

Welcome to Worship

*Our Mission: To boldly live out
our faith in Jesus through worship,
fellowship, and service to God and
our neighbor, here and around the
world.*

December 14, 2025 - 8:30 AM

Third Sunday of Advent



Grace Lutheran Pastors, Staff, and Musicians

Rev. Dr. Allison Cobb: Senior Pastor
Rev. Cole McCormick: Associate Pastor
Nicole Kolbe: Office Administrator
Brad Anderson: Maintenance
Jane Reiman: Finance Director

Amber Hansen: Open Door Meal Coordinator
Organist: Carol Madsen
Chancel Choir Director: Joyce Jorgenson
Pianist: Molly Bless
Praise Band: Jen Kahler and Musicians

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Please Note: Worship services are broadcast on local TV and online. Being in the Sanctuary implies consent to be on camera. If you do not wish to be on camera, please sit in the back rows or balcony. Communion may be brought to you in your pew.

At Grace Lutheran, we believe in the real presence of Christ in Holy Communion, and we practice eucharistic hospitality with an open table. **All persons**, whether visiting or a member, are welcome to meet Jesus at the table. Please ask your communion server if you prefer grape juice or a gluten free communion kit. The ushers will direct you to the front for communion or you may receive communion in your pew. Jesus invites all to come and be fed, forgiven, and free!

Prelude and Bell Ringing

Welcome and Announcements

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you.

P: Welcome to Worship!

Call to Worship

Chancel Choir

Candle Lighting

Reader 1: In the midst of our waiting and longing for God to make the world right again, we cling to the truth that God has saved, God is saving, and God will save. So today, we join our voices with the prophet Isaiah, who calls us to live in the joy of the truth of God's salvation.

Congregation: We choose to believe that the day is coming when "the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away".

Reader 2: We light this candle of joy as a sign of the Truth that sets us free to live in joy as we wait and work for the day when all creation will flourish together.

Light three candles of the Advent wreath.

Advent Candle Hymn

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah v.3 #240

Confession & Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

All: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Long-expected God,

All: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from

self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.

P: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

Prepare the Royal Highway

#264

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, **and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any

ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Lector: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹ Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Lector: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Children's Message (Sing)

Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Gospel Acclamation

p. 142

Pastor: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:2-11

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by

the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord. **All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Cole McCormick

Hymn of the Day

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

#254

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
 who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
 who has spoken through the prophets.
 We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
 We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 We look for the resurrection of the dead,
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the Church

P: God of grace...

C: ... hear our prayer.

Offering

Chancel Choir

Loaves and Fishes Offering

*Youth are invited to walk forward and place their offering into the basket.
 Just like the little boy who gave his 2 fish and 5 loaves to Jesus, who
 multiplied them to feed thousands, the youth offering will go to The
 Grace Food Pantry. Adults are welcome to give a child an offering to
 bring up too.*

Offering Hymn

Come Now, O Prince of Peace (v.1)

#247

Offering Prayer

**Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the
 desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may
 rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.**

Holy Communion

Great Thanksgiving (sung)

p.144

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Preface

**It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in
 all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
 through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the**

promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (sung)

p.144

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Thanksgiving at the Table

Children of all ages may receive communion or a blessing. They are also invited to take an instrument to praise God during the sending song. All are welcome at Christ's table.

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

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.
Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

Holy Communion

Children of all ages may receive communion or a blessing. They are also invited to take an instrument to praise God during the sending song. All are welcome at Christ's table.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done, on earth
 as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
 and the glory forever and ever.
 Amen**

Lamb of God

p.112

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
 Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Hymn

***Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness* #488**

Blessing

P: May God who comes among us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
 grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good
 news to share today and always.

All: Amen.

Sending Hymn

Joy to the World

#267

Sending

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude