

Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023 9:00 a.m. Liturgical worship with organ

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 worshiping at Grace Lutheran, we're glad you are here!

You can learn more about our congregation

- •on our website at www.gracedm.org
- •by asking a greeter or other members of the congregation
- •picking up one of our newsletters in the Entryway.

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. When following along in the bulletin, the congregation is invited to read the items in bold (often marked with a C:) aloud.

Large print bulletins are available from the ushers.

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 needed, the **Kids Corner** in the Gathering Hall has puzzles, books, coloring pages and Megablocks! This space is intended to offer a place for children to be and play if they need to step of out of worship and during fellowship times.

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.

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

Prelude Two improvisations on the theme "Keep Awake." "Wake, Awake for Night Is Flying" - P. Nicolai arranged by P. Manz, and "O How Shall I Receive Thee" - M. Teschner arranged by P. Manz

Welcome

Poetry Prayer

Please rise in body or in spirit

Advent Litany

L: The power of dreams lies in waking up. For when we close our eyes,

C: We can see a better world.

L: When we close our eyes,

C: We can dream a better dream.

L: But when we open our eyes,

C: We begin the work of faith.

L: The power of worship is the same. When we enter this space,

C: We can see a better world.

L: When we enter this space,

C: We dream a better dream.

L: But when we leave this space,

C: We begin the work of faith.

L: So come in. Dream your dream.

C: Find hope here.

L: For in an hour,

C: We will begin the work of faith.

L: Let it be so.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Original Dreamer,

C: Over and over again in scripture, we hear your dream for a beautiful world.

We hear your dream for peace and reconciliation.

We hear your dream for harmony and togetherness.

We hear your dream for community and hope.

We hear your dreams, and yet we do not open our eyes.

We continue to live with the curtains drawn, the covers pulled tight, eyes shut to the realities of the world.

Forgive us. Kindle a hope in us that will burn through the darkest nights.

Give us the strength and the will to keep awake in this sleeping world.

With hope we pray, amen.

L: People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit, you are joined to this wonder. You have put on & Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Hark, The Glad Sound"

#239

Greeting

L: 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.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Ambo side: I dream of sunflower fields.

Organ side: I dream of key lime pie with a mile-high meringue.

Ambo side: I dream of the days when we could be part of a crowd.

Organ side: I dream of snow days.

Ambo side: I dream of empty beds in jail cells.

Organ side: I dream of a world that will let kids be kids.

Ambo side: I dream of full tables instead of empty bellies.

Organ side: I dream of schools with enough money to teach.

Ambo side: I dream of parents with enough money to feed.

Organ side: I dream to keep awake, because if we don't dream of better days, then we might forget that this is not what God imagined.

Ambo side: So today we light the candle of hope, for hope is the very thing that keeps dreams afloat.

Organ side: May this light be an invitation to keep awake.

Ambo side: May this light be our invitation to be Advent people—people who dream. Amen.

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray,

C: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

¹O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—² as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! 3When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains guaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. 5You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. 6We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities. like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. 9Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.

³Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Reading Notes

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. *Instead, the people* experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Reading Notes

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

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.

Reading Notes:

Jesus encourages his followers to look for-

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Please rise in body or in spirit

Gospel Acclamation



L: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the Thirteenth Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

[Jesus said:] ²⁴"In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,

²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²"But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

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

Please be seated **Sermon**

Please rise in body or in spirit

Hymn of the Day "Christ, Be Our Light"

#715

Affirmation of Faith

L: We believe in God.

C: We believe that God has dreams for humanity.

L: We believe in the Holy Spirit.

C: We believe that the Holy Spirit comforts us when our dreams turn to nightmares.

L: We believe in Jesus.

C: We believe that Jesus walked this world to wake us up, Inviting us to be the church in the world.

L: We believe in dreams.

C: We believe in the power that dreams have to show us a new way.

L: So in this Advent season,

C: We are those who dream and those who wake up. May it be so. Amen.

ward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

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 allinclusive 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.

Offering As Lutherans, we believe that Christian giving is about worship AND action. As an option to the offering plate, scan this QR code to access our secure digital offering plate.



Prayers of the People

L: Merciful God.

C: receive our prayer.

L: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

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

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

C: And also with you!

Please be seated

Announcements

Please rise in body or in spirit

Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray,

C: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Holy Communion

L: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

L: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

L: Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

L: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

L: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

L: Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
C: Come, Holy Spirit.

L: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. C: Amen.

O. A....

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

Lord's Prayer
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

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 forgiveness 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 forgiveness of sins

Communion

Todav we will receive **Holy Communion** through wafers and pouring chalice. The line forms from the front pews to the back, with the ambo side of the aisle going first followed by the organ side. Please use the hand sanitizer provided before you receive the gluten free wafer. Then proceed to the tray of cups. Both wine and grape juice will be available. Please place your cup in the basket by the side aisle as you return to the pew.

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

Invitation to Communion

L: In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

Please be seated

Lamb of God



Distribution Hymns: #751 (3x), #474, #515, #488

Please rise in body or in spirit

Prayer after Communion

L: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen

Blessing

L: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. 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 "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers" #244

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Improvisation on the sending hymn, "Rejoice, Rejoice Believers"
Swedish folk tune arranged by P. Manz

fitting that the response is a resounding "Thanks be to God."

Welcome to Grace!

Ministers —the people of Grace

Pastor -

The Rev. Michael Schmidtmike@gracedm.org

Vicar

Adam Bardenadam@gracedm.org

Organist –

Rich Snyder.....<u>rich@gracedm.org</u>

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Custodian – Todd Haugen

Ushers - Linda & Jim Rundle

Greeter -

Lector – Julie Honsey

Poem Reader -

Communion Assistants – Jenie Schmidt, Kate Schaller

Altar Guild – Sue Anderson & Carol Woodruff

Tech Crew – Greg Boeschen, Jamie Briggs, Chuck Denton, Paul Nelson, Jon Rissman, & Amy Schmelzer

Counters - Jon Rissman & Tom McCleary

Coffee & Donuts -



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