

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 remains 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 are available at www.gcine Brunswick.org .

On Christmas Day, those who desire can join the Montreal English church worship services at 11:30 a.m. Atlantic time. The Zoom link will be send to you prior. If you are reading this bulletin and you are not on the email list and you wish to attend, please feel free to contact Mr. Vautour at the email address below.

Bible Study: Our next Bible Study will be in January 2021 when we begin to study the Epistle of James.

To see specific prayer requests from the church, please go to www.gcine Brunswick.org – under “Members Only” and type the password.

- Let us pray for the Church to put first things first which is **to love God with all of our heart, with all of our soul and with all of our mind**. The secondary commandment and flowing from the first is **to love our neighbour as ourselves**.
- Let us pray according to God’s will as per his instructions: “**1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings 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.**” (1Ti 2:1-4 ESV)
- Let us pray that God will strengthen his people with faith, perseverance and love during this difficult pandemic period and that the good news of the Gospel will be spread widely.
- Covid-19 is causing more and more pain and ravages. Let us pray for God’s merciful intervention as millions all over the world are suffering as result of this pandemic. Let us pray, “**Our Father n heaven, hallowed by your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven**” as we read in Matthew 6.
- Let us pray that God will give us to wisdom to know how he is working and how he wants us to humbly participate in his work of salvation. “**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**” (Eph 2:10 ESV)

Offerings: you can send your offering directly 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**. Thank you for your continued generous giving to God by giving to this part of God’s church, his body.

From Mr. Bill Hall – GCI Canadian Director “We will continue to process the donations we receive in Saskatoon. Members are urged to mail them directly to our office for the time-being. They 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> . We will credit all donations received via Canada Helps to a member’s local congregation, if we can identify where they attend.”

Disaster Relief: Helping our members in Honduras (December 9, 2020)

I asked Pastor Mauricio, of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, to share some photos and details of the condition of our church members in La Democracia, San Pedro Sula. Here is the translated message. – Heber



As you have asked, I will share some data and photographs of our congregation on the north coast of Honduras, provided by Pastor Marco Antonio Mejía. As additional information, Honduras has 8.5 million inhabitants, of which approximately 3 million people were affected, including members of the Church.



Location: Colonia la Democracia

Colonia la Democracia is located approximately 30 km from the city of San Pedro Sula, on the banks of the Ulúa River. It is located in the municipality of San Manuel, Cortes, and borders the city of El Progreso, Yoro. The population is approximately 1300 to 1800 people. It is presently flooded by hurricanes ETA and IOTA. Its inhabitants are in temporary shelters or in the homes of relatives.



The church building has been operating since 1998. The church is made up of about 15 families, in addition to the families of the children and youth who attend the congregation, making an average of about 75 people, including adults, children, and youth.

Here are some photos of the situation where the church was located.

Mauricio I spoke to pastor Marco this morning and it's finally drying up and folks are beginning to assess the damage. The church building seemed to have sustained a lot of damage.

Blessings, Heber Ticas

Superintendent of Latin America

JESUS CHRIST: THE BIRTH OF JESUS: A STORY OF SHAME

Jesus' birth involves more humiliation than glory. The Son of God was in glory, but he saw us living in the slime-pit of sin, and he loved us so much that he came into this slime-pit to save us. He gave up his glory and he lived in humble circumstances. When Jesus was born, people were not amazed by his glory. There was no glory in putting a baby in an animal's feed trough.

Jesus didn't deserve any shame, but he was willing to live in it, until we killed him. That is the example God has given us. It shows us what love is. It shows us what God is like. Jesus told Philip, "**If you have seen me, you have seen the Father**" (John 14:9). He wasn't talking about appearance, but about love and humility.

When Christ became flesh, it was not some strange deviation in his character. Rather, it shows what God is like all the time. God is always so loving that he is willing to come to our slime-pit to rescue us. He is always willing to put his own comfort and glory aside so he can rescue us. This is true greatness. Glory is not about power and bright lights. True greatness is not in strength or money. True greatness is humility and service, and that is just as true of God as it is for us. God's greatness is seen in his love, in his willingness to serve. The birth of Jesus shows that.

To put it in human terms, it would be like Pharaoh decided to give up the throne, give away his wealth and join the Hebrew slaves in the clay-pits, trying to make bricks without straw – not just for a day, but for 30 some years. If any Pharaoh actually did this, we would think he was insane, but God did this on an even greater scale. He gave up more, and he descended even more—and this is what God is like all the time. His glory and greatness is seen in how much he is willing to give up, not in how much he has now.

A birth in shame

Think about the circumstances of Jesus' birth. He did not come when the Jewish people were a strong nation. Rather, he came when they were despised and ruled by a pagan empire. He did not come to the most important city—he grew up in a region called "Galilee of the Gentiles."

Jesus was born in embarrassing circumstances, less than nine months after Mary and Joseph married. God could have easily caused the conception after Mary and Joseph were married. It would have been just as easy for the Holy Spirit to create a baby in a married woman as in an unmarried woman. It would have been easy to avoid the appearance of evil, but God did not. Even before Jesus was born, Jesus was in a compromised situation.

Luke tells us that Joseph went to Bethlehem because everyone was supposed to go to their family's city to be counted for the census ([Luke 2:3-4](#)). I don't know, but it seems that Joseph would have had at least a few brothers or cousins in the family of David who would have gone to Bethlehem, too. But we hear nothing of them, about how they might have helped Joseph and Mary. They were on their own.

God loved the world so much that he gave them his only Son—and the world didn't want him. They knew God only as a God of power and wealth; they had forgotten about the God who walked in the garden of Eden calling for his wayward children. They had forgotten about the God who had a still, soft voice.

The world didn't want God, but God still loved the world. Even when we were sinners, even when we were ungodly, God loved us and sent his Son to die for us ([Romans 5:6, 8, 10](#)). That is what God is always like. The birth of Jesus should remind us of that. Christmas should remind us of his great humility.

A touch of glory

The angels were a touch of glory in the nativity story. Here were the bright shining lights, the heavenly choir singing praises to God. But where did they appear? Outside of town, with shepherds, the lowest level of society. Shepherds were so despised that they couldn't even testify in court. No one trusted them because they moved from one town to another. But God sent his angels to shepherds, not to priests and kings.

Some of the king's advisors in Jerusalem knew that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem ([Matthew 2:4-6](#)), but they didn't bother to make the five-mile trip. God was drawing the far-off, but the ones who were close, couldn't even see the star. The glory of Christmas was so hidden that only a few people from the east could take the hint.

Not long after this, an angel warned the family: "Flee for your life. The king is out to kill you." The Christ child was taken to Egypt, becoming a refugee in the land the Jews had left—the land of slavery, the land of outcasts. This is the glory of being poor, persecuted, rejected by the people you have come to save. This is not the way we usually think of glory, but it is God's kind of glory—the glory of love and self-sacrifice. Whoever wants to be great, Jesus said, let him become a servant. This is true greatness because this is the way God is.

Just like Jesus

God is like a king who steps into the mud to help us make bricks without straw. He is like a king who sends his Son to his people even though he knows they will kill him. God is like someone who sacrifices himself to keep his enemies (that's us) from being punished. God is like Jesus—all the time. He is like a person who loves children, touches lepers and socializes with tax collectors and prostitutes. God is like someone who was hated without a cause, beaten without mercy and crucified without committing a crime.

God lets people hate him and beat up on him—not because he is a fool, but because he knows the best way for us to come to our senses is to see what selfishness really leads to. He knows that the best way to overcome evil is not by force, but by persistent love.

Thankfully, God has the power to pull it off. He is not hurt by our flailings. He does not get depressed when we reject him. He does not get vindictive when we insult him. He is bigger than that, so much bigger that he can be patient with us. He can be a helpless baby, he can be a crucified criminal, he can stoop that low because he loves us.

In this way, Christmas shows us what God is like. It shows us how much he loves us. It shows us the extreme that he went to in order to save us. God is so glorious that he left his glory and came down into the slimepit to save us. He was willing to be a baby conceived before marriage. He was willing to be born in a stable, to be rejected, to flee to Egypt. He was willing to give it all up, even his life, for us.

A lesson for us

God wants us to be like he is, to be like Jesus was. Not in appearance, not in power, but in love and humility. He set the example for us, and Christmas, or the birth of Jesus, has a message for us in how we behave toward one another. Jesus said that a servant is not greater than the master. If he, our lord and teacher, has served us, we should also serve one another ([Matthew 20:26-28](#)). Whoever wants to be great should become a servant. Jesus wants us to go out of our way to help others. We are to use our time and our resources to help others. Jesus also said, "**if you want to follow me, take up your cross.**" Be willing to lose, even your life, and you will be great.

This is the way we are to follow Jesus' example, to let him live in us. We don't follow his example in keeping Hanukkah, in cleansing the temple, or in going to synagogues on the Sabbath. But he specifically says that we are to follow his example in serving others. That's the message of Christmas and the path of true glory.

We need to identify with that baby in the manger, to be like he is. We need to identify with the woman who had to give birth in a stable, and with the family who were refugees in another nation. Our role model is someone who loved his enemies, who was rejected time and again, and yet loved them. He was taken advantage of, ridiculed, despised and

convicted of a crime, all because he wanted to help us. That is truly praiseworthy, truly worth celebrating!
Author: Joseph Tkach

GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—a) www.gci.org , b) gcinewbrunswick.org , c)
<https://www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton> ; d) *Grace Communion International-Moncton*
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKazyWhmKmDZy69vJcFfPg>

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