



Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Liturgical worship with piano

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 Mega-blocks! This space is intended to offer a place for children to be and play if they need to step 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

“Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”

Timothy R. Matthews, arr. Tom Fettke

Welcome

Poetry Prayer

Please rise in body or in spirit

Advent Litany

L: John the Baptist said, “Prepare the way.” So family of faith, how do we prepare our minds for worship?

C: We silence the inner critic. We let go of busy thoughts. We make space for God to speak.

L: How do we prepare our *hearts* for worship?

C: We bless all emotions. We feel what we feel. We open ourselves up to be moved.

L: How do we prepare our *bodies* for worship?

C: We take in the scent, sight, and feel of this space. We breathe in God’s mercy. We exhale God’s love.

L: How do we prepare our *souls* for worship?

C: We bring our full selves into this space. We wear our hearts on our sleeves. We trust that even now, God is here.

L: Family of faith, what we practice in worship, we must live out in our daily lives. So prepare the way. Let us worship Holy God.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: One: Holy God, I wish that peace was something I could buy. I wish that peace could be ordered in a subscription service, found on a map, downloaded in an app, or voted for in a ballot. I wish that peace was as easy as a one-time choice when I was feeling my best. However, what I have found is that peace involves everyday decisions over and over, whether or not I am feeling my best. So today I confess, in front of this community of faith, that I need your help in this Advent season. Prepare the way for greater peace, and teach me how to be a part of it.

C: God forgives you. May God’s guiding hand surround you. May you know comfort. May you know peace.

L: Amen.

C: Holy God, We wish that peace was something we could buy. We wish that peace could be ordered in a subscription service, found on a map, downloaded in an app, or voted for in a ballot. We wish that peace was as easy as a one-time choice when we are feeling our best. However, what we have found is that peace involves everyday decisions over and over, whether or not we are feeling our best. So today I confess, in front of this

community of faith, that I need your help in this Advent season. Prepare the way for greater peace, and teach me how to be a part of it.

L: God forgives you. May God's guiding hand surround you. May you know comfort. May you know peace.

C: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Gathering Hymn "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" #254

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.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Ambo side: I dream of the first pitch of opening season.

Organ side: I dream of a laundry day, where each sock finds its mate.

Ambo side: I dream of family home for the holidays.

Organ side: I dream of good books and homemade meals.

Ambo side: I dream of sunset drives with the windows down.

Organ side: These are beautiful dreams, but I also have urgent dreams.

Ambo side: I dream of conversations across party lines.

Organ side: I dream of more bridges and less walls.

Ambo side: I dream of more laughter and less fear.

Organ side: I dream of more listening and less tears.

Ambo side: But most of all, I dream of peace like a river.

Organ side: Today we light the candle of peace.

Ambo side: May it remind us that there is another way. Amen

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray,

C: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; 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

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD; you have re stored the good fortune of Jacob.

²You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.

Reading Notes

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

Reading Notes:

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

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.

- ¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
¹¹**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**
¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.
¹³**Righteousness shall go before the LORD and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Please rise in body or in spirit

Gospel Acclamation

The image displays musical notation for the Gospel Acclamation 'Al-le-lu-ia'. It consists of four staves, each with a vocal line (treble and bass clefs) and a corresponding Latin text line. The first two staves are for a four-part setting, and the last two are for a two-part setting. The text 'Al-le-lu-ia' is repeated three times across the staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines, with some notes circled in red.

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the First Chapter.
C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

P: 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 “Comfort, Comfort Now My People” #256

Affirmation of Faith

L: We believe that a voice cried out in the wilderness,

C: Saying, “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

L: And so, we show up in church pews on cold, blustery days.

C: We march toward justice.

L: We roll up our sleeves.

C: We plant trees for our children.

L: We make art.

C: We choose hope.

L: We gather at the Table.

C: We set an extra plate.

L: We sing loudly, with joy.

C: We share stories and wisdom.

L: We celebrate children.

C: We fall together.

L: We rise together.

C: We love together.

Reading Notes:

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus’ birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

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.*

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.*



L: We do all these things because we believe that God loves us so much that God shows up here.

C: So we prepare and prepare for that next beautiful day. May it be so. Amen.

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

P: 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.

P: 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.

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 our-
selves 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

Today 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.

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

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

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: #473 (3x), #496, #484, #492

Please rise in body or in spirit

Prayer after Communion

P: 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

P: 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

"Blessed Be the God of Israel"

#250

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Setting by John Carter

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 Schmidtmike@gracedm.org

Vicar

Adam Bardenadam@gracedm.org

Organist –

Rich Snyder.....rich@gracedm.org

Pianist

Kathy Bowermaster

Minister for Communications –

Michelle Voelkermichelle@gracedm.org

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Kami Chicas.....kami@gracedm.org

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Mike Hilsabeck.....mike.h@gracedm.org

Office Assistant for Worship

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

Custodian – Todd Haugen

Ushers – Linda & Jim Rundle

Greeter – Jenie Schmidt

Lector – Pam Palmer

Poem Reader – Kate Schaller

Communion Assistants – Tammy Denton & Cherie Rissman

Altar Guild – Sue Anderson & Carol Woodruff

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

Counters – Mark Stume & Jon Rissman

Coffee & Donuts – Mike & Marilyn Nizzi



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Pastor Michael Schmidt

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