

# Grace Lutheran Church, School, ECC

Oak Creek, Wisconsin  
www.graceoakcreek.org

*Celebrate  
Teach  
Share*

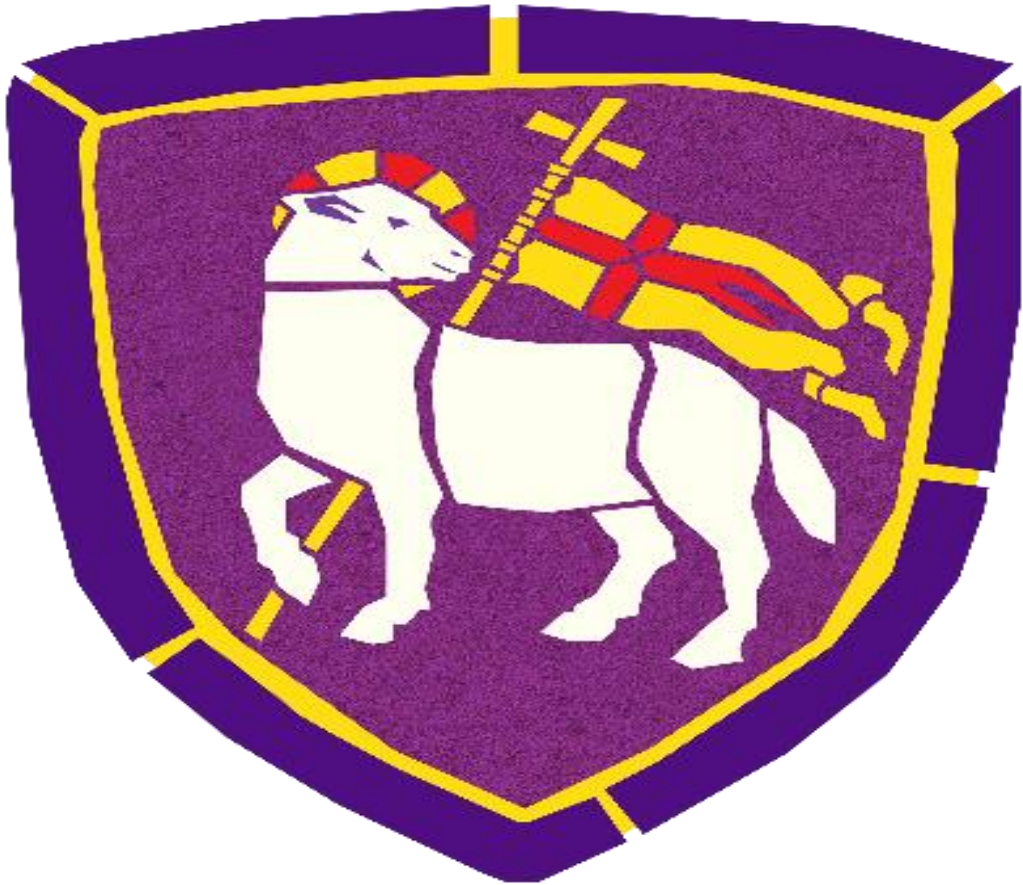
## First Sunday in Advent

December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

*"By His Grace you are saved through faith."*



Ephesians 2:8



*Image: "Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield." (Psalm 33:20)*

## Welcome to Grace! We're Glad You've Joined Us!

### WORSHIP NOTES FOR OUR GUESTS

Worship bulletins & worship activity bags (age 2-8) are available for your children to use during the service. Please see an usher if you need assistance finding them.

Children are **always** welcome - we don't want anything to keep families from attending! From time to time a child will naturally have a difficult moment in worship. If that happens and you feel a need to step out, please make use of our church narthex and entrance, so you may still be able to follow along in worship until your child is ready to return again!

If you would like to include a **prayer for someone** in our worship today, please add it to the **Prayer Request Sheet** found on the podium in the narthex.

**We're glad you're with us.** Please introduce yourself to Pastor Taggatz. If you are in search of a new church home, or are interested in learning more about Grace, we would be happy to visit with you. We hope you'll be back and give us an opportunity to know you!

### **As We Gather “We Are Waiting for His Arrival”**

Welcome to the season of waiting! Not only is Advent a period of preparation for Jesus' first coming at Christmas, but this sacred season readies our hearts for Jesus' ultimate coming: *when He, as King of kings and Lord of lords, returns in power on the Last Day, when every knee will bow before Him and every eye will see Him as the One who reigns in sovereign majesty over all things.* Until the arrival of that glorious Day, we wait for Him in confident faith, strengthened by His Word and Meal, trusting that He has redeemed us by His cross and resurrection. With the expectant people of old, may our worship together lead us to say: *“Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield”* (Psalm 33:20).

### **We invite a moment of silence during the prelude for Prayer**

As our organist begins the prelude we move from our regular conversations and the happenings of the world around us in order to turn our attention to worship. **Please take these moments as an opportunity to focus on prayer.** Make use of this time to look through our service in anticipation of the scripture we will share and the hymns we will sing. God richly bless us as we gather in God's presence today! We hope you will take these moments as a time to transition into worship as we have entered into God's presence through Word and Sacrament.

Order of Service...*Divine Service Setting 1, pg. 151*

✠ PREPARATION ✠

Opening Hymn 334 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You (vs. 1-4)

*Stand*

Confession and Absolution LSB 151

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

✠ WORD ✠

**Introit** (*Psalm 25:1-3; antiphon: Zechariah 9:9b, alt., sung responsively*)



Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;\*  
righteous and having sal- | vation.

To you, | O LORD,\*  
I lift | up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust; let me not be | put to shame;\*  
let not my enemies exult | over me.

Indeed, none who wait for you shall be | put to shame;\*  
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly | treacherous.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
and to the Holy | Spirit;  
as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;\*  
righteous and having sal- | vation.

**Kyrie** *LSB 152*

A In peace let us pray to the Lord.  
C Lord, have mercy.

A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.  
C Lord, have mercy.

A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for  
the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.  
C Lord, have mercy.

A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to  
the Lord.  
C Lord, have mercy.

A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.  
C Amen.

*During Advent, the Hymn of Praise is omitted...*

## Salutation and Collect of the Day *LSB 152*

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

*Sit*

## Old Testament Reading *Isaiah 64:1-9*

*(“Behold, please look, we are all Your people.”)*

<sup>1</sup>Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your presence—<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, and that the nations might tremble at your presence!

<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome things that we did not look for, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. <sup>4</sup>From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him. <sup>5</sup>You meet him who joyfully works righteousness, those who remember you in your ways. Behold, you were angry, and we sinned; in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved? <sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.

We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. <sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities. <sup>8</sup>But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. <sup>9</sup>Be not so terribly angry, O LORD, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

## Gradual (*Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt., read responsively*)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zion.\*

**Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | rusalem.**

Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;\*

**righteous and having sal- | vation.**

Blessèd is he who comes in the name | of the Lord.\*

**From the house of the Lord we | bless you.**

## Grace Choir - "One and All Rejoice"

### Epistle Lesson 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

*(We wait for Jesus, who sustains us and takes our guilt away.)*

<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—<sup>6</sup>even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—<sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>8</sup>who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

### Alleluia and Verse LSB 156

C **Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.  
Alleluia, alleluia.**

**Alleluia Verse for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent** "*Alleluia. Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Alleluia.*" (Psalm 24:7)

### Holy Gospel Mark 13:24-37

*(Jesus calls us to be on guard, keep awake for His Second Coming)*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus said:] "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, <sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. <sup>26</sup>And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>"But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven,

nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. <sup>35</sup>Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning— <sup>36</sup>lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

### **Apostles' Creed *LSB 159***

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life T everlasting. Amen.

*Sit*

**Children's Message "Grace in Jesus" (1 Cor. 1:3-9)** The children of the congregation are invited to come up to the chancel area for a special message for them. Please note—parents of small children may also come up near the chancel area to accompany their children for the message)

**Sermon Hymn 332 Savior of the Nations, Come (vs. 1-4, 7)**

**Sermon "Awake to the Eternal Word" (Matthew 13:24-37)**

**Guest Preacher:** Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador (Mission, Human Care, and Stewardship Executive of the South Wisconsin District, LCMS)

## Offertory *LSB 159*

- C** What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?  
I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord.  
I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.  
I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people,  
in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

## Offering/Attendance

As the offerings are being passed to you by the ushers, we ask that you take this time to fill out the attendance pads located in your pews so that we can acknowledge your presence with us today. We are so glad that you have joined us in worship here at Grace!!! We also thank you for your generosity and support of Jesus Christ our Lord's Kingdom work!!! God bless you!!!

You can now give online. It's easy, fast, and secure. If you're able, we also encourage you to set up recurring giving by texting **graceoc** to 206-859-9405, use this QR Code or head to our web-site at [graceoakcreek.org](http://graceoakcreek.org). You may give a onetime gift or set up your regular weekly or monthly offering. Those using this method of giving may still bring their envelope if they wish and simply write 'online giving' on the outside and place it in the offering plate.



## *Stand*

**Prayer of the Church** (*After each petition the Pastor will say, "Lord in Your mercy," and the congregation responds saying, "Hear our prayer."*)

## ✠ SACRAMENT ✠

## Preface *LSB 160*

- 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 Him thanks and praise.**
- P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the



company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**Sanctus *LSB 161***

- C Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:  
Heaven 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.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving *LSB 161***

- P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**
- C Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer *LSB 162***

- 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.**

## The Words of Our Lord *LSB 162*

- P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My T body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.” In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My T blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

## Pax Domini *LSB 163*

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
C **Amen.**

## Agnus Dei *LSB 163*

- C **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.**

*Sit*

## Distribution

### We celebrate the Lord’s Supper

Members of our sister LC-MS congregations are invited to join us for communion. Guests to our Lutheran Church are invited to first speak with Pastor before joining at our Lord’s Table. We hope you will learn more about us as we gather to “*Celebrate, Teach, and Confess*” the Good News of God’s Grace! In the Bible, the Apostle Paul wrote: *Let a person examine himself and so eat of the bread, and drink of the cup (1 Cor. 11:28)*. Before attending the Lord’s Supper, ask yourself the following questions:

1. *Do I believe that I am a sinner, and am sorry for my sins? (Prov. 28:13; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8-9)*
2. *Do I believe that Jesus Christ by His death, offers me forgiveness for all my sins? (Romans 5:8; Col. 2:13; Heb. 9:28; 1 John 1:7)*
3. *Do I believe that I receive the body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine (not merely symbolically present?) (Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:24-25)*
4. *Do I desire to turn from my sinful ways and live a God pleasing life by the power of the Holy Spirit? (Isaiah 1:16; John 8:11; Rom. 6:12)*

If you are unable to answer yes to these questions, please talk to the pastor before communing, as participating without a proper understanding of Holy Communion can be spiritual harmful (1 Cor. 11:27-29). If you can answer yes to these questions, then come with a repentant heart and join us in the reception of the Lord’s Supper. Adults and children not yet instructed about Holy Communion are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.

**COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION PRACTICE**—We are offering altar/rail communion as our communion practice. While you are at the altar, please let us know if you would like to receive the Common Cup. Individual communion cups are also available to you. You also have the option to kneel or remain standing during altar/rail communion. Gluten Free communion wafers are also available upon request. If it is physically difficult for you to commune at the altar rail, please speak to the Pastor or an elder about receiving communion in your pew.

### **Distribution Hymns**

-333 Once He Came in Blessing (vs. 1-4)

-350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come (vs. 1-4)

*Stand*

### **Thank the Lord LSB 164**

- C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev'ryone what He has done.  
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear His name.  
He recalls His promises and leads His people forth in joy  
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

### **Post-Communion Collect LSB 166**

- A Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of waiting that, on the Day of His coming, we may rejoice forever as those You have made guiltless in Your sight; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

### **Benediction LSB 166**

- P The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.
- C Amen.

### **Closing Hymn 331 The Advent of Our King (vs. 1-4)**

### **Announcements**

**Pastor:** Go in Peace and Serve the Lord!

**People:** Thanks be to God!



### WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

*For all who worship this day, bless us through your Word, O Lord.* Pastor Bill Wurm (Alzheimer's disease); Tom Janes (healing & strength); Larry Abelt Sr. (healing & strength); Myles King (blood disorder); Cindy Riemer (cancer); Michael Helzer (cancer); Michael Parker (healing & strength); Jim & Kari (healing and strength); Greg Voss (healing & strength); Curt Bayer (cancer) former member of Grace; Cindy Schmidt (healing); Sandra Mallas (health, peace, comfort); Gary Forsythe (dementia); Dominic (recovery from a stroke); Brittany (cancer); Greg (cancer); Judy (poor eyesight); Darlene & Jerry Urbaniak's Nephew (Alzheimer's); Linda (brain cancer); Bryan (cancer); Jenny Rice (cancer); Dale (cancer); Cookie (lung cancer); Evan (healing & strength); Sue Klemme (pancreatic cancer); Keith Iverson (hospice); Scott (kidney failure); Marlene Voss (hearing loss); Rikky (medical testing); Jennifer (diagnosed with MS); Rachel Goodle (prayers for God's strength); Brooke Bzdawka (blood clot); Daniel Abelt (cancer); and Alyssa (healing & strength); Michael Abelt (healing & strength); Stephanie (pregnant with twins); Katie Bailey Klinge (cancer); Andora (surgery for cancer); Sabrina (cancer); Lori Jablonski (cancer) and Jessie Marshall (healing & strength) friend of Cathy Weeks; Paige (God's help & comfort), Emilee; and Isaac (healing from a broken ankle), Heather (cancer), Bob Morgan (healing and strength); Steve Benzie (stomach pain, hernia); Craig (stem cell transplant); Dianna Abelt (healing and strength); Sara Keno (seizures); Dale Schmidt (Huntington's Disease); Sharon Russell (recovery from a fall); Pauline Parker (healing & strength); and Mike Zanardi (pancreatic cancer); Scott Dimke (ICU after heart surgery) friend of Eric & Lisa Kamprath; Doc Medek (rehabilitation); Sharon McCaigue (cancer); and Cheryl (cancer) friend of Sharon Iseli.

*For our Homebound Members at Grace:* Betty Lemmer (hospice), Kathy Gaudian, Bernice Byklum, Art Steinborn, Patricia Groth, and Gloria Kilponen.

**We Mourn** with the family and friends of **John Curnie**, friend of Carol Loveall, and the family of **Dennis Nameth**, the father of Michael Nameth, who were called home to heavenly rest. **We pray:** *Almighty God, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, deal graciously with the families of **Dennis Nameth & John Curnie**, and all who mourn their deaths, that casting every care on You, they may know the consolation of Your love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.*

**We thank Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador** for proclaiming the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and also leading us in Bible Class this morning. We pray that God would continue to bless Pastor Meador in his ministry to God's people of the South Wisconsin District! Thank you for your proclamation of God's Word to us today! **Following worship this morning, we invite you to Adult Bible Class in the School Library from 9:15-10:15am for a special teaching session with Pastor Meador, please join us!!!**

**All those on the Grace Prayer Line dealing with long term health and medical issues;** Hear our prayer. We encourage you to submit prayer requests for worship and/or our prayer line by emailing: [Paulinemom@aol.com](mailto:Paulinemom@aol.com).

**If you do not have access to a computer you may call:**

Prayers for worship:		
Church Office:		414-762-8990
Requests on prayer line:	10am-3 pm Carol Thurber	414-762-9615
	3pm-9 pm Pauline Parker	414-764-5574

**Assisting with the Divine Service**

We thank God for all those individuals who have been involved in supporting our worship services this week. If you are interested in assisting in any of the ways shown below, please speak with pastor or one of our elders.

	<u>Thursday 11/30 6:30pm</u>	<u>Sunday 12/3 8:00 am</u>	<u>Sunday 12/3 10:30 am</u>
<u>Elders</u>	Lance Kopperud	Greg Nowakowski	Eric Kamprath
<u>Readers</u>	Kathryn Szefflinski	Erica Vitek	Edward Taggatz
<u>Communion Set-up</u>	Advent	Kathy Szefflinski	Kathy Szefflinski
<u>Linens</u>	Gail Nowakowski	Gail Nowakowski	Gail Nowakowski
<u>Acolyte</u>	Elder	Elder	Martin Taggatz
<u>Ushers</u>	Mark Roettgen	Bob Buzzell	Tommy Szefflinski
	Connie Roettgen	Lynn Buzzell	Andrea Szefflinski
			Edward Taggatz

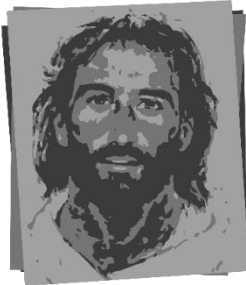
**Volunteers Needed to Assist with Worship!**

We are in need of additional people to assist as ushers and lay readers during worship services, especially for Sunday mornings at 8am and Thursday evenings at 6:30pm. Ushers arrive early, greet people and hand out bulletins before service, gather offerings and assist with communion during service, and straighten up the church after service. Lay readers proclaim God's word to the congregation by reading the Old Testament and Epistle lessons during the worship service. If you are able and willing to help in either of these capacities, please sign up on the sheet in the back of church -- your assistance is greatly appreciated. Please feel free to approach the elder on duty with any questions you may have about these opportunities.

**Your 2024 Grace Lutheran Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex of the Church.** Please feel free to pick your envelopes up and we thank you for your continued support of our Church, School, and Early Childcare Center through the stewardship of your time, talents, and treasures! God bless you! **\*\*Please do not use until January 2024.\*\***

## Choir at Grace

Choir practice is on Thursday evenings in the church following worship. Please consider joining our church choir. Music has a unique way of connecting us with God, and being a part of the choir is a beautiful opportunity to share your voice and your faith. Whether you're an experienced singer or someone who simply loves to sing, we welcome you with open arms. Martin Luther once said, *"He who sings, prays twice."* Please contact Kathy Kolb, our Choir Director, for further details if you are interested in joining our church's choir.



## Holiday Worship Schedule for 2023

### *"Jesus: The Son of David, the Son of Abraham"*

On Thursday nights @ 6:30pm at Grace during the last Thursday in November and the month of December we will once again be having our Advent Midweek Worship Services. There is great interest in genealogies today. In the past, such interest was usually confined to one dutiful family member who would gather all the information together and begin reconstructing the family tree. However, genealogy websites have simplified such work so that even the most casual observers are able to explore their family histories and better understand their pasts. The scientific advances of DNA are also allowing people to explore more than just one or two branches of the family tree and also to understand how all the generations of the past have come together in each unique, individual family member. In these weeks of Advent, the sermons will help us unpack the significance of Jesus' genealogy and how God was at work weaving his plan of salvation throughout the history of his chosen people—*as he reveals in the Old Testament all the way through Joseph and Mary*. Here is the order of holiday worship for the coming month, we hope to see you in worship as we receive Christ's gifts of Word and Sacrament for the forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, and salvation. Please note, there will be no Thursday night worship service on Thursday December 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Thursday Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm –Advent Midweek 2**— "Jesus: The Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1–2)

**Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup> --Special Trim the Tree Service 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent**—Sunday worship services of 8am and 10:30am...

**Thursday Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm –Advent Midweek 3**— "Jesus: The Son of Scandal" (Matthew 1:1, 3, 5–6)

**Thursday Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> 6:30pm –Advent Midweek 4**— "Jesus: The Son of Joseph" (Matthew 1:16)

**Sunday December 24<sup>th</sup> 9:30am 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent with Communion**

**Sunday Dec. 24th 4pm, 5:30pm—Christmas Eve:** “Jesus: The Son of Mary” (Matthew 1:16)

**Monday Dec. 25th 9:30am—Christmas Day:** “Christmas, as John Writes It” (John 1:1–14)

**No Thursday evening worship on Thursday December 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Sunday December 31<sup>st</sup> 9:30am New Year’s Eve Worship—** Guest Pastor Jim Klug

**Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup> 8am & 10:30am Services—** “People Who Don’t Belong” (Matthew 2:1–12)

**Stephen Ministry Training at Grace—**Are you interested in becoming a Stephen Minister? Stephen Ministers are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life, but they all share a passion for bringing Christ’s love and care to people during a time of need. Trainees learn how to listen to, care for, and walk with those going through difficult times in life. After being matched with a person experiencing a life crisis, the Stephen Minister meets with that person on a weekly basis to listen, care, encourage, and provide emotional and spiritual support. The caring relationship lasts as long as the need for care exists. We are going to begin a new training session for Stephen Ministers in February of 2024. The training is scheduled to take place on Sunday evenings from 6-8:30pm starting February 11<sup>th</sup> and ending June 23<sup>rd</sup>. (We will take off for Easter Monday and Memorial Day). If you would like to learn more about Stephen Ministry, you can contact Jeanne Meyer at: [mevorch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mevorch@sbcglobal.net) or 414-423-0010. Look for a special informational meeting between our Sunday morning worship services in December where you will have more information to learn about training to become a Stephen Minister at Grace! To learn more about Stephen Ministry you can also go to this website: [www.stephenministries.org/stephenministry/default.cfm/917](http://www.stephenministries.org/stephenministry/default.cfm/917)

### **Church & School Furnaces Needed**

We are currently in need of funding for our aged furnaces at both the school and church. This fundraiser is to replace the 7 remaining furnaces at our school and the boiler at our church. All units are over 20 years old. The goal is \$50,000. Please prayerfully consider donating above and beyond your general offerings. There will be offering envelopes in the narthex and a donation box for your offerings. Thank you for your ongoing support of our ministries at Grace! God bless you! **Currently we have raised over \$28,231.63 for the church & school furnace fund, thank you for your support!**

### **Adult Bible Class Topic— God’s Word for Today: 1 & 2 Thessalonians—*The Lord is Faithful.***

On Sunday mornings in the school building, we will be studying 1 & 2 Thessalonians from 9:15-10:15am. In this bible study you will learn that God gave Paul a vision. In it, a man from Macedonia pleaded with Paul saying, "*Come over to Macedonia and help us*" (Acts 16:9). Following the Lord's call, Paul and his entourage eventually reached Thessalonica. In his two letters addressed to the Thessalonian Christians, Paul expresses his deep care as a founding pastor concerned about his fledgling congregation. In addition to Christian persecution, the Lord's second coming, the antichrist, and Christian discipline, in this bible study you will learn about:

1. the power of the word of God;
2. the importance of living a God-pleasing life;
3. the reason why we are faithful to the bible's teachings.

### **IN THE WORD FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

**Catechism:** Lord's Prayer—Second and Third Petitions

**Verse of the week:** John 8:31b-32, *“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

**Psalm of the week:** Psalm 24

**Hymn of the week:** LSB 343 “Prepare the Royal Highway” (stanzas 1-2)

**Bible Readings for the Week:**

**Sunday**— The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem—Matthew 21:1-9

**Monday**— Hannah Prays for a Son—1 Samuel 1:1-18

**Tuesday**— The Prophet Samuel Is Born—1 Samuel 1:19—2:2

**Wednesday**— Jesus Heals a Demoniac—Mark 5:1-20/Third Article

**Thursday**— The Song of Hannah—1 Samuel 2:1-11

**Friday**— The Lord Calls to the Boy Samuel—1 Samuel 2:12, 18-21; 3:1-20

**Saturday**—The Day of the Lord—Malachi 4:1-6

## **LUTHERAN HOUR DEVOTIONS ADVENT 2023**

### *“What Child Is This?”*

In Jesus' birth, God came down to earth for us. In *What Child Is This?* we see how Jesus, foretold by the prophets and confirmed by God as His own Beloved Son, is the Father's ancient promise fulfilled. Born to save us from our sins, this lowly Child triumphed over sin and death to become our Savior. Lutheran Hour devotionals are available on the back table of the narthex in our Church. We will include our church's contact information, along with our Holiday Worship Times so that you can share the joy of the birth of our Savior Jesus with those around you, namely, your neighbors, family members, and friends. Here are some tips on sharing these devotionals with your neighbors, family members, and friends inviting them to worship with us this holiday season:

**SEEK GOD:**

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in the heart of your friend.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to bless all interactions with your friends and family.

**BE CREATIVE:**

- Exchange stories of family Christmas traditions. You'll learn about others' current spiritual situation and be able to share what Jesus means to you.



- Invite your friends to make new traditions this year, especially if the Christmas season is stressful or depressing. Invite them to read the devotions with you, go to Advent services, or participate in a servant event.
- Bring your friend or family member to help work at a church activity before Christmas. Getting to know people in a nonthreatening way makes them more likely to attend future worship.

***FOLLOW UP:***

Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries can help keep your faith conversations going. Read, listen, e-mail, or print at [lhm.org/advent](http://lhm.org/advent).

“In view of God’s display of love in Advent and Christmas, we gladly unite to praise Him. Christmas brings out that unity as we join with Mary and Joseph and shepherds and angels to glorify our Savior as one united family. For this reason, we pray as Paul did, ‘*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him.*’” Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – *A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org) Hurting from abortion? Word of Hope can help. [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org); 888-217-8679.

**LUTHERAN HOUR "Before They Call"** Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. SOS and Mayday are distress signals that cry out for rescue. So is "Lord, have mercy!" (Isaiah 64:4) **The Lutheran Hour can be heard any time on the internet at: [lhm.org](http://lhm.org)** scroll down the page and click on, "listen now." Or listen to any of these local radio stations on Sunday mornings.

WTMJ 103.3 FM Milwaukee, WI Sun 6:30 am  
 WTMJ 620 AM Milwaukee, WI Sun 5:30 and & 6:30 am

**Stewardship Minute**— During advent as we prepare our minds and hearts for the birth of Jesus, we are reminded of how John the Baptist prepared the people for the coming of Christ. John the Baptist, who lived during the time of Jesus, was God’s special messenger. When people were questioning who he was, he said, “*I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord’*” (John 1:23). In his ministry, John the Baptist warned people about being greedy. Greed will keep us from sharing our clothes, food, and money with people in need. Jesus shared the same message when He said, “*Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions*” (Luke 12:15).

**ADVENT IS PREPARATION FOR  
CHRIST'S COMING – HIS SECOND  
COMING! THE BABY OF BETHLEHEM  
WILL COME AGAIN, THIS TIME IN GLORY!**

“At the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in Heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is  
Lord, to the glory of God the Father”  
(Philippians 2:10-11).

A Panera Fundraising flyer. The top section shows a Panera sandwich, a salad, and a drink. Below this, the text reads: "Panera FUNDRAISING", "Help support us!", "GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH GRACE LUTHERAN SCH EARLY CHILDHOOD", "December 4, 2023", "4:00 pm to 8:00 pm CDT", "8907 South Howell Avenue, Oak Creek, WI", "Use code FUND4U at online checkout, in the Panera App, or at the kiosk in-cafe.", "25% OF SALES WILL BE DONATED", "Bring this flyer or show a digital copy to your cashier when ordering at the cafe or enter the promo code FUND4U at checkout on Panerabread.com or the Panera App to ensure your organization gets a portion of the proceeds.", "Learn more at fundraising.panerabread.com", "©2023 Panera Bread. All rights reserved.", "This card has coding used placed on Panerabread.com, and delivery orders placed through third-party sites, app markets and all 101 count towards the event. Other restrictions apply. For complete details, visit: https://www.panerabread.com/terms-conditions. \*Card may vary by cafe."/>

**Panera FUNDRAISING**

Help support us!  
**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH GRACE LUTHERAN SCH EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**December 4, 2023**  
**4:00 pm to 8:00 pm CDT**  
**8907 South Howell Avenue, Oak Creek, WI**

Use code **FUND4U** at online checkout, in the Panera App, or at the kiosk in-cafe.\*

Bring this flyer or show a digital copy to your cashier when ordering at the cafe or enter the promo code **FUND4U** at checkout on Panerabread.com or the Panera App to ensure your organization gets a portion of the proceeds.\*\*

Learn more at [fundraising.panerabread.com](https://fundraising.panerabread.com)

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\*This card has coding used placed on Panerabread.com, and delivery orders placed through third-party sites, app markets and all 101 count towards the event. Other restrictions apply. For complete details, visit: https://www.panerabread.com/terms-conditions. \*\*Card may vary by cafe.

**Panera Fundraiser for Grace Ministries!!!** Join us at Panera Restaurant on South Howell Avenue in Oak Creek on Monday December 4<sup>th</sup> from 4-8pm when proceeds from your purchases will go towards the ministries at Grace. A digital or virtual flyer needs to be presented for in-store orders at Panera. Otherwise, PROMO code FUND4U may be used for online orders during this time.

**Martin Luther High School Music Department invites you to attend their annual Christmas Concert on Friday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. The concert, entitled “Glory to the Newborn King” will feature the Troubadours, Chorus, Concert Choir, Brass Choir, Spartan Band, Varsity Band, and Symphonic Band. Please join us for this festive event! Ticket reservations may be made by calling 414-421-4000. Tickets are also available at the door!**

**Growing in Grace**  
**November 22<sup>nd</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Offering**

<i>General Offering</i>	\$4183.25		
<i>On-Line Giving</i>	\$603.41		
<i>Missions</i>	\$195.00	<i>Attendance</i>	139
<i>Debt Fund</i>	\$0.00	<i>Communed</i>	119
<i>Mortgage Offering</i>	\$190.00		
<i>Portals of Prayer</i>	\$0.00		
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>\$5171.66</b>		

**Please note:** In order to meet budget each week we need to receive \$6,586 in offerings. Thank you for your generosity and support of the ministries here at Grace. We could not do what we do without your prayers, volunteering of your time and talents, and financial support!!!

**OPPORTUNITIES AT GRACE THIS COMING WEEK**

Sunday	12/3	<b>8:00 am</b> 9:15 am <b>9:15 am</b> <b>10:30 am</b>	<b>Divine Worship</b> Adult Bible Study <b>Sunday School</b> <b>Divine Worship</b>
Monday	12/4	<b>4pm-8pm</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> <b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>Panera Dining Out</b> Confirmation Class Grief Share
Tuesday	12/5	<b>7:00 am</b> <b>6:30 pm</b>	Men's Bible Study and Breakfast (OC Diner) Stephen Ministry Meeting
Wednesday	12/6	<b>9:30 am</b> <b>6:30 pm</b>	Ladies Bible Study <b>All Boards Meeting</b>
Thursday	12/7	<b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>Advent Service</b>
Friday	12/8	<b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>Christmas Program for ECC</b>
Saturday	12/9	<b>8:00 am</b> <b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Rise &amp; Sonshine Bible Study</b> <b>Ladies Guild</b>
Sunday	12/10	<b>8:00 am</b> 9:15 am <b>10:30 am</b>	<b>Divine Worship – Trim the Tree Service</b> Adult Bible Study <b>Divine Worship</b>

## SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We have gathered today to celebrate the most precious gifts and treasures our Lord gives us: His forgiveness, life and salvation. It would be our honor to have you join us again next week as we “Celebrate, Teach, and Share” the Good News of God’s Grace among all people.

Grace is committed to supporting families through our Early Childhood Center, Day School, and High School. We are blessed to be a member of the Lutheran High School Association of Milwaukee.

Pastor	Rev. John M. Taggatz	414-762-8990 (O) 715-467-1231 (Cell) 262-664-4365 (Home) <a href="http://thewordendures.blogspot.com">thewordendures.blogspot.com</a>
Principal	Mr. Steve Gettelman	414-762-3655
ECC Director	Mrs. Rachel Miliacca	414-762-8755
Director of Music	Mrs. Lisa Hengst	
Choir Director	Mrs. Kathy Kolb	
Congregation President	Mr. Tony Mirenda	414-807-7445
Fax:	Church/School ECC	414-762-8869 414-856-9262

Pastor		<a href="mailto:pastor@graceoakcreek.org">pastor@graceoakcreek.org</a>
Church Office	Heidi Brunzelle, Church Secretary	<a href="mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org">church@graceoakcreek.org</a>
Principal		<a href="mailto:principal@graceoakcreek.org">principal@graceoakcreek.org</a>
School Office	Dena Guziewicz, Admin. Asst.	<a href="mailto:school@graceoakcreek.org">school@graceoakcreek.org</a>
ECC Director		<a href="mailto:eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org">eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org</a>
ECC Office		<a href="mailto:ecc@graceoakcreek.org">ecc@graceoakcreek.org</a>

### Church & ECC

3381 E. Puetz Rd.  
Oak Creek, Wisconsin 53154

### School & Church Office

#### Mailing Address

8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave.  
Oak Creek, Wisconsin 53154

