

God Rest
Ye Merry
Gentlemen

OAKS

PARISH

Our Mission

To abide in Christ Jesus for the renewal of all things.

Our Core Values

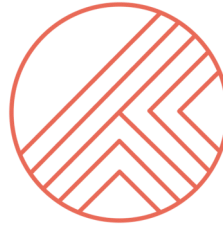
Gospel of Grace



The gospel of grace is the foundation of everything we are and do at Oaks Parish.

At Oaks Parish, we experience holistic flourishing through the person and work of Christ. The death and resurrection of Christ has redeemed us individually, and collectively as a church; we try to mirror that grace in all we do.

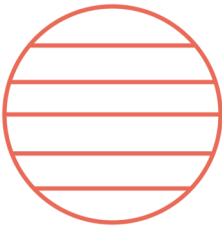
Faithful Presence



We are committed to Portland and aspire to be a church woven into the fabric

of the city. Oaks Parish is a uniquely welcoming and inclusive place. We greet our neighbors, friends, families, and co-workers with infectious hospitality, faithfully showing the love of Jesus in Portland.

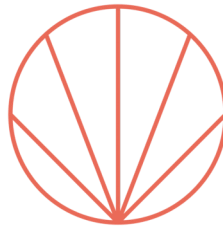
Formative Rhythms



The rhythms of our life shape our character, and at Oaks Parish we anchor our

practices in Scripture and the historical church. Our liturgical and expressive practice of gathered worship on Sunday pervades and shapes our rhythms of prayer, study of Scripture, and gatherings throughout the week. This process of intentional formation, or discipleship, shapes us to be more like Jesus.

Extended Family



Oaks Parish is intensely relational. We strive to live together as a diverse,

multi-generational extended family—not just on Sunday, but throughout the week. We share our stories and how God is redeeming them even as we work, play, and serve together. We want everyone to experience being known and loved in Christ.

Quotes for Reflection

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

For it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself.

Anthony DeMello, *The Way to Love*

Observe the marvelous change that comes over you the moment you stop seeing people as good and bad, as saints and sinners and begin to see them as unaware and ignorant. You must drop your false belief that people can sin in awareness. No one can sin in that light of awareness. Sin occurs, not, as we mistakenly think, in malice, but in ignorance. “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.”

Deeper, Dane Ortlund

Your growth in Christ will go no further than your settledness, way down deep in your heart, that God loves you. That he has pulled you in to his own deepest heart. His affection for his own never wanes, never sours, never cools. Half-hearted is not who he is. That thing about you that makes you wince most only strengthens his delight in embracing you. At your point of deepest shame and regret, that’s where Christ loves you the most.

The Third Week of Advent

Candle of Joy

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels, from the realms of glory
wing your flight o'er all the earth.

Ye who sang creation's story
now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Come and worship; come and worship!
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night.
God with you is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light.
Come and worship; come and worship!
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Saints before the altar bending,
watching long in hope and fear;
suddenly the Lord descending,
in His temple shall appear.
Come and worship; come and worship!
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

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Responsive Reading

from Isaiah 40

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem.

She has served her term; her penalty is paid.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

**Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low.**

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
See, the Lord God comes with might.

**He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms!**

Song of Reflection

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a King!
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;
by Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Words by Charles Wesley; Music by Christian Friedrich Witt © Public Domain
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Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10 NRSV

1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

3 His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;

4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

6 The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

7 The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

9 They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the
nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Advent Meditation

Artistic Reflection:

The Adoration of the Shepherds, Rembrandt (1646)

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 seers of old have sung.
It came, a blossom 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 us a Savior,
when half-spent was the night.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender,
with sweetness fills the air,
dispel in glorious splendor,
the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
from sin and death now save us,
and share our every load.

Original text, German, 1580. Tune: German, 1599 © Public Domain
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Offering Prayer

Generous God,

we have been made in your image.

So, in your generosity, make us generous.

In your faithfulness, make us faithful.

So that whatever gift we bring to you might be an offer of worship before you, as the gold, frankincense, and myrrh were before your son Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

New Testament Reading

Luke 2:8-20 NRSV

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Bryan Buck: God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen
Lessons in Carols

Notes

Application Questions

1. Of all the types of people in Jewish society, why do you think God chose to announce the birth of Jesus to shepherds?
2. Do you believe that God loves you? How does this story help you see his love more clearly?
3. The people around Jesus at his birth responded in different ways. Which response resonates for you right now and why?

Confession of Sin

God of grace and truth,
your prophets told of your promises – of restoration and salvation.
We confess that we have not believed your promise,
that we have preferred brokenness to restoration,
and have lingered with disease, rather than welcome wholeness and
renewal. Forgive our stiff necks and renew our hearts, so that we may
receive the fullness of your promise, and live into that joy. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Isaiah 55:6-7 NRSV

6 Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
7 let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day,
to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!

From God our heavenly Father, a blessed angel came,
and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same;
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.

"Fear not, then," said the angel, "Let nothing you affright;
this day is born a Savior of a pure virgin bright,
to free all those who trust in Him from Satan's pow'r and might."

The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,
and left their flocks a-feeding, in tempest, storm, and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straightway, this blessed Babe to find.

Now to the Lord sing praises all you within this place,
and with true love and charity each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas does bring redeeming grace.

Words & Music 18th century English Carol © Public Domain
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Confession of Faith

We believe in God, the father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

We believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended to heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Communion

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We do not dismiss in any set order, come forward when you feel ready.

Form two lines down the center aisle, return to your seats by the side aisles.

Take the elements and consume them at your seat at your discretion.

Bread is locally sourced and gluten free. Choose between red wine and white grape juice.

Song of Reflection

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the Source, the Ending He.
Of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessed, when the virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race;
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed His sacred face, evermore and evermore!

This is He whom heav'n-taught singers, sang of old with one accord,
whom the Scriptures of the prophets promised in their faithful word;
now He shines, the long-expected;
let creation praise its Lord, evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him; angel hosts, His praises sing:
pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
every voice in concert ring, evermore and evermore!

Christ, to Thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to Thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be,
honor, glory, and dominion,
and eternal victory, evermore and evermore!

From a 4th century devotional poem by Marcus Aurelius Prudentius, set to a 12th century plainsong.

Benediction

Doxology

Words by Thomas Ken & Music by Louis Bourgeois © Public Domain

Prayers for Those Not Communing

Prayer for Those Searching for the Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared confess, but through you I am more loved than I ever dared hope. Thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, enable me to see in you the fulfillment of all my true needs, and may I turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to see that your Gospel is bigger than my sin, and that your work breaks the power of sin as well as freeing me from its penalty. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the pioneer and author of my faith. Amen.

oaks parish

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Oaks Parish: Get Connected

Welcome to Oaks Parish

Thanks for joining us today - we would love to connect with you! Jot down your name and email address on the postcard found in your worship guide and drop it in an offering basket before you leave so we can get to know you.

How to Use Postcards

- Let us know you're visiting
- Sign up for the weekly email
- Share a prayer request
- RSVP for an event
- Connect with pastoral staff

Drop your postcard in an offering basket before you leave today!

Morning Prayer

Join us online every Wednesday at 6:30am to pray together for our community and beyond at oaksparish.org/morningprayer.

Advent Reflection Guide

Prepare your heart for the Advent of our Lord with this year's Advent reflection guide: "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," including Scripture, reflection questions, and prayer. You can listen to the guide (published on Mon, Wed, and Fri) on the Oaks Parish Podcast (found on Apple Podcasts or Spotify) or download to read at oaksparish.org/advent.

Christmas Eve Worship

We'll celebrate the birth of the newborn King with a Lessons & Carols service on Sunday morning at 10am. This is a service for the whole family so there will be no OP Kids classes.