

## **Grace Lutheran Church**

*Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania*

### **Welcome to Worship**

**Christmas Eve**

December 24, 2024

5:00 p.m. & 9:00 p.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](http://www.gracedm.org)*
- *by asking a greeter or other members of the congregation*
- *picking up one of our brief brochures from the Visitor Center in the Gathering Hall, or newsletters in the Entryway.*

*Worship Online: During times when you cannot be with us in person, you can participate in worship on our website or Facebook page @gracelutherandm*

*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](mailto:Mike@gracedm.org), 515-276-6873.**

***The Poinsettia insert is printed on pages 10 and 11 of this bulletin.***

## Prelude

## Welcome

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### Call to Worship

L: Let the heavens be glad!

**C: Let the earth rejoice!**

L: Let the sea roar!

**C: Let the fields exult!**

L: Let the trees of the forest sing for Joy!

**C: For our God comes to us this night!**

### Confession and Forgiveness

L: We confess our sins before God and one another.

*Pause for silence and reflection.*

L: Gracious God,

**C: We confess to you and to our siblings in Christ that we have made decisions which have caused harm to you and our neighbors. We have put our selfish desires ahead of the needs of others. We have sought comfort in worldly things and forgotten you. For these and for all the ways in which we have fallen short, forgive us. Lead us back into a right relationship with you, our neighbors, and all of creation.**

L: Beloved of God, I bring you good news of great joy for all people, for in Jesus Christ, all things are made new. For his sake, God forgives us all our sin and calls us into abundant life. Receive this gift with joy, in Jesus name.

**C: Amen.**

### Gathering Hymn

“On Christmas Night”

#274

### Greeting

L: Today Christ is Born! 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 Advent Wreath

L: Emmanuel is here among us!

**C: We light this candle of hope fulfilled.**

L: We light this candle for peace on earth.

**C: We light this candle with joy at your coming.**

L: We light this candle for love incarnate.

### **Gathering Hymn**

*We are a “singing church,” so we follow the advice of the apostle Paul to teach and admonish “one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16).*

**C: We light the Christ candle in a proclamation of God with us!**

L: Thanks be to God!

**Hymn** "Now the Heavens Start to Whisper" ACS #901

**C: Now the heavens start to whisper,  
as the veil is growing thin.  
Earth from slumber wakes to listen  
to the stirring, faint within:  
seed of promise, deeply planted,  
child to spring from Jesse's stem!  
Like the soil beneath the frostline,  
hearts grow soft to welcome him.**

**Heavy clouds that block the moonlight  
now begin to drift away.  
Diamond brilliance through the darkness  
shines the hope of coming day.  
Christ, the morning star of splendor,  
gleams within a world grown dim.  
Heaven's ember fans to fullness;  
hearts grow warm to welcome him.**

**Christ, eternal Sun of justice,  
Christ, the rose of wisdom's seed,  
come to bless with fire and fragrance  
hours of yearning, hurt, and need.  
In the lonely, in the stranger,  
in the outcast, hid from view;  
Child who comes to grace the manger,  
teach our hearts to welcome you.**

L: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

L: Almighty God,

**C: As we hear the story of our Savior's birth, we are filled with wonder and awe. Thank you for the gift of your Son, born in a manger. In our daily lives, help us remember the profound joy of this story. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

**Anthem** (5p.m.)

"Son of Mary"

*Chancel Choir*

**Reading Notes:**

*A census issued by  
Caesar Augustus  
leads Joseph and*

**Reading: Luke 2:1-20**

<sup>2:1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration

and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph 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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And 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.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### Sermon

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**Hymn of the Day** "Angels We Have Heard on High" #289

### 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;**

*Mary to travel to Bethlehem. In the city, Mary gives birth to Jesus. This news is announced to some shepherds living in the nearby fields by an angel who gives them a sign to look for the Messiah.*

### Creed

*The Creed is our response to God's speaking to us. Martyrs and saints have been confessing this creed since 325 A.D. The word "creed" comes from the Latin "credo" which means, "I believe!"*

### **Prayers of the People**

*This prayer in the service follows the directive of the Apostle Paul to young Timothy, a pastor: "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone.*

### **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.*



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: God, in your mercy,  
**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: We lift up all of our prayers, spoken and unspoken to you. In Jesus' name we pray.  
**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: God of heaven and earth,  
**C: from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. Amen.**

### **Thanksgiving at the Table**

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.**

**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 and take a cup from the tray. Then proceed to receive the gluten-free wafer. 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: A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

*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, grant us peace.

*Distribution Hymns: #276, # 487, # 277, # 271*

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**Prayer after Communion**

L: Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.

**C: Amen**

**Gospel of the Incarnation John 1:1-14**



## Hymn of Light

“Silent Night”

#281

Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight;  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from your holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

## 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

“Joy to the World”

#267

## Dismissal

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

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

## **Instructions: Lighting of the Candles**

*Candles will be lit from the center aisle. Tip your unlit candle over the flame to light your candle. Hold your lit candle upright, and let your neighbor tilt their unlit candle over yours until lit. Continue until each person in the pew has a lit candle.*

## **Blessing**

*Here as we leave to continue our journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land, God uses the pastor to say words that were said first through Aaron in the wilderness more than 3,000 years ago.*



**Thank you to all who sponsored poinsettias  
to brighten our sanctuary this Christmas.**

**Poinsettias are given by:**

*Jenny Rehder in memory of my parents.*

*Carli Stee in memory of Connie Beall.*

*Jane and Ed Ridnour in honor of family and friends.*

*Marla Gowdey in memory of Carolyn Lehnus.*

*Carter and Carol Woodruff in honor of our children, Dmitri, Emily, and Bailey;  
and all children around the world.*

*Virgil Olson In memory of my wife Gayle and to honor my family.*

*Carrie Schall and Bob and Rita Stackhouse in memory of John David Schall.*

*Jason and Laura Irwin in memory of Geno Zamarripa.*

*Louie and Sue Anderson in memory of our parents, Bob and JoAnn Young  
and Lou and Sue Anderson; brother Steve Young; and loving friend Connie  
Heuton.*

*Patty Allen in memory of my parents and brother and in honor of family.*



**Poinsettias are given by:**

*Lenny and Pam Palmer in honor of our families, past and present.*

*Karla Swanson in memory of my parents: Erwin and Karin Swanson.*

*Brent and Valerie Culp in memory of Dean and Betty Culp, Mary Vasey, and John Barkley.*

*Mike, Jenie, Allison, and Samantha in memory of loved ones.*

*Larry and Mary Weaverling in memory of our parents.*

*Jason Galle in memory of Kristina Galle.*

*Dean and Cathy Watson in memory of our loved ones.*

*Jon and Cherie Rissman in memory of our loved ones and in honor of God's glory.*

*The Brandsfield family in memory of Bob Brandsfield.*

*The Brandsfield family in memory of Barb Mixdorf.*

*Ernie and Cheryl Weatherington in memory of our parents.*

*Deanna and Erik Weber in memory of Elmer Weber .*

## Welcome to Grace!

**Ministers** —the people of Grace

**Pastor** –

The Rev. Michael Schmidt .....[mike@gracedm.org](mailto:mike@gracedm.org)

**Vicar**

Jesse Hershberger.....[jesse@gracedm.org](mailto:jesse@gracedm.org)

**Organist** –

Rich Snyder.....[rich@gracedm.org](mailto:rich@gracedm.org)

**Piano Accompanist, Music Ensemble Coordinator** –

Kathy Bowermaster

**Minister for Communications** –

Michelle Voelker .....[michelle@gracedm.org](mailto:michelle@gracedm.org)

**Bookkeeper**

Mike Hilsabeck.....[mike.h@gracedm.org](mailto:mike.h@gracedm.org)

**Office Assistant for Worship**

Jessica Flannery.....[jessica@gracedm.org](mailto:jessica@gracedm.org)

**Custodian** – Todd Haugen

**Usher** – 5 p.m. Carter Woodruff

**Greeter** – 9 p.m. Lenny & Pam Palmer

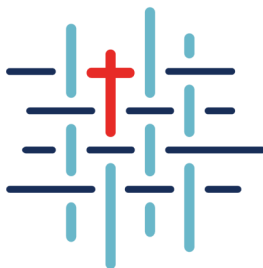
**Lector** – 5p.m. Carol Woodruff 9 p.m. Pam Palmer

**Communion Assistants** – 5p.m. Jenny Rehder, Tammy Denton

**Altar Guild** – Sue Anderson, Carol Woodruff, & Jenny Rehder

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

**Counters** – Tom McCleary & Mark Stumme



GRACE  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

**Grace Lutheran Church**

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**Pastor Michael Schmidt**

515-276-6873

[www.gracedm.org](http://www.gracedm.org)