

## Watch worship online - connect through www.gracelutheran-alpena.org

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# Grace Lutheran Church

## **Grace Lutheran's Purpose Statement**

*"We share God's love by welcoming all and making a Christ-like difference in our community and world."* 

# **GATHERING**

## The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

## WELCOME/PRELUDE

## GATHERING

(the assembly stands as they are comfortable)

(All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.)

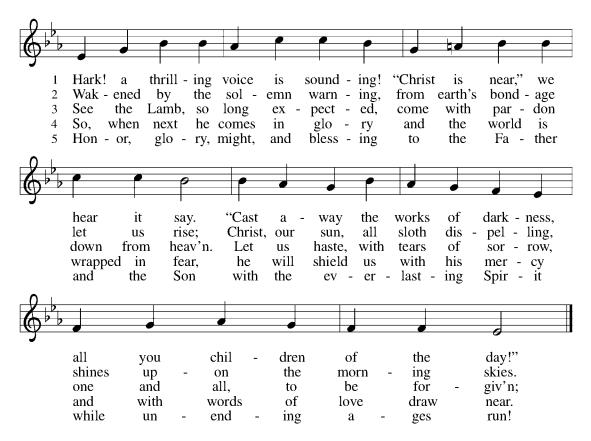
## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

- P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.
- C: Amen.
- P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P: God of mercy,
- C: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.
- P: God of might,
- C: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.
- P: God in our midst,
- C: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.
- P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through + Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.
- C: Amen.

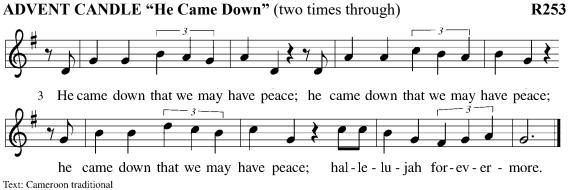
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GATHERING HYMN "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding " R246
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Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878

Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823–1889 This selection is in the public domain.

#### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING



Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional

Arr. John L. Bell © 1986 Iona Community. Permission to reprint/stream this music obtained from OneLicense #A-708784.

#### GREETING

- P: 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.

#### **KYRIE**







P: The Lord be with you.

#### C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## <u>WORD</u>

#### God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

#### SCRIPTURE READINGS Malachi 3:1-4

God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means "my messenger") will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God's people, as silver and gold are refined.

<sup>1</sup> See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup> But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup> he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

**L:** The word of the Lord.

## C: Thanks be to God.

#### **Psalm: Luke 1:68-79**

*In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us. (Lk. 1:78)* 

<sup>68</sup> Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel,

you have come to your people and set them free.

#### <sup>69</sup> You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of your servant David.

<sup>70</sup> Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us from our enemies, <sup>71</sup> from the hands of all who hate us,

#### <sup>72</sup> to show mercy to our forebears, and to remember your holy covenant.

<sup>73</sup> This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham: <sup>74</sup> to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

#### free to worship you without fear, <sup>75</sup> holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.

- <sup>76</sup> And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,
- <sup>77</sup> to give God's people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.
- <sup>78</sup> In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
- <sup>79</sup> to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

## Philippians 1:3-11

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tenderhearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup> constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup> because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup> to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup> having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

P: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM "Symbols of Christmas"

## Introduction

Program



Music: THIS JOY, African American spiritual

#### Program

Special Music "An Angel Came from Heaven"

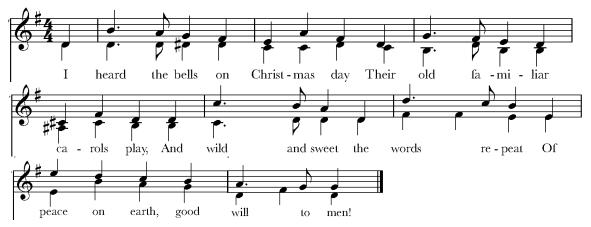
An angel came from heaven, from heaven, from heaven. An angel came from heaven to bring good news. The angel's name was Gabriel, the angel's name was Gabriel, the angel's name was Gabriel, to bring good news.

He came to see a lady, a lady, a lady. He came to see a lady to bring good news. The lady's name was Mary, the lady's name was Mary, the lady's name was Mary, to bring good news.

He said, "You'll have a baby, a baby, a baby." He said, "You'll have a baby to bring good news."

#### Program

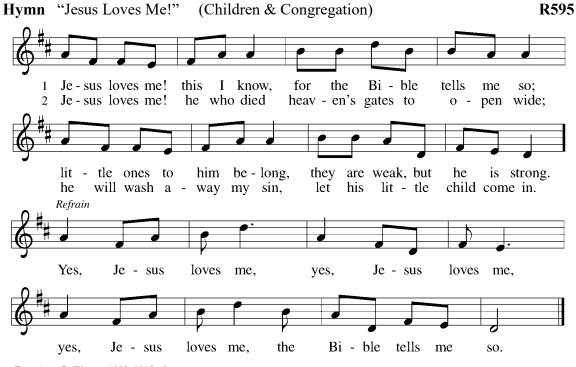
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Hymn "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" (Children & Congregation)

Words: Henry W. Longfellow; Music: John Calkin. Public domain.

## Program



Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820–1915, alt.

Music: JESUS LOVES ME, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

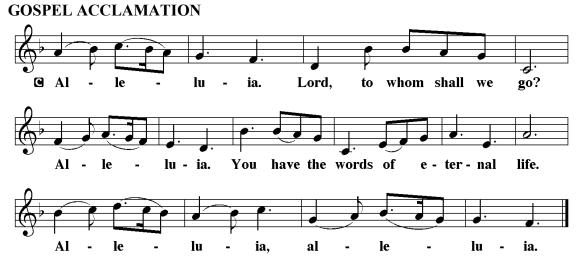
#### Program

Hymn "Joy to the World" (Children & Congregation)

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. R267

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748 Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

(The assembly stands as they are comfortable for the Gospel)



**P:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

#### C: Glory to You, O Lord.

#### Luke 3:1-6

John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

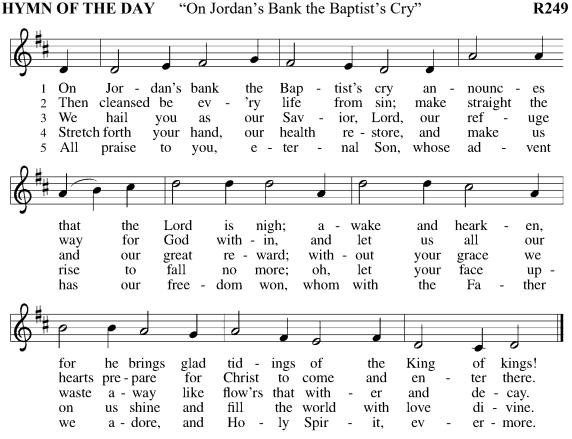
<sup>1</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. <sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain

and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; <sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

- **P:** The Gospel of Our Lord.
- C: Praise to You, O Christ.

## HOMILY

(The assembly stands as they are comfortable)



Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite

Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621 This selection is in the public domain.

#### **APOSTLES' 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 power of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.

#### **INTERCESSORY PRAYERS**

(Response after each petition)

**P:** Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

#### MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

#### **OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** (the assembly stands as they are comfortable and sings as the gifts are brought forward)

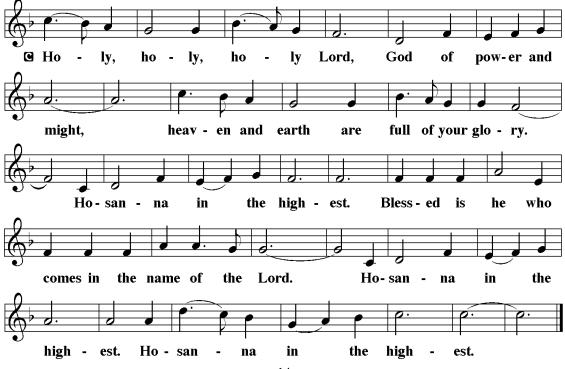




- P: Let us pray...Creator God,
- C: you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

- 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.
- P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise...(*concluding*)...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



## **EUCHARISTIC PRAYER/WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

P: 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 . . .

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

- C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
- P: 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.
- P: 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.
- P: 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.

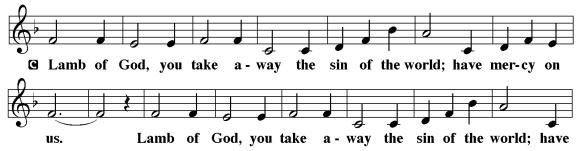
## LORD'S PRAYER

- P: Lord, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray.
- C: 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.

P: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

## HOLY COMMUNION

(All who desire to receive Christ's presence in bread and wine are welcome to participate in the Eucharist)





Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676; tr. composite

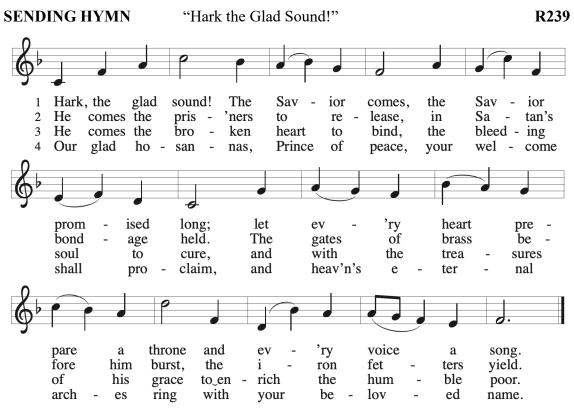
Music: WIE SOLL ICH DICH EMPFANGEN, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

(the assembly stands as they are comfortable)

- P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
- C: Amen.
- P: Let us pray...Generous God,
- C: we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. Amen.

## BLESSING

- P: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, + bless and keep us now and forever.
- C: Amen.



Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751 Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**P:** Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C: Thanks be to God.



WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT GRACE LUTHERAN A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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We are glad to have you here worshiping with us. For visitors, we would be glad to tell you more about Grace Lutheran and how we share God's love. Please leave the best way to contact you on the visitor sheets in the Sanctuary Narthex or the Office Lobby or use the bulletin and give it to an usher.

#### **COFFEE HOUR AFTER SUNDAY WORSHIP**

Join us for a time of fellowship with coffee/tea/juice and treats in the Fellowship Hall off the Office Lobby after our Sunday worship.

## **IN OUR PRAYERS**

Bill Whitscell, Gary Bettega, Don & Myra Cross, Adam Kamyszek, Kelly Pankey, Joanne Kindt, Tammy Furze, Eleanor Coddington, Sandy Malaski, Janet Chroninger, Bonnie Cross, Elfie Jahnke, Budd & Marlene Jobson, Don Barnard, Meredith Smith, Robert Larsen, Vicki Piontkowski, Elaine Hatch, Scott Lancaster, Dorothy Hansen, Larry & Emma Nelson, Michele Amelotte, Jim Malaski -- Mychele Allmacher, Danielle Lawrence, Bishop Emeritus Gary Hansen, Deborah Al-Duwaisan, Julie Stafford, Daphne Flack, Dixie Crevier, Brenda Donajkowski, Rev. Sarah Samuelson, Linda, Kaye Harry, Sandra Beck, Kevin Carlson, Laura Fettes (Don Cross' granddaughter), Arlie Prevost, Donna Kendziorski, Jeff Kendziorski, Geraldine Rhoads, Herb Schiller, Ann Haske, Jimmy Lappan, Donna Hatch, Jordyn, Maggie, and Joseph Hansen.

## **PRAYER PARTNERS**

From the LARCC (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Congregational UCC) parishes of Alpena, this weekend we pray for the Sunday School Program at Grace Lutheran Church. Our Synod Prayer Partner for this week: St. Paul Lutheran Church/ Alpena, Rev. John Shipman, and Bishop Craig Satterlee and Synod Staff.

#### 2024 CHRISTMAS WISH LIST Reminder: Gifts are due back Sunday, December 8th.

## ADULT CE - SALVATION ARMY CHURCH - 11 AM IN THE LOUNGE

Continuing our study of other denominations, we will look at the Salvation Army church, pages 114 - 116 in our book. With some distinct differences from Lutheran and other Christian traditions, we look for similarities and differences. Hope to see you there.

## **CHRISTMAS CAROLING - DECEMBER 15**

You are invited to join in Christmas caroling around the community! There will be lunch provided after church on Sunday, December 15th at 11:00 am and **caroling will begin at 12:00pm.** A sign up sheet is in the Office Lobby. We will be going to assisted living homes as well as homes of some of our members. Please join in the fun!

## A NEW CHURCH YEAR

We begin again our journey of faith through Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection. This year with the Gospel of Luke. The beginning Advent season is a season of preparation, hope and expectation. We look to the manager, yes. More importantly though, we also look beyond it to the more that is coming. As we pray, Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. That is truly what we are preparing for. The Kingdom of love, peace, grace and justice to come to here and now. That working with God and Jesus, we embody that in our living.

That is how we, the church, are different than the world. Christmas is not our goal. What lies beyond it is what we prepare for and hope for and expect. That is why we have a season of Advent before Christmas. And a season of Christmas after the 25<sup>th</sup>. If the church is not different than the world, we are of no value, and do not have meaning. We do have meaning though because of the more that is possible.

Christmas shows God's incarnation in Jesus and tells us we have value. And we have a purpose. We are church for God's mission. Believing that, we prepare again to learn the hear the story of Jesus and learn it for our living. That we are part of the Kingdom that is and the more Kingdom to come.

God's Grace and Peace to all, with Jesus' love

Pastor Tom

## LITTLE FOOD PANTRY

Mrs. Dasher's Ella White School third graders collected a generous amount of food for our pantry and the big yellow bus from Besser Elementary School with volunteers, including students and staff, came to Grace to donate 1,461 items of non-perishable food items and toiletries. We are very blessed with these donations and it will help in the months to come to fill our pantry. Thank you!

#### **HAPPENING THIS WEEK!**

#### Sunday – 8th

8:50 am	Choir Practice
9:00 am	Sunday School
9:30 am	Worship
11:00 am	Adult CE - Lounge
6:30 pm	Remembering Our
-	Children Cand Lighting

#### <u>Monday - 9th</u>

8am-noon Church Office Open

#### Tuesday - 10th

8am-noon	Church Office Open
9:00 am	Sewing/Quilting
11:00 am	Pastors Text Study
6:00 pm	Church Council

#### Wednesday - 11th

8am-noon	Church Office Open
6:00 pm	Bell Choir Practice

#### Thursday - 12th

8am-noon Church Office Open 4:00 pm Foster Families Christmas Party

#### Friday - 13th

8am-noon Church Office Open

#### Saturday - 14th

5:00 pm Worship

#### **SERVING DECEMBER 7/8**

Ministers
Pastor Rev. Tom Orth
Music DirectorClaire Witt
Recorded AccompanimentKat Tomaszewski
LectorCorinne Fraley
Comm. Asst Wayne & Chris Christopherson,
Diane Prevost (Saturday)
Ushers Gary & Kay Grove, Rick Engstrom
Cindy Domrase (Saturday)
Greeters Joel & Cindy Suszek
Altar Guild Gentry Family
Livestream Team Dawn Anderson, Jan
Charter, Don LaBarre, Alex Struble
CountersCheryl Lang, Cindy Suszek
Coffee HourAdam & Sara Kamyszek
SERVING DECEMBER 14/15

Ministers
Lector Anne Gentry
Comm. Asst Wayne & Chris Christopherson,
Diane Prevost (Saturday)
Ushers Gary & Kay Grove, Rick Engstrom
Cindy Domrase (Saturday)
Greeters Anna Lewis, Darlene Freel,
Patti Tucker
Altar Guild Gentry Family
Livestream Team Dawn Anderson, Jan
Charter, Don LaBarre, Alex Struble
CountersCheryl Lang, Cindy Suszek
Coffee Hour Joel & Cindy Suszek

# Large print worship folders & hearing assistance devices are available from ushers

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