

The First Sunday of Christmas



**LESSONS
& CAROLS**

Welcome to Worship
Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

December 28th, 2025

9:00 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.

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*
- *by 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 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

Welcome

Please rise in body or in spirit

Gathering Hymn “Once in Royal David’s City”

ELW #269

Dialogue

L: Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shines light in the world.

C: By day and night he shines for all to see.

L: Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty

C: that the world may see the justice and richness of God.

L: God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,

C: so that all who believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.

L: Jesus is the light of the world.

C: Jesus is the light of our lives.

L: Sing to God a new song!

C: A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.

Opening Prayer

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray,

C: Gracious God of heaven and earth, you have thrown a lifeline to us in our darkness— a beam of light that shines through Jesus. Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation. Though crucified on a cross, he is the Lord of life. Fill us with the wonder and joy of his presence in the world and in our hearts. Amen.

Please be seated

Special Music

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Grace Bells

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar

across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

First Carol “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” ELW #244

Second Reading: Isaiah 11:1-12

¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious. ¹¹On that day the Lord will again raise^[d] his hand to recover the remnant that is left of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea. ¹²He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Second Carol**"Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming"**

ELW #272

Third Reading: Micah 5:2–5a

²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵and he shall be the one of peace.

Third Carol**"O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

ELW #279

Fourth Reading: Luke 1:5–25

⁵ In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years. ⁸ Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. ¹⁰ Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. ¹¹ Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. ¹⁴ You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know that this will happen? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." ¹⁹ The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I

stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.²⁰ But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur.”²¹ Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering at his delay in the sanctuary.²² When he did come out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak.²³ When his time of service was ended, he returned to his home.²⁴ After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said,²⁵ “This is what the Lord has done for me in this time, when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people.”

Fourth Carol

“Blessed Be the God of Israel”

ELW #250

Fifth Reading: Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”^[a] ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”^[b] ³⁵ The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^[c] will be holy; he will be called Son of God.³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Fifth Carol “The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came” ELW #265

Sixth Reading: Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Sixth Carol “Faith Begins by Letting Go” ACS #1004

Seventh Reading: Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.

Special Music “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”
Grace Bells

Eighth Reading: Luke 2:8–20

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.

Eighth Carol "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks" ACS #913

Ninth Reading: John 1:1–14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Please rise in body or in spirit

Responsive Prayer

L: It is you, loving God, who lights our path with truth.

C: Your Word, Jesus, is truth.

L: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to gather in wonder with the shepherds.

L: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to kneel in reverence with the wise ones.

L: In his light, draw all to the manger

C: to sing for joy with the angels.

L: In the brightness of his life

C: cast away the darkness of injustice, poverty, and hunger in the world.

L: It is you, loving God, who meets us on our way.

C: In the light of Jesus, show the world the way of life. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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

**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.**

Blessing

L: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

C: Praise God, all creatures here below!

L: You are the shepherds telling the story.

C: We tell it in the streets and across the land.

L: You are the wise ones worshiping with thanksgiving.

C: We worship with gifts of song and service, talents and treasures.

L: You are the angels announcing peace.

C: We live with joy and go now in peace.

L: Almighty God, Father, **☩** Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn "Go Tell It on the Mountain" ELW #290

Dismissal

L: Glory to God in the highest!

C: And peace to God's people on earth!

L: Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Improvisation on "Rejoice, Rejoice Believers" ELW #244

Swedish folk tune arranged by P. Manz

Welcome to Grace!

Ministers —the people of Grace

Pastor –

The Rev. Michael Schmidt.....mike@gracedm.org

Vicar –

Lotegeluaki Lengai.....lotegeluaki@gracedm.org
(Loh-tay-gay-loo-wahk-ee Lain-guy)

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Custodian – Todd Haugen

Ushers – Carter Woodruff

Greeter –

Lectors – Jenny Rehder, Carol Woodruff

Altar Guild – Sue Anderson & Carol Woodruff

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

Counters – Mark Stumme & Carter Woodruff

Coffee & Donuts – Marilyn Nizzi



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