



John came
to testify
to the light

JOHN 1:8

Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2017

8:15 a.m.

OUR STATEMENT OF MISSION

Grace Lutheran Church is a community of faith, centered in worship, held in grace, strengthened in love, sent forth in mission, in Jesus' name.

Welcome! *If this is your first time worshipping at Grace Lutheran, the Visitor Center in the Gathering Hall (right outside the sanctuary) has information for you about our congregation. Please sign the guest book, ask questions, say hello! We invite you to join us for coffee, tea, and donuts in Grace Hall between services. The greeters, ushers, or announcement sheet will happily fill you in on education hour offerings, Sunday school, and the teen hangout.*

If you are interested in finding out more about membership at Grace, please contact Pastor Mike at Mike@gracedm.org, 515-276-6873.

We worship together in many ways: Standing, sitting, singing, speaking, listening. You are invited to worship in as many (or few) ways as you are comfortable and able.

Large print bulletins are available from the ushers.

*Please sign the **Attendance Registration** sheets which are found in each pew.*

Children belong and are welcome in worship! *Children's bulletins are available from the ushers, and activity bags are available outside the doors to the sanctuary. If your children become restless, the service is broadcast in the Gathering Hall so you may still watch and participate together. **The nursery is available for newborns to age 3 and is staffed by Grace Kids Care staff members.***

Communion – We welcome all people to the Lord's table to receive Holy Communion.

Children ages 3 and above are welcome at the parents' discretion, after meeting for instruction with the pastor. Children not instructed are invited to come forward for a blessing. If you are not able to come forward to take communion, please notify an usher before the service. Then try to sit by the aisle and the pastor will commune you in your pew.

Stephen Ministry *is a one-to-one care giving ministry for those experiencing personal problems such as grieving or crisis situations. If you would like to be connected to a Stephen Minister, please contact the office for assistance.*

Prelude Two variations on “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

Behnke

Welcome

Please stand as you are able

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.

C: Amen.

P: Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: God of all time,

C: we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of justice and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.

P: In the mercy of almighty God... the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” #257
verses 5-7

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

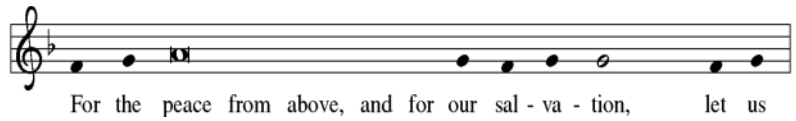
C: And also with you.

Kyrie



Gathering

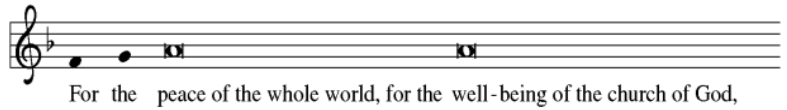
On this day the Lord has acted! On the first day of the week God began creation, transforming darkness into light. On this, the “eighth day” of the week, Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. We celebrate this new creation in the waters of baptism and in the feast of victory. With great joy we celebrate this day of days, even as we begin the great fifty days of Easter. Filled with hope, we go forth to share the news that Christ is risen.



For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us



pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



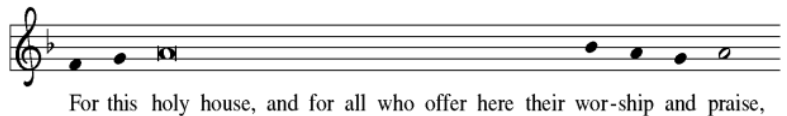
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

Lighting the Advent Wreath: Advent 3

P: We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #257
Verses 1-3

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay:
teach us your will and guide our way
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height in
ancient times you gave the law in
cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray,

C: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

Reading Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of

Reading Notes:

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the

jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of the Lord, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm 126

You are invited to sing the response and read the lines in bold responsively.



¹When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, then were we like those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy. Then they said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”**

³The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses of the Negeb. R**

⁵Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves. R**

Please stand as you are able

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *Repeat alleluia*
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the First Chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated

Sermon

"What did he say?"

Gospel Acclamation

Old Lutheran liturgies often call this verse the "Gradual" which is based upon a Latin word meaning "step". We step up, with the Gospel acclamation, to hear the words of eternal life.

Gospel Notes

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

Please stand as you are able

Hymn of the Day “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” #815

Creed

The Apostles’ Creed is in a way the “Reader’s Digest Bible”. If you took the Bible and did to it what Southern chefs do to green beans (cook them for 24 hours), you would find the Apostles’ Creed at the bottom of the pot when you lifted the lid.

Prayers of the People

In the middle of worship, we pause to pray not only for ourselves and our loved ones and their needs, but for everyone: the whole church, the world, and its leaders, and the local community. This kind of all-inclusive prayer is at the heart of Christian worship precisely because Jesus Christ died and rose again, not just for a few but for all people.

Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I 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.**

Prayers of the People

L: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: We raise our prayers to you, O God, in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

All: God of love, have mercy on us. Pour out your Spirit upon us. Center us in worship. Hold us in grace. Strengthen us in love. Send us forth in mission. In Jesus’ holy name. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you all,

C: And also with you!

Please be seated

Announcements

The Offering

Please stand as you are able

Offering Prayer

P: Savior of the nations, come. Make your home here in us. Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light.

C: Amen

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

Holy, Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,

heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the

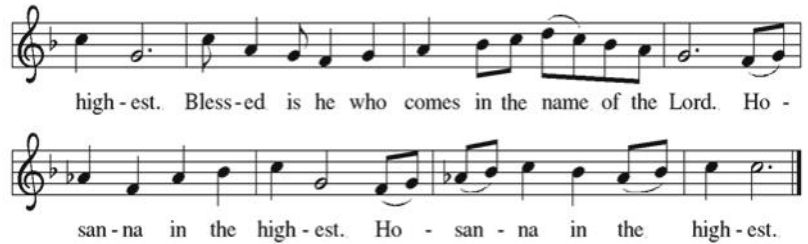
Sanctus

As we draw close to God in this meal, we sing these words from the angels. The words harken back to Isaiah’s vision in the temple, where he hears the seraphim singing “Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might, heaven

and earth are full of
your glory.”

Lord's Prayer

*We gather in prayer
in response to the
gospel heard in the
proclamation that
this meal is given
“for you and for all
people for the for-
giveness of sin.” We
find ourselves at the
very heart of the
gospel message.
Christ not only
speaks to us in the
supper, but gives us
what he is speaking
about: his body and
blood for the for-
giveness of sins*



high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Thanksgiving at the Table

P: In the night in which he was betrayed...

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy

kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not
into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

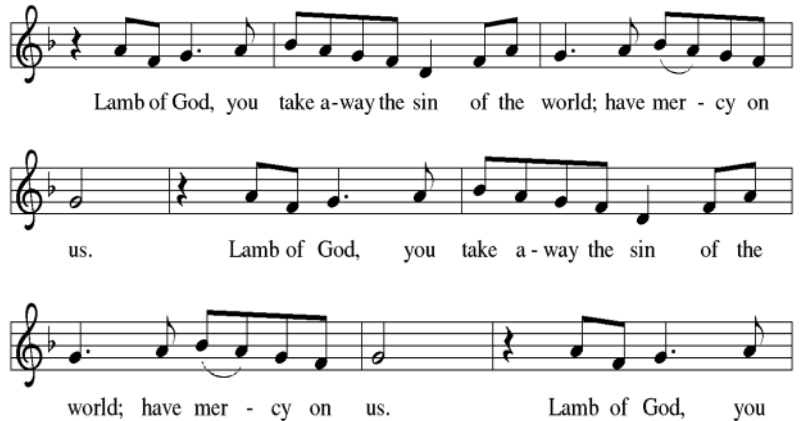
**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever
and ever. Amen**

Invitation to Communion

P: Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you. Share in the feast of
salvation.

Please be seated

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you



take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Distribution Hymns 294, 752(3x), 779

Please stand as you are able

Prayer after Communion

P: God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share. Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

Blessing

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn "Prepare the Royal Highway" #264

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude Toccata on "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"
Behnke

We will receive by pouring chalice this morning: Receive a cup. Receive and eat the bread. Proceed to the wine or grape juice. Communion bread is gluten free.

Dismissal
With the dismissal from worship, we are sent to serve the Lord through the unique gifts, talents, and relationships of each one of us. This is not a conclusion of service, but a start to what the next week will bring in our walk with Christ. So it is fitting that the response is a resounding "Thanks be to God."

Welcome to Grace!

Ministers —the people of Grace

Pastor –

The Rev. Michael Schmidt mike@gracedm.org

Minister for Worship and Music –

Emma Stammer emma@gracedm.org

Minister for Youth and Family –

Ellen Rothweiler..... ellen@gracedm.org

Organist –

Rich Snyder..... rvdlsnyder@centurylink.net

Grace Kids' Care Director –

Brooke Howsare..... brooke@gracedm.org

Minister for Administration –

Denise Friesth..... denise@gracedm.org

Minister for Communications –

Michelle Voelker michelle@gracedm.org

Office Assistant for Worship

Jessica Flannery..... jessica@gracedm.org

Custodian – Todd Haugen

Ushers – Linda Bigger, Tim Nelson, Carter Woodruff, & Larry Nordeen

Acolyte -

Liturgist – Alex Davik

Lector – Karen Taylor

Altar Guild – Sue Anderson & Carol Woodruff

Communion Assistants – Carol Woodruff, Cherie Rissman, Nancy Crowfoot,
& Cheryl Weatherington

Counters – Chris Lawson and Mike Carney

Coffee – Karen Taylor



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