

*Advent is
Working for
Peace*

The Season of Advent, Five Worship with Holy Communion December 8, 2024

Good morning & Welcome to Grace

***Our mission is to invite and welcome all
to the fellowship of Christ in service to our community.***

**This year, Grace is exploring an extended, seven-week Advent season. We're using the appointed texts from the Lectionary each week, but our focus is on the coming of Christ, in the stable, into our everyday lives, and at the end of all things. This is a practice that, while new for us, has gained traction in many mainline Churches over the past ten years. We are excited to invite you into the journey with us.*

We are glad you are with us for worship today, and we offer a special welcome to any guests who may be with us this morning, and to all those who are joining us via Live-Stream.

Children are welcome in worship at Grace! The voices of children only enhance worship, and they are welcome in this space! There is a Children's Corner in the sanctuary and, if needed, a nursery off the lobby.

In thanksgiving to God for the saving grace shown to all of us in the death and resurrection of Christ, we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion each week. All are welcome at the Table. We do come forward to the front of the sanctuary for communion. The Pastor stands in the center of the aisle with the bread. Communion assistants are located on both sides of the sanctuary, with both **wine (red)** and **juice (white)**.

For those participating from home, please have a small glass of wine or juice and a small piece of bread available for all who are planning to commune.

If you have questions about our worship service, please don't hesitate to ask someone around you. For more information about Baptism or Communion, about what Lutherans believe, or even about Grace Lutheran Church, please do not hesitate to reach out to our pastor.

Again, we're glad you're here! Welcome to worship!

GATHERING ~ The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

⌘ See Screens Up Front

PRELUDE

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

Hayes

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

⌘ **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

GATHERING HYMN

“All Earth is Hopeful”

ELW 266

⌘ **GREETING & THE ADVENT WREATH**

⌘ **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Malachi 3.1 – 4

God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means “my messenger”) will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God’s people, as silver and gold are refined. And we read:

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like washers’ soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD, as in the days of old and as in former years.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Luke 1.68 – 79

SECOND READING

Philippians 1.3 – 11

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge. And we read:

³ I thank my God for every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy ⁵ for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God’s grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my

witness, how I long for all of you with the tender affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what really matters, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹ having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

⌘ GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

GOSPEL

Luke 3.1 – 6

John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by “repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord. And we read:

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. ⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth, ⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Blessed Be the God of Israel”

ELW 250

⌘ **THE CREED** ~ *Let us affirm our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE PEACE

MEAL ~ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

CHANCEL CHOIR

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

ELW 264

⌘ **OFFERING & OFFERTORY RESPONSE** *“Create in Me a Clean Heart”* **ELW 186**

⌘ OFFERING PRAYER

⌘ **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING** (Those moved to do so may rise.)

⌘ **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (THE SANCTUS)** **ELW 191**

⌘ **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE & THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

⌘ INVITATION TO COMMUNION

COMMUNION *Those on live stream may commune at this time.*

⌘ LAMB OF GOD

ELW 195

COMMUNION HYMNS

*“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”
“Thank You, Lord”*

**ELW 241
ACS 1092**

1 Thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord, thank you,
 2 Been so good, been so good, been so
 3 Been my friend, been my friend, been my
 4 Love you, Lord, love you, Lord, love you,

Lord, I just want to thank you, Lord.
 good, I just want to thank you, Lord.
 friend, I just want to thank you, Lord.
 Lord, I just want to thank you, Lord.

⌘ BLESSING & PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING ~ God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

⌘ BLESSING

SENDING HYMN

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

ELW 631

⌘ DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

“Rejoice this Day”

Roger Wilson

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