

Welcome
to



GraceUnion
CHURCH

Encountering Grace through Jesus, right where we are.
Being moved by Grace toward all God has for us.

3900 Union Rd, St. Louis, MO 63125 | graceunionstl.org
Email: graceunionstl@gmail.com | Phone: 314.892.2757

WELCOME TO GRACE UNION

Thank you for joining us today! If this is your first time with us, please stop by the Connect Center in the lobby for a free gift. We'd love to meet you.

GU SPOTLIGHT

Find out more about these events at graceunionstl.org.

GU SMALL GROUPS

KEENAGERS (50+) - Thursday, 12/21

If you are 50 or older, please join the Keenagers small group this Thursday at 11:30 a.m. in the Cafe area. Come enjoy a time of fellowship, good food, devotions and games. Contact Jean Myers at 636.296.4643.



The **GU Students Christmas Party** is this Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. All youth grades 6-12 welcome!



Please join us again for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, next Sunday at 3 or 5 p.m. There is no childcare as all are welcome to celebrate together!

WAYS TO CONNECT



SUNDAYS @ 10AM
Nursery—Elementary



PRAYER NEEDS
Email: gucprayer@gmail.com



SUNDAYS (Middle School) @ 10:15
WEDNESDAYS (Gr 6-12) @ 6:30PM



SUNDAYS @ 9AM
Women's Group (Conf. Room B)
Men's Group (Conf. Room A)

CONNECTION CARD

If you're new to GU, want prayer, or need to update your info, fill out a Connection Card, and put it in the Offering or the Giving Box in the lobby.

STAY CONNECTED



@graceunionstl | #graceunionstl

LISTEN ONLINE



ONLINE AUDIO
graceunionstl.org/multimedia

WAYS TO GIVE



ENVELOPE
Offering/Giving Box




TEXT TO GIVE
314.888.5188



ONLINE
graceunionstl.org

SAVE THE DATES

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- 12/18 Food Addicts Anonymous
 - 12/20 GU Students Christmas Party
 - 12/21 Keenagers (50+)
 - 12/24 Christmas Eve Services (3 & 5pm)
 - 1/13 Ministry Workers Safety Training
 - 1/24 Wednesday Night Experience (NEW)
 - 1/24 Awana Wednesdays (PreK-Elementary)
 - 1/26 Ladies Night
 - 2/25 Annual Church Business Meeting

OUR STAFF IS HERE TO SERVE YOU

OFFICE: 314.892.2757

- **Rev. Bob Poley, Lead Pastor**
bobpoley78@gmail.com
- **Rev. Jason Myers, Associate Pastor**
jscott5157@gmail.com
- **Patrick Daniels, Student Ministry Pastor**
patrickdaniels1137@gmail.com
- **Carrie Indelicato, Worship Leader**
cindelicato@live.com
- **Crystal Myers, Early Childhood Director**
crystaldawnmyers@gmail.com
- **Carrie Clifton, Publications & Media**
lcclifton@aol.com

Christmas Roadtrip: *Bethlehem*

Luke 2:1-11

- During the Intertestamental Period, Israel had been a free and Independent Nation under the Liberating Rule of the Maccabean Dynasty.
 - Then in 63BC, two Maccabean brothers were bickering over control of Israel.
- So in 63BC, under the guise of helping, Rome assumed control in Israel and they never left.
- By the time we reach the birth story Rome is making a definitive move.
 - The census was the final piece in Subjugating Israel
 - The whole purpose of the census was taxation.

I. The Road trip to Bethlehem was a journey in to subjugation and taxation.

- A. But if you go back in the story 60 years there was a point when Rome looked like an asset, but it was in reality a liability.
- B. How many things in your life over the years have initially appeared to be assets but ended up as liabilities?
- C. Natural things* can be good, but we always end up looking for something in natural things that they are not capable of giving us.

*Natural things: jobs, houses, cars, possessions, health, appearance...

Isaiah 55:1-2

Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come and buy and eat! Come buy wine and milk without money and without cost. **Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy.**

II. Spiritually hungry and thirsty people have a tendency to invest themselves in things that are incapable of producing what they need.

- A. Here is the problem with natural stuff: The creation was detached from the creator because of human sin.
 - We replaced his will and lordship with our own.
 - When that happened creation itself lost the animating presence and life of God.

B. This natural world is full of things that, on the surface, appear to give you something, but they cannot give you what you seek.

- The animating life of God was lost from the equation.

C. But there is hope.

Verse 10-11

10 But the angel said to them (shepherds), "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.

11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord

III. The birth of Jesus brought the Source of Life Inextricably back into creation.

A. In this moment with a baby in a cattle stall the Animating, Life Giving source came back into the picture permanently.

- The physical and the spiritual would no longer be separated.

B. When the creator is put back in his rightful place in your life, and the physical and spiritual are again intertwined, the life-giving POTENTIAL of things is again unlocked.

- God can use a job to enrich your life in remarkable ways.
- God can use a thing like a great house to bless you and your family and pour out life.
- God can use material things to enrich you and give to you.

IV. A real Savior has been born.

A. When that young man who wanted to be the next king in Israel needed help he reached out to a source that promised to give to him.

- As we make our way through this world there are so many things that appear to offer us some form of salvation.

B. He is a savior. He is the one that can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

The question: We know God entered the world that first Christmas in a new and life-giving way, but what does it look like for God to enter YOUR World in a new and life-giving way this Christmas?