



We could more easily
catch a hurricane in a
shrimp net than we can
understand the wild,
relentless, passionate,
uncompromising pursuing
love of God made present
in the manger.

—
Brennan Manning

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE
DECEMBER 24, 2023
Order of Worship
www.CrossSound.org

Welcome

Welcome to Cross Sound Church. Whether you are a follower of Jesus, someone interested in Christianity, or a skeptic about faith—God is calling you to worship. Wherever you are in life, we hope you feel welcome and at home. If you have never been to church (or not in a long time) and fear that you will not know what to do, how to act, or what to say, know this: God's grace is here and is for people like you.

We are a church that loves our cities: Bainbridge Island, Poulsbo, Silverdale, Kingston, and Seattle. And while we actively love and serve our communities, we don't pretend to have it all together. Instead, we are a church where there is freedom to struggle with our questions, doubts, and fears; and a place where real healing, joy, and power can be found.

We are a church rooted in the belief that the historic Christian gospel is true, compelling, and promises to change our lives powerfully, in the direction of freedom, hope, and generosity.

The gospel, which means 'Good News', tells us that God's Kingdom has entered history in order to renew us and the world. The gospel is more than entering God's Kingdom, it is also the way we face every struggle in life and make any progress in personal growth.

The good news is that Jesus lived the life we should have lived and died the death we deserved to die in order to put us in a place where only He deserves to be—in a right, safe, thrilling relationship with God the Father.

Cross Sound Church desires to be filled with both believers and non-believers, who together explore the claims of the gospel and its effects on our lives and on the world.

Our aim in worship is both ancient, with liturgy that connects us to the Church of old and those who have gone before us, as well as modern, accessible, and meaningful. Underneath it all is our desire to be God-honoring, God-exalting, God-glorifying! Let's worship God together.

Say hello

PASTORS: Dave O'Connell: daveoc@crosssound.org (314) 853-2695
and Dave Sellers: dave@crosssound.org (206) 334-5205

To learn more about the entire staff and our team of Elders, Deacons, International Ministers and Community Group Leaders, visit our website: crosssound.org call our office: (206) 842-6898 or email info@crosssound.org

As we gather to worship, please silence all mobile phones and devices for the duration of the service.

Gathering

CALL TO WORSHIP — Luke 2:10-14

The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Renewing

CONFESSION OF SIN

Confession happens within the context of relationship, both with God and with each other as we acknowledge our sin and need for forgiveness. Jesus promises that He freely forgives sins which frees us from past regrets. You are invited to personalize your confession as we pray silently.

Heavenly Father,

We should let you lead us — but we go our own way.

We should let you satisfy us — but we seek lesser things.

We should let your love fill us — but we lose sight of you.

Forgive us, we pray.

**In your grace, would you set our eyes upon the one
born in Bethlehem, and bind our joy, our hearts,
and our lives to Him.**

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND RECEIVING OF GRACE

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. — Micah 7:18-19

Praise God!

In Jesus Christ we are loved and we are forgiven!

Amen.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING — read by the Grant Family
4th candle – (purple) The Candle of Love: God sent his only Son to earth to save us, because he loves us.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” — John 3:16-17

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

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 host 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 a Virgin’s womb!
Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see! Hail, the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man 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 Son 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!”

The largest book in the Bible is primarily a book of poems set to music to sing God praises. This is all part of God’s design to surround His presence with singing. Gratitude to God expresses dependence upon God and is an antidote for cynicism, criticism, and bitterness.

POETRY READING — read by Carrie Beyer, written by Christina Rossetti, 1885

The Shepherds watch their flocks by night,
Beneath the moon's unclouded light,
All around is calm and still,
Save the murm'ring of the rill:
When lo! a form of light appears,
And on the awe-struck Shepherds' ears
Are words, of peace and comfort flowing
From lips with love celestial glowing.
Spiritual forms are breaking
Through the gloom, their voices taking
Part in the adoring song
Of the bright angelic throng.
Wondering the Shepherds bend
Their steps to Bethlehem, and wend
To a poor and crowded inn: –
Tremblingly their way they win
To the stable, where they find
The Redeemer of mankind,
Just born into this world of danger,
Lying in an humble manger.
And they spread abroad each word
Which that joyful night they'd heard,
And they glorified the name
Of their gracious God, Who came
Himself to save from endless woe
The offspring of this world below.

When Love Crossed Over

One glorious night when love crossed over and cast aside both crown and throne
to live beside the common man as was foretold: the promised One.

And there He lay in humble straw as angels sing goodwill to all,
A gift from God to reconcile all men to Him: this perfect child.

Behold this day: a Saviour's born! and in whose fate this world has longed;
conceived in faith, received with love; come, kneel beside this child of God.
Come, kneel beside this child of God.

KIDS' MOMENT — THE GIFT OF GIFTS

Elementary School Students are Invited to Come Forward

“The giving of gifts is not something man invented. God started the giving spree
when he gave a gift beyond words, the unspeakable gift of His Son.”

— Robert Flatt

Here I Am to Worship

Light of the World, You stepped down into darkness,
Opened my eyes, let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore You,
Hope of a life spent with you

*Here I am to worship, Here I am to bow down,
here I am to say that you're my God
You're altogether lovely, Altogether worthy,
Altogether wonderful to me*

King of all days, Oh so highly exalted,
Glorious in Heaven Above
Humbly You came to the earth You created,
All for love's sake became poor

Chorus x 2

And I'll never know how much it cost, To see my sin upon that cross
And I'll never know how much it cost, To see my sin upon that cross

Chorus

ANNOUNCEMENTS & GREETING

Please stand and introduce yourself to one another.

Text: Luke 1:26-38

Title: Meet Mary

Series: Christmas Surprises

Speaker: Dave O'Connell and Dave Sellers

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

NOTES:

QUOTES:

“The virgin birth has never been a major stumbling block in my struggle with Christianity; it’s far less mind-boggling than the Power of all Creation stooping so low as to become one of us.” — Madeleine L’Engle

“What keeps the wild hope of Christmas alive year after year in a world notorious for dashing all hopes, is the haunting dream that the child who was born that day may yet be born again, even in us.” — Frederick Buechner

“The hinge of history is on the door of a Bethlehem stable.” — Ralph W. Sockman

OFFERING — *Offering is a way for members and friends to support the worship and work of the church, its mission and ministry. There are different ways to give:*

- Offering basket: place Check or Cash in a Giving Envelope on Sunday mornings
- Cross Sound app: look up “Church Center” on the App Store and follow prompts
- Online: www.crosssound.org/give • Stock: contact bookkeeper@crosssound.org
- Mail: Cross Sound Church PO Box 11748 or 600 Ericksen Ave NE #210, Bainbridge Is., WA 98110



Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
— 2nd Corinthians 9:7

King of Kings

In the darkness, we were waiting, Without hope, without light
Till from heaven, You came running, There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfil the law and prophets, To a virgin came the word
From a throne of endless glory, To a cradle in the dirt

*Praise the Father, Praise the Son, Praise the Spirit, Three in one
God of glory, Majesty, Praise forever to the King of Kings*

To reveal the kingdom coming, And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation, You did not despise the cross
For even in your suffering, You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation, Jesus for our sake you died

*Praise the Father, Praise the Son, Praise the Spirit, Three in one
God of glory, Majesty, Praise forever to the King of Kings*

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Praise the Father, Praise the Son, Praise the Spirit, Three in one
God of glory, Majesty, Praise forever to the King of Kings*

Sending

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord Jesus,

**When you entered the world,
The angels sang out in awe and with praise.
Allow us this Christmas, to share their wonder,
And to be filled with astonished joy and praise.**

For this, O Lord, we pray:
Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus,

**When it was time for you to be born,
There was no room for you except in a stable.
Be with those in our community who have need,
And help us as a church to provide for our neighbors.**

For this, O Lord, we pray:
Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus,

**The first people to hear of your birth were shepherds,
Those who were often belittled in their day.
Make us a church that truly values others; a church that
Shows love and dignity to all people in your name.**

For this, O Lord, we pray:
Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus,

**When it was time for you to be born,
You chose to be born of a simple teenage girl.
May you continue to use simple people like us,
To be your vessels of blessing to your world.**

For this, O Lord, we pray:
Lord, hear our prayer.

MEXICO VIDEO

Joy To The World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come, Let Earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room
And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven and nature sing
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing

Joy to the Earth, the Savior reigns, Let all their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy

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

BENEDICTION — Romans 15:13a

This Christmas, may the
God of hope fill you with all
Joy and peace as you trust in him.

Amen.

Prayer

We hope these are helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and His people, the church.

Prayer for the Skeptic

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sin and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my needs, and my turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the pioneer and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people, and live in the fullness of your spirit. Amen.