

C O R N E R S T O N E
H O U S T O N

GATHERING GROWING GLORIFYING

Order Of Worship
December 21, 2025

*Call to Worship | Hebrews 1:1-4 | Rev. Blake Arnoult

God invites and calls us into his presence to worship him.

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² 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. ³ 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, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

*Song of Adoration | Joy To The World

We begin by responding with praise to God for who he is and for what he does.

Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing

Joy to the earth the Savior reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods
Rocks hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat repeat the sounding joy

No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found
Far as the curse is found
Far as far as the curse is found

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders wonders of His love

Music and Lyrics: George Frederic Handel, Isaac Watts

*Confession of Faith | Heidelberg Catechism Q.1

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

What is your only comfort in life and death?

That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.

*Song of Confession | Go Tell It On The Mountain

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

**Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
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 our Savior's birth

Chorus

Down in a lowly manger
Our humble Christ was born
And brought us all salvation
That blessed Christmas morn

Chorus

Music and Lyrics: John W. Work

Confession of Sin

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.

Almighty Father, the tomb calls forth our adoring wonder, for it is empty and Christ is risen! Help us to reckon ourselves crucified with Christ. It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us. And the life we now live in the flesh we live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us when he came and was born, lived, died, and was raised for us. We want to be dead and buried to sin, to selfishness, to worldliness, that we might not give into temptation and our old way of living. Show us our sin and show us our Savior and the hope to look to his coming again.

Assurance of Pardon | 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 | 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.

¹ Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

*Song of Response | What Child Is This

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

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

**This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary.**

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

**Nails, spears shall pierce him through,
The cross he bore for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.**

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.

**Raise, raise a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary.**

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 | O Come All Ye Faithful

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

O come all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye O come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold Him
Born the King of angels

**O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ the Lord**

Sing choirs of angels
Sing in exultation
O sing all ye bright
Hosts of heav'n above
Glory to God all
Glory in the highest

Chorus

Yea Lord we greet Thee
Born this happy morning
Jesus to Thee be all glory giv'n
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing

Chorus

Music and Lyrics: C. Frederick Oakeley, John Francis Wade

Prayer for Christ's Church

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

***Reading of Scripture | Matthew 2:1-23 | Rev. Blake Arnoult**

God reveals himself and his work and speaks to us his people through his Word.

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ 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.'"

⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸ 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." ⁹ 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.

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

¹¹ 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.

¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.

¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

¹⁹ But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹ And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³ And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Pastor: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

The Preaching of the Word | Rev. Blake Arnoult

"Advent: The Exodus 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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

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 | Hark The Herald Angels Sing

We celebrate our communion in faith and song.

Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled
Joyful all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With angelic hosts proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of the Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail th'incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with men to dwell
Jesus our Emmanuel
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace
Hail the Sun of Righteousness
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

Come Desire of nations come
Fix in us Thy humble home
Rise the woman's conqu'ring seed
Bruise in us the serpent's head
Adam's likeness now efface
Stamp Thine image in its place
Second Adam from above
Reinstate us in Thy love
Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

Music and Lyrics: Felix Mendelssohn, Charles Wesley

Departing Song | Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus

We begin to end in faith and song.

Come Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart

Joy to those who long to see thee
Day-spring from on high appear
Come thou promised Rod of Jesse
Of Thy birth we long to hear
O'er the hills the angels singing
News glad tidings of a birth
Go to him your praises bringing
Christ the Lord has come to earth

Come to earth to taste our sadness
He whose glories knew no end
By his life he brings us gladness
Our Redeemer Shepherd Friend
Leaving riches without number
Born within a cattle stall
This the everlasting wonder
Christ was born Lord of all

Born Thy people to deliver
Born a child and yet a King
Born to reign in us forever
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring
By Thine own eternal spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne

Lyrics & Music: Rowland Hugh Prichard, Charles Wesley

*Benediction | Romans 12:1-2 | 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.

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Announcements

2025 Budget Update

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

2025 Budget: \$813,000

Giving Received as of 12/17/2025: \$661,745

Difference as of 12/17/2025: \$(151,255)

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

Wednesday, December 24, 2:30pm

A.D. Players at the George Theater

Join us for a time of Christmas Eve Fellowship 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 guidelines 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?

KIDS' CORNER



MEMORY VERSE OF THE WEEK

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2

? CATECHISM OF THE WEEK ?

How could Christ suffer?

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

What kind of life did Christ live on earth?

A sinless life of perfect obedience, and service and suffering.

What kind of death did Jesus die?

The painful and shameful death of the cross.

What is meant by the atonement?

Christ satisfied God's justice by his suffering and death as a substitute for sinners.



PRAYER REQUEST

"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."

KIDS' LESSON

What is the clearest, best way to know God - what he's like, what he thinks of you, how much he loves you?

Jesus. But, Jesus seems like a riddle. He actually is a riddle. But he's a riddle that's been revealed!

Sometimes simple math is the hardest. $1+1 = 2$. Always right? No! Not always.

We're talking about baby Jesus and the incarnation - God becoming man. The incarnation is the enfleshing of the Son of God. God takes on human nature.

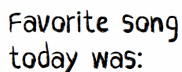
So what is 1 divine nature + 1 human nature = ?
Not two people!

1 divine nature + 1 human nature = 1 person = Jesus who is fully God and fully human.

AND Jesus is not a mixture of human and divine. Jesus being God and man is not like pouring chocolate into milk and stirring. When the Son of God became man it wasn't like mixing colors like you mix some blue of divinity and some yellow of humanity and you get this green thing. He was not a mixture of things. Jesus was truly a man, and yet He did not stop being what He was which is God. And this is the crazy mysterious awesomeness of the incarnation.

In the gospel of Matthew today the Bible is going to tell us - Why did God have to be born as a man to save us? God himself had to become a man because only God could be born without sin. And Jesus has to be sinless if he's going to die for our sins and beat our sin.

But, the awesome news about the incarnation - God had to become a man to save us BUT God didn't have to come to save us. We don't deserve salvation. That doesn't sound awesome except.... God chose to come anyways. God chose to send his Son for you. The Son chose to come for you - all out of grace. That's the good news of the incarnation and the gospel.

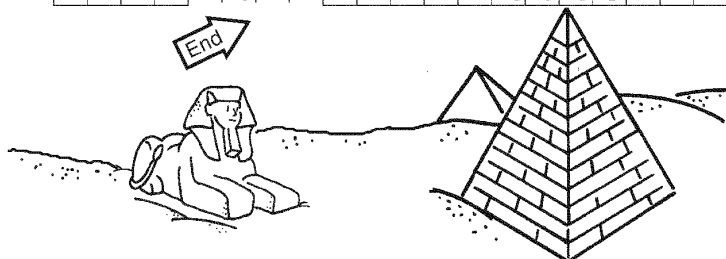
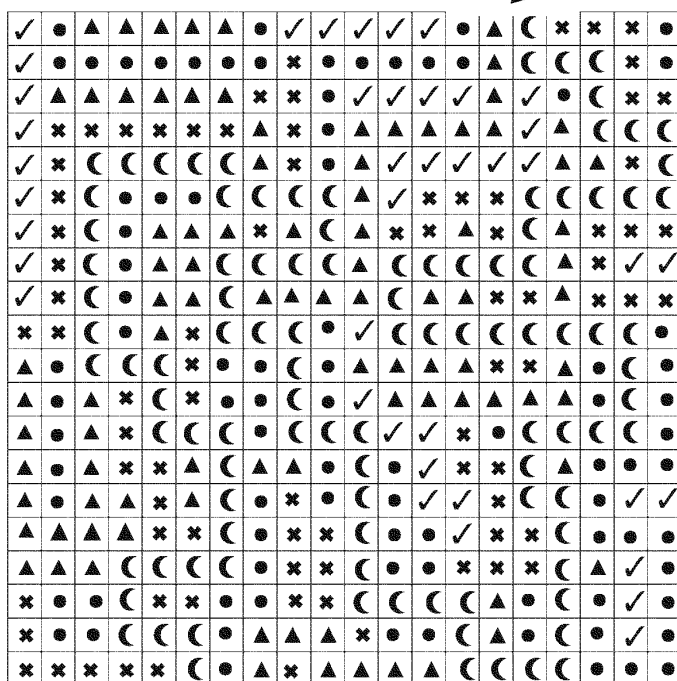
This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, typical of notebook paper. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

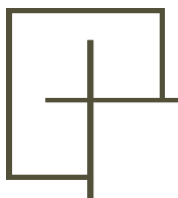
A large, blank scroll graphic with a black outline. The scroll is unrolled, showing a large rectangular area. At the top, the text "WHAT ARE WE LEARNING ABOUT GOD FROM THIS PASSAGE?" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The scroll has a small loop at the top left and a larger loop at the bottom right, suggesting it is a continuous sheet of paper. The background is white.

KIDS' CORNER

Joseph took Mary and Jesus by night to Egypt.

Find the path of shapes that reaches Egypt. You may make only straight moves, no diagonal ones.





SUNDAYS, 10 AM
A.D. PLAYERS AT THE GEORGE THEATER
5420 Westheimer Rd, Houston, TX 77056
www.cornerstonehouston.com