

Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 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 worshipping 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.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Ambo side: I dream of dance parties in the kitchen.

Organ side: I dream of laughter that is contagious.

Ambo side: I dream of birthday candles and another beautiful year.

Organ side: I dream of family game nights and dinner parties with friends.

Ambo side: I dream of homemade Halloween costumes and homemade family recipes.

Organ side: I dream of pillow forts, fireflies, and front porch swings.

Ambo side: I dream of every little thing that brings joy; and I know it comes from God.

Organ side: So today we light the candle of joy as a reminder that God's dream for this world involves the end of all tears.

Ambo side: God's dream for this world involves a joy that overflows and is contagious.

Organ side: So may this fire burn bright, and as it does, may we sing.

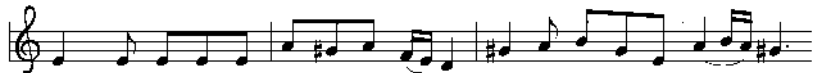
Ambo side: May we dance.

Organ side: May we laugh.

Ambo side: May we hold onto the people we love.

Organ side: May we sow joy in a hurting world, and may it be an act of holy resistance. 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.
- 3 Light three 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.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: 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

First 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 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

Psalms 126

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.**

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.**

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 God, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

Reading Notes:

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

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.

Anthem

"Prepare the Way" Arr. Hal H. Hopson
Chancel Choir and Grace Bells

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Please rise in body or in spirit

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

L: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the First Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Luke 1:45-55

⁴⁵Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" ⁴⁶And Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name; ⁵⁰indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the

proud in the imagination of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

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 “My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness” #251

Welcome of New Members

Today we welcome Sharon Iverson and Lenny Palmer.

Welcome

L: Let us welcome these siblings in Christ to this community of faith.

C: We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we will give thanks

Affirmation of Faith

L: Great Creator,

C: We are in awe of you.

We will never know how you managed to dream up

Mountains and valleys,

Freckles, dimples, and curly hair,

A cool morning mist,

The change of seasons,

Or the magic of music.

Your greatness is beyond our reckoning.

And because we are in awe of you,

We believe we must follow Mary’s lead

And allow our souls to sing.

We believe that the appropriate reaction to your goodness

Is complete gratitude,

Which looks like love for our neighbor,

Justice for the poor,

Food for the hungry,

And joy that overflows.

And even though we do not always believe in ourselves,

We believe that our song is pleasing to you.

We believe. Help our unbelief.

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.*



In Christ's name we pray, 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

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.

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 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 speak-
ing about: his body
and blood for the for-
giveness 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.

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: #528 (3x), #257 (vss 5-8), #592, #790

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

"People, Look East"

#248

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“The First Noel” arr. Holmes

“Hark, The Herald Angels Sing” arr. Holmes

“God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen” arr. Holmes

Grace Brass

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

Minister for Communications –

Michelle Voelkermichelle@gracedm.org

Administrative Assistant –

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

Bookkeeper

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

Office Assistant for Worship

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

Custodian – Todd Haugen

Ushers – Linda & Jim Rundle

Greeter – Pam Palmer

Lector –

Poem Reader – Julie Honsey

Communion Assistants – Julie Honsey & Kate Schaller

Altar Guild – Sue Anderson & Carol Woodruff

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

Counters – Carter Woodruff & Jon Rissman

Coffee & Donuts – Tammy Denton



Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor Michael Schmidt

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www.gracedm.org