

Worship services are being cancelled until further notice because of Covid-19. However, we will have worship services through the Internet Zoom platform every Sunday at 10:30 AM in NB, NS and PEI. The Zoom link for this service will be sent to you by email. The telephone numbers for Zoom always remain the same but the Meeting ID and password number change every week. Please let Mr. Vautour know if you would like to be added to the weekly email list. See the bottom of the bulletin for the contact information.

If you have friends or acquaintances who want to join in the worship service, please do not hesitate to share with them the Zoom links to join with us in the worship our great God.

Please note that audio and video sermons and other materials are also available on our local website at www.gcine Brunswick.org
The complete study of the book of Acts led by Mr. Gary Deddo is available on our local website. It is an excellent Bible Study. You are encouraged to take the time to study it.

This coming Thursday, April 1, 2021, this being Maundy Thursday at 7:30 PM, we will have a special service remembering Jesus last meal with his disciples before the agony of Gethsemane leading up to his crucifixion and resurrection. During the service, we will have a number of hymns, Scripture reading and Communion.

March 28 will be dedicated as a day of prayer for GCI churches across Canada. We will pray for God's gracious intervention for the management, consequences of the Covid 19 pandemic and its related problems which affect so many people in so many ways.

We can be thankful for the progress being made even though many challenges continue. Requests submitted by church members for this national day of prayer are listed on our local website www.gcine Brunswick.com under "Members Only".

To see specific prayer requests from the church, please go to www.gcine Brunswick.org – under "Members Only" and type the password. If you do not know the password, please contact Mr. Vautour.

- Let us pray according to God's will and as per his instructions: "1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Ti 2:1-4 ESV)
- **Prayers of Thanksgiving** for this period of the year when churches all over the world are remembering the death of our Lord and Savior and preparing to celebrate his resurrection. These events are pivotal for God's people and for the world.
- Let us thank God that whatever the world may experience at this time, Jesus will return and make everything right in God's perfect timing.
- This being Palm Sunday, we can thank Jesus for his humble entry in Jerusalem showing us the way of humility and sacrifice. Let us thank him we can walk in the way of the Lord because he lives in us and we in him when we accept his gift of reconciliation in faith. We have the blessing of participating in what he is doing.
- Let us pray that we as individual members and as a church we will recognize and reject the values of the world that are contrary to the values of the kingdom of God, as we are shown and led by the Holy Spirit.

- Let us pray that more and more people will have their eyes opened to the truth that true freedom can only be found in Jesus. Jesus said, **“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (John 8:31-32)**
- Let us pray for one another that Jesus will continuously invigorate us by his presence to live in the obedience of faith.
- As we have received the gift of repentance, let us pray for his strength to do “His will rather than ours”.
- Let us pray that we will not be led away by false prophets and that love will not grow cold. Let us pray to have his strength to persevere to the end as we read in Matthew 24:11-13.

Offerings: (Paraphrase of some information given by Mr. Hall, GCI Canadian Director): Just a reminder that any donations we receive via either Credit Card or Canada Helps are subject to about a 3-3.5% fee which means any donations we receive for your congregation, are reduced by that amount. Direct Debit (Pre-authorized Payment) or E-Transfers have much lower transaction fees, that we do not back charge to the local congregation. (Cheques do not have a transaction fee). One can send E-transfers to khorwood@gcicanada.ca (her full name is Kathleen Horwood) if their bank uses INTERACT. There is no need for a password as the donations are deposited directly into the GCI banking account. In the subject or message line, write the name of your church and your member number. There is no need for a password as your offering will directly immediately in the GCI church bank account. Most bank send an immediate confirmation of successful deposit. If you do not know your member number, please write to Mr. Vautour at the email address below.

You can send your offering directly by cheque to the following address: **Grace Communion International- Canada, Suite 203A, 2121 Airport Dr., Saskatoon, SK 7SL 6W5.** If you prefer, you can also call **1-306-653-2705.**

You can also donate via phone using a credit card, or via Canada Helps using **the donate button** on our website at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/7735>. All donations received via “Canada Helps” are credited to the members local congregation. It is therefore important that you include your address and other information Canada Helps asks.

Death of John Biswas (March 24, 2021)



Naomi and John Biswas

With a heavy heart, we must announce the death of John Biswas. He was an elder and the National Director for Bangladesh, and long-time friend in ministry to many in our church. He will be missed.

From “Hosanna” to “Crucify Him” to “He is Risen” March 24, 2021



Greg and Susan Williams



Dear GCI Family and Friends,

Coming down from Mt. Tabor after the Transfiguration, our Lord Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem. The journey to Jerusalem is ultimately toward the cross, and people shouting for Jesus to be crucified. Yet we cannot come to “Crucify him!” without the triumph of, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Lord,” which occurred on Palm Sunday.

The crowds are absolutely correct as they sang praises of Jesus from Psalm 118. Designating him the title of king is accurate.

Jesus is indeed the One coming in the name of the Lord; he is blessed; he is the King of Israel! The setting in which Christ parades down from the Mount of Olives finds Rome in charge of Jerusalem. The Temple is empty of God’s glory, and the people of Israel are in waiting. They are waiting for their King, but their expectation is for a conquering King on a white warhorse. However, we have the one who is already King entering not on a warhorse or chariot, but on a donkey. What?

Jesus did not enter Jerusalem as a militaristic king to overthrow the Roman regime. His kingdom is different and unexpected. His reign is humble, yet immeasurably powerful; it is founded on transformational godly love. His power is not displayed by overthrowing the gentile rulers, rather, it is shown through his willing and voluntary death on the cross, where sin and death are defeated.

Having entered the city, we now turn our attention to the events of the days leading up to the cross. It would be extremely confusing for someone to move from Palm Sunday and the Triumphal Entry only to return the following Sunday to hear about the Resurrection. What happens in between these two bookends is extremely important. To see the story as a complete story requires that we include the celebrations and recollections of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

As we move past the Triumphal Entry, we cannot miss how the humble procession of Palm Sunday frames the unfolding story. To fully feel the impact, we must juxtapose the image of the crowds crying “Hosanna” with that of Jesus standing before Pilate just five days later and the crowds screaming “crucify him!” It is not enough to simply focus on the original cast members. Feeling anger toward Judas, perplexed by Peter, or mystified by the fickleness of the crowd doesn’t take us far enough. A major reason we need to rehearse the unfolding story of Passion Week is so that we can personalize these accounts. Where would I be?

The real work is to recognize and own that I am the one shouting “Hosanna” and laying down palm fronds because I celebrate the triumphal entry. However, a few short days later, I am also a voice in the crowd approving his death with the words “Crucify him!” because he wasn’t the king I expected him to be, and because I am easily swept up in the emotion of the moment. O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God that through Jesus I can be delivered (see [Romans 7:24-25](#)).

Don’t just rush through this week—bask in the richness of what the week offers, savor in the deliverance. On Maundy Thursday dig into the Passover meal that Jesus shared with his closest friends. Note how he instituted the Eucharist with its simplicity and profundity. Think about the rich words of the new commandment he gave—to love as he loves. Pay attention to the instruction and encouragement that the disciples could not fully appreciate until months and years later. Place yourself in the story and think and feel the thoughts of the disciples.

On Good Friday feel the weight of being before Pilate, the sting and trauma of the cat-of-nine-tails, the heaviness of carrying the cross, the jeers of the soldiers, the presence of your mother and the disciple that you love, and the release from the words, “It is finished.” You can draw parallels between Psalm 22 and the words of Jesus on the cross. Be awed by the forgiveness Jesus bestows even while being murdered. The picture of pain, agony and humiliation serves to amplify the picture of victory on Resurrection Sunday. (I leave it to your pastor to share the Easter message.)

All of this is good, and it paints the story of Jesus and the salvation he brings for humanity. Palm Sunday reminds us of the humble, powerful, unique King that we hail as Hosanna. Good Friday reminds us of how quickly our hearts can turn away from the King. And because of his saving mercy, we have Easter Sunday to assure us that “He is risen, He is risen indeed!” In the middle of our up-and-down human experience that is so vividly displayed in the Passion Week and Easter, we have a Savior who set his face firmly toward Jerusalem—all because of his indescribable, non-fickled, undeterred love for us. And our risen Savior lives to continue the love story of bringing humanity to glory.

Wishing you an awe-filled Passion Week and Easter!

Greg Williams

2021 Virtual Denominational Celebration

March 24, 2021



As previously shared, out of concern and caution, we have transitioned the 2021 Denominational Celebration to a virtual event. While this is a new experience to learn about and plan for, we are enthusiastic about the opportunity to connect and worship with even more members of our global fellowship through a digital platform. We are committed to bringing you a vibrant and inspirational time

together celebrating how the Spirit is moving in GCI, as well as equipping opportunities for our pastors and ministry leaders.

The virtual event will provide our usual Celebration content and opportunities for engagement, including sessions featuring each of our regions around the world, interactive workshops for Hope Avenue leaders, worship and communion, as well as spaces to relationally connect.

Continue to visit <https://www.gci.org/events/2021> to view and download the Event schedule and future updates.

Registration will open on April 15th. We are looking forward to celebrating and worshipping with you all!

REVELATION: REVELATION 3:14-22 – LAODICEA: THE COMPLACENT CHURCH (FROM GCI.ORG)

Christ introduced himself to the church at Laodicea as “**the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation**” (3:14). These titles were not taken from the description of Christ in chapter 1. Neither do they have any parallels in the final chapters. However, the ideas in the names are implicit to the book of Revelation as a whole.

Jesus is the faithful and true witness. He spoke and did only what the Father commanded him, no matter the consequences ([John 3:34](#); [5:36](#); [12:49](#)). Christ as faithful witness was a sharp contrast to the Laodiceans, who witnessed only to their own supposed spiritual works.

Problems at Laodicea (3:15-19)

Like the church at Sardis, Laodicea had been bitten by the bug of complacency. But this church was also spiritually arrogant in its self-satisfaction. It was the only church Christ did not commend for anything. Tragic, indeed! The church thought of itself as rich and in need of nothing from Christ. Although many of the members may have been materially rich, the “wealth” it claimed for itself would be spiritual. What is in view here is Laodicea’s spiritual pride and complacency.

The members needed to buy true riches in the areas of life where they felt they had no lack. This is explained in metaphorical terms as gold refined in the fire (3:18). Christ is the refiner of the human soul, which he purifies as the refiner does gold ([Malachi 3:3](#)). What needed refining was Laodicea’s faith so that it would become genuine ([1 Peter 1:7](#)).

Laodicea also needed white clothes to cover its spiritual nakedness (3:18). White garments are used as a symbol of righteousness throughout Revelation (3:4, 5; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13-14; 19:14). They also represent the proper apparel to wear at important festivities. The church cannot gain the righteousness of Christ through its own effort. The white garments are spoken of as given to the saints (6:11; 19:8). They are made white by being washed in the justifying blood of the Lamb (7:14). Without the white garments of righteousness, the church is spiritually naked. Nakedness is a symbol of spiritual shame and worthlessness ([Ezekiel 16:35](#); [2 Corinthians 5:3](#)).

The Laodicean church was spiritually blind. Its members thought they could see – thought that they were rich and without any needs. But Christ counseled them to apply a spiritual eye-salve so that they could see how far they had fallen. They needed to be zealous and repent (3:19).

Laodicea’s spiritual works are described as neither cold nor hot (3:15-16). This may refer to the water supply available in Laodicea and two nearby cities, Hierapolis and Colossae. Hierapolis was the site of hot, spa-like waters, used for medicinal purposes. Nearby Colossae was known for its cold and pure drinking water. But the waters of Laodicea were considered nauseous and undrinkable, not useful for any meaningful purpose. Like the city’s water supply, the church is useless in its service to the Lord, and Christ is about to spit it from his mouth.

The church does not show forth the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The metaphor of the water supply says not so much that the church is half-hearted, but that its works are barren of God’s power. The church reflected human ways and aspirations, not Christ’s. It was far from the living water it desperately needed from him ([John 4:10-14](#); [7:38-39](#)).

Promise to Laodicea (3:20-21)

In the letter, Christ used a metaphor of himself standing at the door and knocking on the minds and hearts of the smug Laodiceans.

Someone or something standing by a door is a well-known biblical metaphor. Jesus used the door metaphor in the context of his disciples’ urgent need to stay spiritually alert ([Mark 13:29](#)). James pictured Christ as the Judge standing at the door (5:9). Jesus spoke of his disciples as waiting expectantly for the master so they could open the door to him ([Luke 12:36](#)).

The image of Christ standing outside and knocking may also imply that the Laodiceans have locked him out of their church! But the metaphor is also a symbol of promise. Christ is waiting outside, hoping the Laodiceans will be open to his correction and change their ways. If they do, he will come in and share a meal with them (3:20). The fellowship meal figures prominently as a symbol of togetherness with Christ in the kingdom (19:9).

This leads easily to the final promise – a place on Christ’s throne, the symbol of his ruling authority (3:21). If the members of the church repent, they can eat and drink at Christ’s table in his kingdom and sit on thrones of judgment ([Luke 22:30](#)).

The fulfillment of this promise is described under the millennial rule of Christ (20:4) and in the eternal new creation (22:5). But the Laodiceans must overcome in Christ, and in the same way he overcame. Because he conquered, he has been given royal authority – which the church can have as well (3:21).

Summary

To summarize, in chapters 2 and 3 we have seen the deep spiritual problems in the church, at least in the Roman province of Asia at the end of the first century. The cares of this life, the penetrating power of the society around the members and wrong spiritual attitudes have blocked out the church's view of Christ to one degree or another.

To many members in the seven churches, the world seemed to be the only compelling reality. They had a desperate need to see behind the scenes, and discover the unseen reality of Christ and God. Members needed to refocus their minds on the real power of the universe, the place where salvation lies – in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Revelation takes up this theme in chapters 4 and 5, revealing where the true salvation of the church lies, which is in the heavenly rule of God and the salvific work of the Lamb. The world system of evil to which many were falling prey will be judged by God and replaced by his eternal kingdom, the New Heavens and New Earth. That's the rest of the story in Revelation.

Author: Paul Kroll, 1995, 2013

GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—a) www.gci.org , b) www.gcine Brunswick.org , c) www.gcicanada.ca; d) www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton ;

For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace, and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email— evautour47@outlook.com