**Sunday, December 30, 2012**

**Welcome** – Greg Snow

**Call to Worship –** *Isaiah 9:2*

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;

**on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.**

Jesus Christ is our life and light. In his name and in his power, let us worship God!

**Song of Praise –** *All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name*

**Glory to God for the Gift of His Son**

All glory to you, great God, for the gift of your Son,

light in darkness and hope of the world, whom you sent to save us.

With singing angels let us continue praising His name and telling the earth His story,

that all may believe, rejoice, and bow down, acknowledging our love through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Song of Worship –** *Angels We Have Heard On High*

**Confession**

How incredible it must have been to hear the heavenly choir singing at the birth of our Savior! We are to offer up the same praise to our Lord and Savior, who is still the greatest gift of all. But often we find it hard to take notice of the Savior; we are caught up with our own gifts, given and received.

**Forgive us, God, for the casual way we treat your gift of love.**

**Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.**

**Song of Worship** *– O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**Assurance of Pardon** *– Titus 3:4-7*

Let’s speak together the word of God:

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,

he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness

that we had done, but according to his mercy,

by the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

so that, having been justified by his grace,

we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Christ was born to be our Savior. The Father sent His only Son to die so that all who accept Him as Lord  
 and Savior will have eternal life in glory.   
 Come, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. Let us bow down and worship Him.

**Song of Worship** *– Jesus, The Son of God*

**Offering**

**Worshiping the Savior *– Matthew 2:10-11; John 4:24/Charles Spurgeon***  *And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.”* – Matthew 2:10-11

Just as the wise men came from far away to worship Jesus, we are called to worship Him. John 4:24 says, “*God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”* In his sermon, The Axe at the Root, Charles Spurgeon described true worship in this way, “*unless the soul shall truly love, and really adore, and sincerely bow, our worship will be as unacceptable as though it were formal and outward.”*

God is seeking relationships not just creatures to worship Him. Coming to Him in spirit and truth is about being in a relationship with Him. He desires an intimate union with us, our heart engaged with His. When we abide in that union, we worship Him with our lives. We don’t worship by simply singing a song, for if our singing is not thought-singing it is of no use; you may have very sweet voices but God does not regard your voice, he hears your heart, and if your heart does not sing you have not sung at all. All we do in our spirit lives: thoughts, actions, words, songs, and prayers worship Him or not. True worship is a state of the heart. Until effectual grace works such worship in man's heart it is obnoxious to him; he will worship God with robes, and incense, and flowers, and banners, but he will not consent to worship him in spirit and in truth.

Mr. Spurgeon concluded his sermon with these words:

*At any rate, my dear hearers, if you have not with your whole hearts loved and worshipped God, repent over it, and pray the Holy Ghost to make you spiritual. Go to Christ's cross, and trust in him; then, and not till then, will you be capable of adoring the most High God in a style in which he can accept your worship. God grant that this may be impressed upon the hearts of all of us, that we may worship God in spirit and in truth.*

Let’s take the next few moments to silently pray, searching our hearts to whether our worship is acceptable to Jesus. If your heart is empty, confess to the Lord that you are a sinner and you have much need of a Savior. That is your first true act of worship. For those who have accepted Christ as their Savior, you may want to say, "Father, I bless thee that I am saved, I thank thee that my sins are washed away." May all of us begin to worship God in spirit and in truth. Let’s pray.

*-Silent Prayer-*

Jesus, You teach us that our act of worship is not confined to a cathedral setting nor does it require professional ministerial training to carry out true worship. It comes from the heart of the true believer who acknowledges that You are the long awaited Messiah, the One who is called Christ. We worship You in Spirit, for though we cannot humanly see or touch You, we come to You in complete sincerity with a spirit that is directed by the life and activity of the Holy Spirit. We worship You in truth because union with You requires believing and speaking the truth. May we be the kind of worshipers that pleases the heart of the Father. Amen.

**Songs of Worship –** *The Heart of Worship/We Fall Down***Message** – *“The Healing of the Paralytic”*   
 *Scripture Reference: Matthew 9:1-8*

**Time of Prayer**

**Song of Worship –** *How Great Is Our God*

**Closing Prayer**