



VALLEY
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Liturgy for
December 1, 2024

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Valley Presbyterian Church exists to make disciples of Jesus by gathering for the public worship of God; by growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ through Christian education; and by sending God's people to go out into the world and love their neighbors and cities for the glory of God.

Service Time:

11:00 am

Location:

9200 Haskell Avenue | North Hills, CA 91343



Welcome to Valley Presbyterian Church!

We trust that you will experience the presence of Christ and the welcome of his people as you gather with us this morning. Below are a series of answers to questions that are often asked about our worship service. We hope that you will find them informative. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact our pastors directly at valleypresbyterian@gmail.com

Does your church have a statement of faith?

Yes! Valley Presbyterian Church is part of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), and as a part of the PCA we subscribe to a document called the Westminster Standards. This document consists of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and two Catechisms (the Larger and Shorter Catechisms) which are meant to be helpful teaching tools for the people of God. The Westminster Standards can be found online, but the basics of what we believe can be found in your bulletin. We confess these basics every week when we recite the Nicene Creed, which has been a summary of the Christian faith for over 1,500 years!

Why is your worship so liturgical?

Believe it or not, every church is liturgical. Some liturgies consist of three songs, announcements, a 50-minute sermon, etc. Those liturgies tend to reflect many Christian churches in North America. Our worship service is ordered the way that it is because it is a reflection of how God has met with his people throughout the history of the world. Here's a breakdown of why we do what we do:

God Gathers His People

At the appointed time, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ gathers for worship, recognizing that God Himself has brought together His people.

We Come to God by Faith

In continued response to God's call to worship, we offer our first prayer to God. This prayer also reflects our adoration and affection for God, acknowledging Him as our Creator and Redeemer.

God Reshapes the Hearts and Lives of His People

God once again addresses us directly through His holy Word. As we are faced with God's perfect holiness, there is only one appropriate response—the confession of our sin. Having heard God's Law and having confessed our sins, what we need most is to have the gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed to us! It is here that God assures us of His forgiveness and Fatherly love toward us!

God Uses His People in His Service

We now enter into a time of intercessory prayer, both for Christ's church and the world. The Kingdom of God is built through the prayers of the church, so we pray because we are given this privilege as His servant-people. In grateful response to all of God's gifts to us, we offer a token of appreciation to Him. Our financial gifts to God are the confession of our stewardship.

God Speaks to Us Through His Word

The preaching of the Word is the primary way God addresses sinners to receive salvation and to grow in it. Thus in preaching, God continues to speak to us with the love of Jesus.

God Renews His Covenant with Us

The reading and the preaching of the Word is when God audibly speaks His gospel to us, then the administration of the sacraments is when God visibly shows His gospel to us. The Lord's Supper is God visibly communing with us at His table.

God Sends His People Out with His Blessing

Just as God initiated worship, so now God concludes worship with His benediction, His "good word." In the benediction, God, through the Pastor, blesses His beloved people. We can all objectively say after

worship that we were blessed. As it is not a prayer, but a pronouncement, we lift up our faces to the Lord as He blesses us, for His face shines upon us and His grace and peace are ours forevermore.

Why is there so much Scripture reading in your worship service?

The Bible is central in our worship service because we believe the Bible is God's word, and we need to hear from God when we gather together. One of Jesus' apostles, Paul, wrote, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, and to teaching." (1 Tim. 4:13) It is through God's word that faith is created in our hearts (Rom. 10:17), and we are made holy (John 17:17).

Why do you take communion most Sundays?

Communion is a Holy Sacrament of the Church (along with Baptism). The word Sacrament is a translation of a Greek word which means "mystery." Baptism and Communion are the "mysteries" of the church, because through them God works powerfully through his Word and Spirit nourishing our faith with Christ and all his benefits. Holy Communion is not an empty ritual, or a mere "remembrance" of Jesus' death, it is fellowship with the risen Christ. In Holy Communion, Jesus and all of his gifts are offered to the faithful.

Communion Information

We are serving both juice and wine as we partake of the Lord's Supper together. Both juice and wine serve as appropriate elements of communion as both fit the biblical requirement of being fruit of the vine. If you have never been baptized, or if you are not a Christian, please abstain from taking Communion. If

you'd like to take Communion, or to be baptized, speak to either of the Pastors, or to one of the Elders. We would be happy to assist you in taking steps toward Baptism, or your first Communion.

Communion is for baptized, repentant, and believing Christians and they should pick up the cups of bread and the vine as they enter for worship. Let us come to Christ's table together rejoicing in our salvation!

Why do you baptize babies?

We baptize the children of believing parents because it is in line with the teaching of Scripture. We don't baptize babies because it's a nice tradition, or because it's what the universal church practiced up until the time of the Reformation. In the Bible, the children of believers are always treated as holy members of God's church by virtue of God's promises (1 Cor. 7:14). In the Old Testament, God commanded that the sign of membership in God's visible church be given to infants who didn't yet have faith (Gen. 17:12). This principle still stands with the New Testament sign of Baptism (Acts 2:39; 16:15.)

Why is worship led by Pastors and Elders?

Pastors and Elders are those whom Christ has gifted and have been set apart by ordination by the Presbytery or congregation to be God's representatives and undershepherds of the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't submit to God's Word because it comes from charismatic teachers, or funny communicators; we submit to it because it comes from those who have been set apart for the office of elder to speak the truth in love that we may grow more and more into the image of Christ.



LORD'S DAY WORSHIP

Prelude
Welcome

Ben Mason
Pastor Ron Svendsen

GOD GATHERS HIS PEOPLE

Call to Worship +

Pastor Ron Svendsen

Hymn of Praise **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**
#194 +

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, 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.
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 vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

WE COME TO GOD BY FAITH

Invocation
& Prayer
of Adoration +

O Lord, like your servants of old, your people
wait patiently for you; as you inclined toward them,
incline also to us and hear our cry. Answer us with your presences, hear our
praise, and speak hope to our expectant hearts. Amen.

Pastor Ron Svendsen

Salutation +

Advent
Readings

Isaiah 9:1-7, Isaiah 61:1-3a, and Luke 1:68-75

Elder Larry Shaw

Advent Week 1 – Prophecy

We eagerly await the promise of the fuller brightness that is to come. We need God's light to see what He has already given us, and to remind us to watch for what God will give us in the fullness of time.

Advent Hymn

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Prophets, you who preached the promise

Of Messiah's birth some day,

Be assured that God's fulfillment

Now to all is on display:

Come and worship, come and worship,

Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Advent Prayer
of Exaltation
and Wonder

Pastor: What shall we render to God for the gift of gifts, His own dear Son. Our redeemer's self-emptying is incomprehensible, and his infinity of love beyond our heart's grasp.

Congregation: Herein is wonder of wonders: he came below to raise us above, was born like us that we might become like him.

Pastor: Herein is love: when we could not rise to him, he draws near on wings of grace, to raise us to himself.

Congregation: Herein is power: when Deity and humanity were infinitely apart, he united them in unbroken unity, the uncreated and the created.

Pastor: Herein is wisdom: when we were undone, with no will to return to him, and no intellect to devise recovery, he came to save us to the uttermost, as man to die our death, to shed satisfying blood on our behalf, to work out a perfect righteousness for us.

We all pray in unison as Pastor leads us:

O God, take me in spirit to the watchful shepherds, and enlarge my mind; let me hear good tidings of great joy, and hearing, believe, rejoice, praise, adore: place me with ox, donkey, camel, goat, to look with them upon my redeemer and in him account myself delivered from sin; let me with Simeon clasp the new-born child to my heart, embrace him with undying faith, exulting that he is mine and I am his. In him you have given me so much that heaven can give no more.

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Lo how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung.

It came a flow'ret bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.

To show God's love aright she bore to men a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

The shepherds heard the story, proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of glory, was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped and in the manger found him,
As angel heralds said.

This flow'r, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God; from sin and death he saves us
And lightens ev'ry load.

O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.

GOD RESHAPES THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE

Call to
Confession
Through
Confessing
Our Sins
Publicly &
Privately

Elder Larry Shaw

Assurance
of Pardon

Elder Larry Shaw

Song of
Praise +

Joy Has Dawned

Joy has dawned upon the world, promised from creation:
God's salvation now unfurled, Hope for every nation.
Not with fanfares from above, not with scenes of glory,
But a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky with the songs of angels,
As the mighty Prince of Life shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in darkness,
Cling now to a mother's breast, vulnerable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb, gazing at the glory;
Gifts of men from distant lands prophesy the story.
Gold, a King is born today, incense, God is with us,
Myrrh, His death will make a way, and by His blood He'll win us.

Song of Adam, Son of heaven, given as a ransom,
Reconciling God and man, Christ our mighty Champion!
What a Savior, what a Friend, what a glorious mystery:
Once a babe in Bethlehem, now the Lord of history.

GOD USES HIS PEOPLE IN HIS SERVICE

As We Pray
for Our World

Pastor Ron Svendsen

As We Give to
God's Work
Throughout
the World

Elder Larry Shaw

GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH HIS WORD

Scripture Reading Luke 1:26-38 Pastor Ron Svendsen

Message “The Highly Exalted Servant” Pastor Ron Svendsen

GOD RENEWS HIS COVENANT WITH US

Communion Pastor Ron Svendsen

Passing of the Peace

GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT WITH HIS BLESSING

Hymn of Response
#198 +

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near, the Savior of the world is here.

A Helper just he comes to thee, his chariot is humility,
His kingly crown is holiness, his scepter, pity in distress.

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in me reveal.

So come, my Sovereign, enter in! Let new and nobler life begin!
Thy Holy Spirit, guide us on, until the glorious crown be won.

God's
Benediction

Pastor Ron Svendsen

Postlude

Ben Mason

Community Groups

We grow together in our faith, not just on Sunday mornings but by gathering to share meals, talk about the Bible, and pray with each other. Check out one of our community groups nearest to you! (VPC Community Groups meet 1st & 3rd Sundays Sept—May)

Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena

6:00pm

Leader: Pastor Ron
Contact: 818-894-9200
Topic: 1 Thessalonians

North Hills

2nd & 4th Sundays at 3:30pm

Leader: Elder Jaime Garcia
Contact: 818-631-0408
Topic: Westminster Confession of Faith

Northridge

Sunday at 7pm/monthly

Leaders: Elders Bruce Mateko & Larry Shaw
Contact: 818-886-1233
Topic: Review/Discussion of Sunday's Sermon

Santa Clarita

2nd & 4th Sundays at 5:00pm

Leader: Pastor Ron
Contact: 818-894-9200
Topic: 1 Thessalonians

Valencia/Santa Clarita

Sunday at 2pm

Leaders: Elders Jesse Cook & Edgar Figueroa
Contact: 818-894-9200
Topic: Redemptive-Historical Study of the Psalms

West Hills

Sunday at 6:30/monthly

Leaders: Nathan Maack (assisting Elder John Martinez)
Contact: (917) 916-7550
Topic: Joshua

Sunday Morning Sunday School & Worship

Adult & Children's Sunday School

Prayer at 9:30am.

Sunday School at 10:00-10:45am. Classes are held for both our children (ages 3 and above) and adults each week. For more information see below:

Adult:

“Route 66,” An Overview of the Books of the Bible | Downstairs Fellowship Room

Children's Sunday School | Brewer Hall

Pre-K-1st Grade, Jess Herr

- Show Me Jesus: God Keeps His Promises (The Patriarchs)

2nd-4th Grade, Nathan Maack

- Show Me Jesus: Trusting God (Psalms)

5th-6th Grade, Edgar Figueroa

- G2R: Matthew to Romans

Middle School and Up, John Martinez

- Athanasian Creed

Basic Beliefs

For those interested in a personal relationship with God, exploring the distinctives of the Reformed faith, or membership at VPC. Attending this does not obligate you to join the church, but you do need to attend if you desire to become a member of VPC. Let Pastor Ron or the church office know if you are interested.

Post-Worship Fellowship & Snack

Refreshments and fellowship on the North Patio.

Children are Welcome in Worship

As part of the covenant family of God, we encourage you to keep your children with you in worship regardless of their age, so that they may follow your example in worshipping God. Don't worry if your children are a bit restless or noisy. However, if your child needs an alternate location, please use the Fellowship Room right off the Narthex.

Nursery is available for parents accompanying children 3-years old and younger. Drop-off care is currently unavailable, but we hope to resume this soon! The nursery has a quiet room available for nursing mothers.

Prayer & Praise

Please be in prayer for Bob Taylor who is undergoing a month of intravenous iron infusions to help with his anemia. We pray that there are no bad side effects and that the treatments will indeed increase his energy.

Mid-Week Gathering

Date/Time: Wednesday, 7pm

Location: VPC Fellowship Room

Topic: “Dust to Glory” by R.C. Sproul

December 2024

Announcements & Needs

Connecting at VPC

If you are a new or recent visitor to Valley Presbyterian Church, please email the church at valleypresbyterian@gmail.com so that we may add you to the VPC email list to keep you in the loop with the latest church news.

Serving at VPC

December 22nd Christmas Choir

A choir will be singing during the December 22nd worship service. All are welcome to join! Please contact Ben Mason at info@benmasonmusic.com for more information.

Music Ministry | Audio & Visual Team

We are looking for singers and instrumentalists who are interested in serving on the music team. Additional volunteers to run sound for the service and capture video for the livestream are needed. Training is provided. Please email Ben Mason at info@benmasonmusic.com if you are willing to serve in these areas.

Ushers & Parking Lot Security Volunteers

Please contact Ed Arreaga at earreaga@verizon.net for more information.

Nursery Volunteers

We are working to reopen the nursery for drop-off care for our families! If you are able to volunteer in the nursery on a rotating basis, please sign up in the narthex or talk to Jess Herr. Thank you!

Meal Ministry

If you, or anyone you know at VPC is in a difficult season where meals would be helpful, please reach out to the Deacons or directly to Theresa Martinez (jtmartz06@gmail.com), to set up a meal train so we may serve you.

Women's Tuesday Evening Book Study | Tuesday, December 10, 7:00-8:30pm

We are going through the book *The Lord of Psalm 23* by David Gibson. Please contact Theresa Martinez (jtmartz@gmail.com) for more information. Location TBD

Women's Brunch | Saturday, December 21

All women of VPC are invited to a Potluck Christmas Brunch! Please join this opportunity to grow in our love and care for one another. Sign-ups are available on a table in the narthex. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Theresa Martinez (jtmartz06@gmail.com) or Merylin Velasquez (merilyng27@gmail.com).

Cookie Decorating at VPC | Monday, December 23, 10:30am

Please join us for another year of cookie decorating! Cookies will be provided and a sign up for toppings is on a table in the narthex. As you are able, bring a lunch with you and stay for extended fellowship time afterwards! Contact Theresa Martinez (jtmartz06@gmail.com) with any questions.

Women in the Word

Women's Community Group meets on Tuesdays at 10:00am in the VPC Fellowship Room. Teaching God's Word! Make New Friends! Fun Discussions! Praying For One Another! Coffee and Treats! We look forward to meeting you! (No Childcare Provided)

Christmas Gift for Pastor Ron Svendsen

Each Christmas season offers us the opportunity to thank our pastoral staff in a tangible way. If you would like to contribute towards a monetary gift for Pastor Ron Svendsen, please bring or mail your gift to Melanie Allen in the church office by Sunday, December 22nd. *Please remember to make any checks out to Melanie Allen as this is a gift to the pastor and not a donation to the church. There is no tax credit for it.*

-If you need assistance, please ask an usher-



**A Church Where God's
People Gather, Grow and Go
for the Glory of God**

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Reverend Dr. Ronald Svendsen
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Liturgy for December 1, 2024
The LORD's Day