

*The Word became flesh
and lived among us*

JOHN 1:14

The Nativity of our Lord *Welcome to Worship on this Christmas Day*

Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

December 25, 2023

10:00 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.*

Prelude A setting of the hymn of the day, "Of the Father's Love Begotten" - traditional plainsong arranged by W. Held

Please prepare for worship through quiet reflection and meditation

Welcome

Please stand as you are able

Dialogue

L: Who are these angels who come to earth,

C: Bearing the news of the Christ child's birth?

L: Who are these shepherds who run to see,

C: And worship the babe on bended knee?

L: Who is this child, so small, so slight,

C: Of whom the angels sang that night?

L: Who is this king, a manger his throne,

C: Who humbles himself to make us his own?

L: Who is this God who sends a Son

C: Into our midst, the promised one?

Gathering Hymn "Hark, The Herald Angels Sing"

#270

Prayer of the Day

L: Let us pray,

C: All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, 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

First Lesson: Isaiah 62:6-12

The prophet invites the people to give God no rest until God reestablishes Jerusalem. In turn, they will receive names full of promise: Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord, a City Not Forsaken.

⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest, ⁷and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. ⁸The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your

grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored; ⁹but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. ¹¹The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." ¹²They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken."

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm 97

¹The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad.

²Clouds and darkness surround the LORD, righteousness and justice are the foundations of God's throne.

³Fire goes before the LORD, burning up enemies on every side.

⁴Lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

⁵The mountains melt like wax before the Lord of all the earth.

⁶The heavens declare your righteousness, O LORD, and all the peoples see your glory.

⁷Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods! Bow down before the LORD, all you gods.

⁸Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O LORD.

⁹For you are the LORD, most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

¹⁰You who love the LORD, hate evil! God guards the lives of the saints and rescues them from the hand of the wicked.

¹¹Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the honest of heart.

¹²Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, and give thanks to God's holy name.

Second Reading: Titus 3:4-7

God saves us not because of what we do. Rather, God is a God of mercy and salvation who graciously cleanses us in baptism and renews our lives through the Holy Spirit.

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior


appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

L: The Word of the Lord


C: Thanks be to God

Please stand as you are able

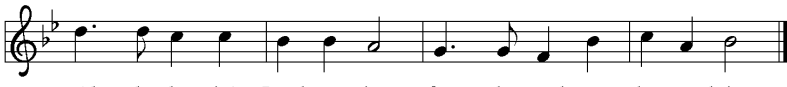
Gospel Acclamation

C: 

Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the Second Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

The world's deep night is shattered by the light of God's new day. The glory of God is revealed to poor shepherds, who share the good news with others.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in

a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

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

¹⁵When 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.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated

Sermon

Please stand as you are able

Hymn of the Day “Of The Father's Love Begotten” #295

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: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers
according to your abundant grace.

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 stand as you are able

Great Thanksgiving (tune: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!)

L: Oh, may the good Lord be with you,

C: And may the Lord be with you too.

L: Lift your hearts to him in praise.

C: To the Lord our hearts we raise.

L: Let us offer praises true.

C: It is fitting so to do: Gratefully we sing to the Lord, our King.

Preface

The Sanctus (tune: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)
Holy, holy, holy Lord! God of hosts, by all adored!
Heav'n and earth cannot contain all the glory of Your name!
Hail, hosanna, God most high! Blest is He who now draws nigh
In the name of God the King! Halle-lujahs glad we sing:
Hail, hosanna! Praises due. Be for-ever, Lord to You!

Thanksgiving at the Table

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

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

Lord's Prayer (tune: Away in a Manger)

Our Father in heaven, all praise to your name!
Your kingdom among us, your will done the same
By mortals and angels. Come Lord, reign alone:
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.
The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;
From evil deliver your children most dear,
For yours is the kingdom; o'er all things you reign.
And yours is the power; all things you maintain.
To you be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.

Invitation to Communion

L: Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

Please be seated

Lamb of God



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
 you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
 e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Distribution Hymns: #472, #296, #272

Prayer after Communion

L: God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” #288

Dismissal

L: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude A setting of the sending hymn, "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" - German carol arranged by W. Held



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