

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 21, 2025 - 8:30 AM

Fourth 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

300 S. Grant Street, Fairmont, MN 56031 | www.gracelutheranchurch.org | 507-238-4418

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: Today, we come face to face with the scandal of Advent: Mary, the unmarried mother; God Incarnate growing in Mary's womb as a vulnerable baby; Joseph contemplating leaving Mary because of her pregnancy; God's love at work in ways that society and propriety could not understand; God calling Mary and Joseph to faithfulness despite the fear of disgrace.

Congregation: With Mary and Joseph, we choose to wait, watch, and listen for the way of Love instead of responding in fear to the world's judgment.

Reader 2: We light this candle of love as a sign of our faithfulness as we seek, find, and follow Emmanuel, God with us.

Light the fourth candle of the Advent wreath.

Advent Candle Hymn *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah v.4* **#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

All Earth is Hopeful

#266

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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. **With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." ¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

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

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the

dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now 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 pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

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

Sermon

Pastor Allison Cobb

Hymn of the Day*My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness*

#251

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

Savior of the Nation, Come

#263

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

Blessed Be the God of Israel

#250

Sending

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude