

Grace Lutheran Church, School, ECC

Oak Creek, Wisconsin
www.graceoakcreek.org

Christmas Eve

December 24th, 2024

*Celebrate
Teach
Share
God's Grace*

"By His Grace you are saved through faith"
Ephesians 2:8



Image: "Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains, And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo." (LSB 368:1)

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 your child is using the bathroom during the worship service, we ask that you monitor them so that they are using it in a timely manner. We are glad that you're here!!!

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 “*The Song of the Angels*”

One of the great pleasures of the Advent and Christmas season is the singing of hymns and carols associated with the nativity of our Lord. Many of the texts of these well-loved songs were written specifically for services in the Christmas season; others were not. “*Silent Night, Holy Night*” (LSB 363) was written to be first sung at a Christmas Eve service in Austria in 1818, and “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*” (LSB 361) was initially included as part of a children's Christmas program at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia in 1868. But another well-loved hymn associated with Christmas was not originally a Christmas song. “*Joy to the World*” (LSB 387) was written as a paraphrase of the second half of Psalm 98 by the English hymnwriter Isaac Watts in 1719. When the text was printed as part of a collection of Psalms in English verse, he gave the song the heading “*The Messiah's Coming and Kingdom.*” Our celebration of the coming to earth of Jesus as our Messiah and Lord gives us a great “*resounding joy*” that lasts all through our years as we await the fullness of His kingdom yet to come!

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...as outlined in your bulletin

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (LSB 380 vs. 1-3)

Stand

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 34:1-3, 5, 7, 22*

Pastor: I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

People: My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.

Pastor: Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together!

People: Those who look to Him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.

Pastor: The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him, and delivers them.

People: The LORD redeems the life of His servants; none of those who take refuge in Him will be condemned.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Galatians 4:4-5*

Pastor: Let us go to our loving Father, confident of His forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

HYMN “God Loves Me Dearly” (St. 1: LSB 392)

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have failed to walk always in the paths of righteousness in our thinking, speaking, and acting; we have not loved You completely or our neighbors as ourselves. We have failed to live as sisters and brothers of Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus, whose birth we celebrate this day. In Your great mercy, forgive and renew us that we may be servants of our eternal king to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: God has heard our plea and has responded to our need. “God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.”

HYMN “God Loves Me Dearly” (Sts. 2-3: LSB 392)

Pastor: 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 ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

HYMN “God Loves Me Dearly” (Sts. 4-5: *LSB* 392)

INTROIT *Psalm 2:1-2, 4-6; antiphon: Liturgical Text*

Pastor: When all was still, and it was midnight,

People: Your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.

Pastor: Why do the nations rage

People: and the peoples plot in vain?

Pastor: The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,

People: against the LORD and against His anointed.

Pastor: He who sits in the heavens laughs;

People: the Lord holds them in derision.

Pastor: Then He will speak to them in His wrath,

People: and terrify them in His fury, saying,

Pastor: “As for Me, I have set My King

People: on Zion, My holy hill.”

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

Pastor: When all was still, and it was midnight,

People: Your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.

Sit

☩ WORD ☩

Pastor: The heavenly sounds of the angelic host praising God have echoed since the beginning of time. Job relates that when the Lord laid the foundations of the earth, “the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God [angels] shouted for joy” (38:7). The prophet Isaiah writes of a time when he heard heavenly beings sounding out the praises of God (Isaiah 6:24), and the psalmist calls on “everything that has breath” to “praise the LORD” (Psalm 150:6). The traditional French carol “Angels We Have Heard on High” includes us among those who have been blessed to hear the song of the angels. Using the Latin phrase

“Gloria in excelsis Deo,” which means “glory to God in the highest,” we add our voices to the glorious sounds of praise as together we sing the next hymn.

HYMN OF PRAISE “Angels We Have Heard on High” (LSB 368 vs. 1-3)

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, on this blessed day, we celebrate our Lord’s birth as the fulfillment of Your promise of redemption from sin. With the company of song-filled angels in heaven and jubilant people on earth, we welcome Jesus as the Savior of the world and Lord of our hearts, who now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 9:2-7*
(*We see a great light.*)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM *Psalms 96*

Pastor: Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!

People: Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Pastor: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

People: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth!

Pastor: Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns!

People: Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity."

Pastor: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it!

People: Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth.

Pastor: He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

People: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

EPISTLE LESSON *Titus 2:11-14*

(The grace of God has appeared.)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN "Now Sing We, Now Rejoice" (*LSB 386 vs. 1-4*)

Stand

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:1-20*

(The birth of Jesus Christ)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while

they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

CREED *Apostles' Creed*

People: 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 everlasting. Amen.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY “Angels from the Realms of Glory” (*LSB* 367 vs. 1-4)

SERMON “The Song of the Angels” (Luke 2:1-20)

OFFERTORY HYMN “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (*LSB* 361 vs. 1-4)

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 website at: 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

Pastor: Let us pray. O Dayspring from on high, babe of Bethlehem, we follow in the steps of those who knelt in humble adoration at Your manger so many years ago. Like shepherds of old, we thrill to hear the message that the herald angel brings: “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” We, too, go to see this thing that has happened. The glory shines around us as well. Our hearts grow warm before the meaning of the miracle. God is love, indeed, and there is hope for all who humbly open up their lives to You. You have come to do for us what we are so helpless to do for ourselves. Empower us to fulfill in faithfulness the things that You have given us to do, so that like ancient shepherds, our daily walk may become for us a road of glory and a mission of peace.

As You did with Mary and Joseph, so make Your home in our human lives and hearts. As Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Judea, lead us wherever we may help to carry out Your plan for humankind. As Mary brought into this world “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel,” so enable us, too, to bring Your peace to desperate people.

Grant that all who see our worship of the newborn babe wonder at the way we keep this day. And O Bethlehem's royal prince, let there be some who, because of us, ponder these things deep within their hearts.

We praise You, the sun of righteousness, who has risen with healing in Your wings; we praise You now and evermore.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9-13*

People: 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.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES *(The lights in the sanctuary are dimmed)*

*(The light is passed from pastor to the ushers who pass it to the congregation. Do NOT let small children hold candles unattended. For your safety and to prevent wax from dripping, **please do NOT tip the lit candle.** Tip only the unlighted candle. Hold the candles straight up and they will not drip. Blow them out gently. Thank you!!!)*

Pastor: As the light of these candles illumines our faces, it symbolizes the light of Christ, a child in the manger at Bethlehem, a Savior suffering our death on the cross, and soon to come from His throne on high as Judge of all. He is our Light here on earth and the eternal Light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice, for the Light of the world has come, who transforms us with the brightness of His glory. This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaimed to you: that God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all.

(The candlelight begins to be spread throughout the congregation.)

People: If we say we have fellowship with Him but still walk in darkness, we lie, and do not live according to the truth.

Pastor: But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another

People: And the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all our sins.

(The candlelight is spread to the rest of the congregation.)

Pastor: You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and then cover its light. Instead, they set the lamp on its stand, set it up high, and it lights everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before all people, that they may see your good works and give praise to your Father in heaven.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor: Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

BENEDICTION *Luke 2:10-11*

Pastor: Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy

People: that will be for all the people.

Pastor: For unto you is born this day in the city of David

People: a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Pastor: 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 ✠ give you peace.

People: Amen.

Sit

CLOSING HYMN “Silent Night, Holy Night” (LSB 363 vs. 1-3)

Pastor: Go in Peace and Serve the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!!!



**“THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND
MADE HIS DWELLING AMONG US.”
HAVE YOU MADE ROOM IN YOUR
HEART FOR HIM?**

“She gave birth to her firstborn, a Son. She
...placed Him in a manger, because there
was no room for them in the inn” (Luke
2:7).



Holiday Worship Schedule for 2024

“The Nativity: Songs of God and Men”

Wednesday Dec. 25th 9:30am–Christmas Day

“Idols and Lies, Word and Flesh” John 1:1–18

**No Thursday evening worship on Thursday December 26th &
Thursday January 2nd**

**Sunday December 29th 9:30am Divine Service with Holy Communion 1st Sunday after
Christmas**

Wednesday January 1st New Year’s Day Worship 6:30pm

“Endings and Beginnings” Isaiah 51:4–6

Sunday January 5th The Epiphany of our Lord 8am & 10:30am Services

“Soaked and Bloody: Our Lord and You” John 2:1–11

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) thewordendures.blogspot.com
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		pastor@graceoakcreek.org
Church Office	Heidi, Church Secretary	church@graceoakcreek.org
Principal		principal@graceoakcreek.org
School Office	Dena Guziewicz, Admin. Asst.	school@graceoakcreek.org
ECC Director		eccdirector@graceoakcreek.org
ECC Office		ecc@graceoakcreek.org

Church & ECC

3381 E. Puetz Rd.
Oak Creek, Wisconsin 53154

School & Church Office Mailing Address

8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oak Creek, Wisconsin 53154

