics: John Sullivan Dwight, Placide Cappeau, Kurtis Park

# <u>Departing Song</u> | The First Noel

We begin to end in faith and song.

The first Noel the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep

#### Noel, Noel, Noel Born is the King of Israel

They looked up and saw a star Shining in the east beyond them far And to the earth it gave great light And so it continued both day and night

#### Chorus

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far
To seek for a king was their intent
And to follow the star wherever it went

#### Chorus

This star drew nigh to the north-west O'er Bethlehem it took its rest And there it did both stop and stay Right over the place where Jesus lay

#### Chorus

Then let us all with one accord Sing praises to our heavenly Lord That hath made heaven and earth of naught And with His blood mankind hath bought

#### Chorus

Lyrics & Music: Sir John Stainer

# \*Benediction | Revelation 22:20-21 | Rev. Blake Arnoult

God sends us out with his blessing. A benediction is not a prayer. We don't bow our heads. We lift them up and even lift up our hands to receive his blessing as we are sent out as participants in his mission to the city of man.

<sup>20</sup> He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

# <u>Announcements</u>

# 2025 Budget Update

Visit our website to give online or scan the code below!

2025 Budget: \$813,000 Giving Received as of 12/10/2025: \$636,979 Difference as of 12/10/2025: \$(176,021)

Please prayerfully consider giving to Cornerstone by December 31st to help us reach our 2025 budget! All gifts must be dated and sent by 12/31/25 to count towards the 2025 giving year.

# **Christmas Eve Fellowship and Candlelight Service**

Wednesday, December 24, 2:30pm A.D. Players at the George Theater Join us for some Christmas cheer and fellowship on Christmas Eve before our candlelight service!

# **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

Wednesday, December 24, 3pm

A.D. Players at the George Theater

Join us for our annual Christmas Eve candlelight service of lessons and carols, beginning at 3pm!

#### **RSVP and Announcements Page**

Visit the website to view our calendar and RSVP to events!



#### Let Us Know You're Here!

Welcome, visitors! We are so glad to have you with us this morning! Please scan the QR code to let us know you're here, or visit our website at cornerstonehouston.com.



#### Serving

Scan the QR code below to sign up to serve at Cornerstone!



#### Giving

Scan the QR code below to see different ways to give!
\*Please Note: An additional fee is charged per transaction for online
giving. Please consider adding this fee to your total contribution in
order to help us cover it: Credit/Debit Cards: 2.9% +
\$0.30/transaction; American Express: 4% + \$0.30/transaction; and
Bank Transfer (ACH): 1% + \$0.30/transaction.



Cornerstone asks its members and visitors to observe the following quidelines set forth by A.D. Players while in the auditorium space:

- no food or drink other than water
- no writing utensils other than those provided in the Lobby by Cornerstone
- no coming on stage
- no standing on chairs

Cornerstone loves our children, and we encourage parents to bring children of all ages into the worship service. We do ask for your help to ensure children observe these guidelines. Special A.D. Players approved dry erase crayons are available in the Lobby for our children to use during the worship service.

# Cornerstone Kids

What in the world is ...?

#### Hymns, Praise Songs?

Singing loudly is not just something we do in the shower. God gave us voices to sing about how awesome he is!

#### Confession?

God wants to hear what we did wrong. Tell him! He not only listens, he also forgives.

#### Prayer?

God cares so much for us that he taught us to pray. He wants us to know what to pray for and also how to pray. How amazing is that? Take a look in your parents' bulletin to check it out!

## The Offering?

Ever wonder why we put money in that basket being passed around? God wants us to give to him and his church in joy as an act of worship!

#### The Sermon?

This is when the pastor helps us understand what God is telling us in the Bible. And the Bible is God's word!

## Communion?

Communion is when we celebrate what Jesus did for us on the cross. We say the bread represents Jesus' body and the wine represents Jesus' blood. Weird huh? And awesome. It means Jesus is really spiritually present with us in the Lord's Supper by the power of the Holy Spirit. And when we eat the bread and drink the wine God nourishes our spirits!!! Who gets to take communion? Those who believe in Jesus and have shared their faith with the leaders in the church.

## Benediction?

This is the end of the church service where everyone receives God's blessing. Isn't it awesome that God shares this blessing with us?





And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Matthew 2:11



#### Did Jesus ever sin?

No. He lived a sinless life.

#### How could Christ suffer?

Christ, the Son of God, became a man so that he could obey and suffer in our place



"Father, we praise your Son is the Lord, our King, and Savior. Blessed be the name of Jesus."

# KIDS' LESSON

Have y'all heard that weird audio recording of that one word repeated over and over? Some people hear something like "yanni" and others hear "laurel"?

We can hear the gospel like Yanny and Laurel - we can hear that gospel and think we hear -

Jesus wants me to be happy so he's supposed to give me what I want

Jesus' job is to make my hopes and dreams come true

Jesus loves me no matter what so I can do whatever I want

Jesus is on my side so he helps me win

Jesus makes me a better person so God will love me

That's like hearing the gospel and saying, I hear Yanny, I hear Laurel and the gospel doesn't say any of that.

The gospel actually says that God the Father looked at God the Son and asked him to come to earth and be born as a man and live the way we're supposed to live. AND, the Father asked God the Son to then suffer and die and take the punishment we all deserve to suffer and die for our sin. God the Father said to God the Son, you will be the light in a dark world and you will take their darkness on yourself - either you die for them or they will die forever. And then the Son of God asked, what do I get if I do? And the Father said, they will come to your light and you will get them.

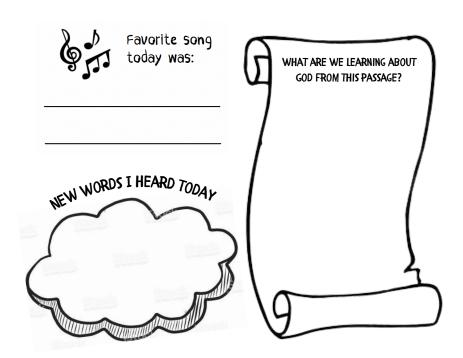
What if the Son of God had said, "No, that sounds terrible. Why should I leave heaven to go to such a dark place and save such terrible people? They're not worth it, why should I suffer for people who don't love me? No thanks." What if? Then there would be no gospel, no salvation, and no hope for any of us and we die forever in the dark.

But the gospel is Jesus looked at God the Father and said, they don't deserve but I'll do it, to get them. And that's why we praise Jesus, because he agreed to give up everything for you to get you.

And the so what for you and me is that the gospel does not say Jesus saves you to make you happy, to make you comfy cozy, to make you rich, to make you successful; the Bible says Jesus saves you for himself for us to love and serve him and others.

# SERMON NOTES





# KIDS' CORNER

# A Visit From the Magi

After Jesus was born ... Magi (wise men) from the east came to Jerusalem and asked ...

Use the code to find their words.

$$^{\wedge}$$
 = A

$$\mathbf{A} = \mathbf{E}$$

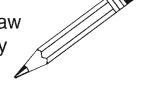
$$\hat{S} = I$$

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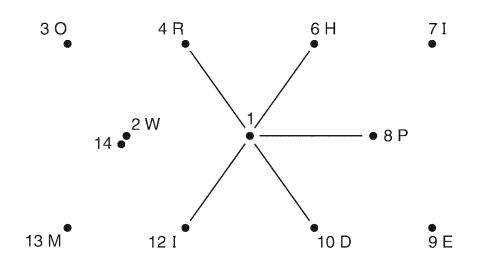
# KIDS' CORNER

Connect the dots. Write the letters in order on the lines.

On coming to the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary and they bowed down and ...



5 S





A.D. PLAYERS AT THE GEORGE THEATER 5420 Westheimer Rd, Houston, TX 77056 www.cornerstonehouston.com