

# Grace Lutheran Church, School, ECC

Oak Creek, Wisconsin  
[www.graceoakcreek.org](http://www.graceoakcreek.org)

*Celebrate  
Teach  
Share  
God's Grace*

## Third Sunday in Advent

December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

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



**Image:** "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand." (*James 5:7-8*)

# 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 “Waiting Without Wondering”**

John is the greatest of all the prophets, and yet he is not without anxiety. He came to prepare the way of the Lord but then found himself in prison—the world unchanged—and those who followed him uncertain about the future. Now, two thousand years later, we look around at our own world with the same anxiety. We are still waiting, but we are not waiting for improvements in the world around us or our own progress in holiness; we are waiting upon the Lord. God is at work, focusing our wondering hearts not at what might be but at what has been in the death and resurrection that gives us hope and confidence. Because of this, we wait for the future He has prepared to unfold, doing the work He has given us to do and sure that He will keep His Word and bring to fruition all that He has begun—in *His own time*.

### **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 4, pg. 203*

### ✠ PREPARATION ✠

Opening Hymn 515 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers (vs. 1-3)

*Stand*

**Confession and Absolution LSB 203**

*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 Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?  
C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. 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 71:14-18; antiphon: Philippians 4:4, read responsively*)

Rejoice in the Lord | always;\*  
**again I will say, | Rejoice.**

I will hope con- | tinually\*  
**and will praise you yet | more and more.**

My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation | all the day,\*

for their number is past my | knowledge.  
With the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD | I will come;\*  
I will remind them of your righteousness, | yours alone.  
O God, from my youth you have | taught me,\*  
and I still proclaim your | wondrous deeds.  
So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not for- | sake me,\*  
until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all | those to come.

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.

Rejoice in the Lord | always;\*  
again I will say, | Rejoice.

*Kyrie LSB 204*

C Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

*The Gloria Excelsis is omitted for Advent*

*Salutation and Collect of the Day LSB 205*

P The Lord be with you.  
C And also with you.

P Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
C Amen.

*Sit*

*Old Testament Reading Isaiah 35:1-10*

*(“Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.”)*

<sup>1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. <sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. <sup>4</sup>Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the

blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup>then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup>And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. <sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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.**

**Epistle Lesson** *James 5:7-11*

**(“Be patient . . . until the coming of the Lord.”)**

<sup>7</sup>Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup>You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup>Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. <sup>10</sup>As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

**Alleluia and Verse** *LSB 205*

C **Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Alleluia Verse for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent**—*“Alleluia. Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia.” (Verse Matthew 11:10b)*

**Holy Gospel Matthew 11:2-15**

**(“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”)**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

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

<sup>2</sup>When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup>and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” <sup>4</sup>And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>6</sup>And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

<sup>7</sup>As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. <sup>9</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is he of whom it is written,

“‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup>Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup>From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup>For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, <sup>14</sup>and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup>He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Apostles’ Creed LSB 207**

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 “No Doubt About It” (Matt. 11:2-15)** (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 345 Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding (vs. 1-4)**

**Sermon “Practice Prophetic Patience!” (James 5:7-11)**

**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 208**

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, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. 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 208***

C **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;  
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.  
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;  
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

#### **Prayer of Thanksgiving *LSB 209***

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. In Your boundless mercy You sent Your servant, John the Baptist, to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of heaven draws near. With thankful hearts we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus," confident that in His body and blood, given us to eat and drink, we receive the forgiveness of sins and so proclaim His death until He comes again in glory. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

#### **Lord's Prayer *LSB 209***

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 209***

- 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 209***

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

### **Agnus Dei *LSB 210***

- C 1 O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.
- 2 O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,  
You take the sin of the world away;  
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,  
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

*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**

**-338 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

**-602 The Gifts Christ Freely Gives**

*Stand*

### **Nunc Dimittis LSB 211**

C    1 O Lord, now let Your servant  
       Depart in heav'nly peace,  
       For I have seen the glory  
       Of Your redeeming grace:  
       A light to lead the Gentiles  
       Unto Your holy hill,  
       The glory of Your people,  
       Your chosen Israel.

2 All glory to the Father,  
    All glory to the Son,  
    All glory to the Spirit,  
    Forever Three in One;  
    For as in the beginning,  
    Is now, shall ever be,  
    God's triune name resounding  
    Through all eternity.

## Post-Communion Collect LSB 212

- A Let us pray. Almighty God, heavenly Father, grant to Your people patience for the days of waiting, knowing that You are at work bringing to completion all that You began in us in our Baptism. Keep us from the torment of doubt, from the prison of fear, and from the wandering of a soul ungrounded in Your Word and favor, and bring us at last to heavenly joy in Your presence forevermore; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with the Father and the Spirit are one God, now and even to the end of all the ages.
- C Amen.

## Benedicamus LSB 212

- A Let us bless the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

## Benediction LSB 212

- 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 348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns (vs. 1-4)

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.* **Myles King** (blood disorder); **Michael Helzer** (cancer); **Michael Parker** (healing & strength) Pauline Parker's son; **Jim & Kari** (healing and strength) friends of Joy Lussier; **Greg Voss** (healing & strength); **Sindy Schmidt** (healing); **Gary Forsythe** (dementia) friend of Carol Loveall; **Brittany** (cancer) daughter of Denise Afelt; **Greg** (cancer) brother in law of Mike & Pat Toman; **Judy** (poor eyesight) friend of Joy Lussier; **Darlene & Jerry Urbaniak's Nephew** (Alzheimer's); **Jenny Rice** (cancer); **Scott** (kidney failure) brother of Pat Toman; **Jennifer** (diagnosed with MS); **Steve Benzie** (stomach pain, hernia); **Cheryl** (cancer) friend of Dennis Iseli; **Carol Long** (cancer) friend of Joy Lussier; **Mariya** (cancer); **Terri** (healing and strength) friend of Joy Lussier; **Cris Evers** (healing & strength); **Laura** (Lou Gehrig's Disease) friend of Jim & Janine Pieper; **Don Adams** (healing & strength) relative of Pauline Parker; **Martha Rowley** (healing & strength) Grandma of Mary Rowley; **Grace Miskimen** (cancer) sister of Beth Jackson; **Dale** (pancreatic cancer) brother of Joy Lussier; **Evan Kopperud** (healing & strength); **Tina Drapp** (breast cancer); **Pete** (healing & strength) friend of Marlene & Greg Voss; **Debbie Parker** (healing & strength) Pauline Parker's daughter in law; **Scott Brenton** (on dialysis) Linda Maldonado's fiancé; **Tom** (healing & strength) brother of Rod Novak; **Gary** (leukemia) friend of Marlene Voss; **Jan Barrett**

(bladder cancer); **Mark Taggatz** (recovery from knee surgery); **Karen** (surgery); **Jen** (recovery from torn hamstring) daughter of Lori Kachelmeier; **Pam** (melanoma, healing & strength) relative of Carol Thurber; **Alexis** (healing & strength) daughter in law of Lori Jablonski; **Mamaia** (healing & strength) friend of Pam & Rod Novak; **Paul & Karen** (healing & strength) Jim & Janine Pieper's relatives; **Ruth Ann** (healing & strength) neighbor of Marlene Voss; **Delaney** (healing from surgery) Granddaughter of Mike & Barb Huber; **Brian** (healing & strength) friend of Marlene & Greg Voss; **Marlene Leonard** (recovery from hip replacement); **Steve** (liver transplant) Son in law of Dawn Jantz.

**For our Homebound Members at Grace:** Kathy Gaudian, Bernice Byklum, Art Steinborn, Doc Medek, and Joanne Morgan.

**We mourn** with the families of **Marilyn**, Neighbor of Janine Pieper; **Karen**, Aunt of Janine Pieper, and **John Kohler**, friend of the Goodle family, who were called home to heavenly rest. We pray for God's comfort and strength for their families during this time. **We pray:** *Heavenly Father, we thank You for the life and faith of Marilyn, Karen and John, whom You have now called home to heavenly rest. Comfort their families with Your peace that surpasses all understanding. Remind them of the sure hope we have in Jesus through His death on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins and His victorious resurrection from the dead. Help them look to the day when all believers will be reunited in Your presence forever. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

**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  
3pm-9 pm

Carol Thurber  
Pauline Parker

414-762-9615  
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 12/11 6:30pm</u>	<u>Sunday 12/14 8:00am</u>	<u>Sunday 12/14 10:30am</u>
<u>Elders</u>	Keith Goodle	Richard Jackson	Rick Weeks
<u>Readers</u>	Kathy Szefflinski	Glenn Dotson	Beth Jackson
<u>Communion Set-up</u>		Kathy Szefflinski	Kathy Szefflinski
		Morgan Parker	Morgan Parker
<u>Linens</u>	Gail Olen	Gail Olen	Gail Olen
<u>Acolyte</u>		Kylie Stecker	
<u>Ushers</u>	Amberleigh Moog	Bob Buzzell	Mike Huber
	Edward Taggatz	Lynn Buzzell	Martin Taggatz
<u>Livestream</u>	Jennifer Olen	Glenn Dotson	

**Matching Grant Opportunity for Grace!!!** Greetings from the Board of Stewardship, Many large companies have a matching grant foundation. They often match employee donations to various 501(c)(3) and other organizations including educational organizations. Though many may exclude religious organizations from their matching gift programs, they may make exceptions for those that provide secular services to the community. Since Grace Lutheran School does provide some secular services as a school, they may qualify for a matching grant. Grace Lutheran School has received grants through these programs in the past. If you are employed by a company with a matching grant foundation, and are interested in making a donation, please consider a donation to Grace Lutheran School. Thank you for your consideration and for your past generosity to Grace Lutheran School. (1 Peter 4:10) Blessings on your stewardship journey!

**Special Voters' Meeting - Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>** A *special Voters' Meeting* will be held on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, immediately following our late worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to seek congregational approval for the sale of property connected with the Zanardi Estate and to cast our congregation's votes for the Synodical President and Vice President. Your participation is important as we tend faithfully to the blessings the Lord has entrusted to our congregation and take part in the wider work of our Church & Synod. Please plan to join us. **Following the Voters' Meeting at Grace, the Early Childhood Center warmly invites you to a special Open House!** Come and see all that God is doing in the lives of the children and families who participate in our Early Childhood Ministry. We hope you can join us for this time of celebration and fellowship.

**Rosie Miliacca is sponsoring a Toy Drive through the Make a Wish Foundation of Wisconsin.** You can see the toy drive box back in the narthex if you are interested in donating some toys to children in need this Holiday Season. There are instructions on what toys they are looking for as well. Please donate any new store bought items in their original packaging (unwrapped) from the list below. Toys play a vital role in a child's wish journey, bringing excitement and anticipation as they look forward to their wish coming true. **Here is the list of toys they are looking for:** *Hot wheels sets, Lego Sets, magnetic dart board, nerf basketball hoop, coloring books, playdough and kinetic sand, puzzles (200 + pieces) colored pencils, bubbles and chalk, nerf sport items, pool floats, portable hammocks, sports balls, Disney items, squish mallows, throw blankets, travel pillow. TEEN Toys: advanced Lego sets, bath and body works items, earbuds, portable speakers, water bottles, Wisconsin Sports Team items.*

**Your 2026 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 Childhood Center through the stewardship of your time, talents, and treasures! God bless you! \*\*Please do not use until January 2026.\*\*

**SAVE THE DATE!!! LOCK IN FOR GRACE YOUTH—Junior and Senior High Lock-In (Grades 5 through High School) Scheduled at Grace on Friday January 16<sup>th</sup> with Concordia Mequon Students from around 6:30pm that night through Saturday January 17<sup>th</sup> by 7:00am...** This lock in is open to our 5<sup>th</sup> grade through High School youth. For this event to be a success, we need your participation and support. Parents or adult members willing to chaperone and assist during the lock-in, please reach out to Pastor Taggatz at: [pastor@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:pastor@graceoakcreek.org). Your involvement will greatly contribute to creating a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. During the lock-in, we have an array of activities lined up, including devotions centered on God's Word, snacks, a Friday night dinner, and engaging games. To ensure we accommodate everyone, kindly inform us if your child will be attending by no later than Tuesday January 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, please have your child bring snacks, a pillow, a sleeping bag, a Bible, and a comfortable sleeping mat for the night.

**Saturday, January 17th – Fellowship Bingo Night!** Join us for an evening of fun and fellowship as our Fellowship Committee once again hosts Bingo Night from 6:30–8:00 pm! This is a free event for all Church, School, and ECC families, and it's a wonderful way to enjoy time together in the middle of winter.

We'll have games, prizes, food, and plenty of laughs. Please bring a finger food to share and your own nonalcoholic beverages for your family. (As a reminder, alcoholic beverages are not permitted on school property.)

To register, please use the online form: <https://forms.gle/PvPnS9YKMjzFqApd9>

### **2026 Altar Flowers**

- ❖ Sign-up for 2026 Altar Flowers! The sign-up sheet will be posted soon on the white board in the narthex.
- ❖ Place your flower order directly with Parkway Floral in South Milwaukee at (414) 762-0246.
- ❖ Flowers will be delivered to church, free of charge, before the Thursday evening service.
- ❖ You can also supply your own arrangement. Rachel Miliacca at the ECC can provide you with a vase liner.
- ❖ Your flowers will be refrigerated after the Thursday service so they will be fresh for Sunday's services.
- ❖ Take your flowers to enjoy at home after the 10:30am service on Sunday.

**Reminder:** If you want to put flowers on the altar, you must pay for it directly to the florist (Parkway Floral, South Milwaukee) if using a florist. Also, there are special offering envelopes in the narthex for Altar Flowers that you can use to make payment.

### **Mitten Tree**

Once again this year, the Mitten Tree has been placed in the narthex. Guild will be collecting mittens, hats, scarves and gloves which will be donated to the South Milwaukee Human Concerns group. Please help us to "decorate" the tree! *All sizes are needed!* If you are a knitter or crocheter...Pauline Parker has bins of yarn to be used for this project...please reach out to her if you need some.

**Choir at Grace! Choir practice is on Thursday evenings following our 6:30pm worship service.** The psalmist reminds us to "*make a joyful noise to the Lord*" (Psalm 100:1), and Martin Luther once said, "*He who sings prays twice.*" What a wonderful way to lift our voices in praise together! If you would like more information, please contact **Kathy Kolb at 414-744-7781**. Please join us—we would love to have you!

## **Holiday Worship Schedule for 2025**

### ***"All About Mary"***



On Thursday nights @ 6:30pm at Grace during the month of December we will once again be having our Advent Midweek Worship Services. The Advent season starts the time that is referred to as the festival half of the Church Year. Between now and the final week of the Easter season, we will follow the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, from now, when we await His coming as a baby in Bethlehem, to the time when He physically leaves the earth at His ascension and then His disciples begin the new era of life in the church as it takes form in Jerusalem and beyond.

During Advent, we wait *for* Jesus, *with* Jesus. The darkest part of the year is brightened by the assurance that the Savior who came for the world once is coming again. And we do not wait alone. Together, the whole Christian Church is accompanied in this waiting by the Christ who promises to be with His people always. Jesus' mother, the virgin Mary, knows a lot about waiting. With pregnant anticipation, Mary waited *for* Jesus, the promised Messiah who would reign from David's throne forever. But Mary was always waiting *with* Jesus, the Son of the Most High nestled within her womb. Throughout this Advent, we will listen with Mary, sing with Mary, and wait with Mary. Because, on darkest days, the Christ comes as near to you as He did to Mary to wait *with* you for the glorious sunrise that's coming. **Please note**, due to our special holiday worship there will be no Thursday night worship service on Thursday December 25<sup>th</sup>, as we will be having worship that morning on Christmas Day.

### **Holiday Worship Service Schedule**

#### **Thursday, December 18 – 6:30pm**

*Advent Midweek 3: "And Mary Sang" – Luke 1:46–55*

#### **Wednesday, December 24 – 4:00pm & 5:30pm**

*Christmas Eve – "The Nativity of Our Lord: She Gave Birth" – Luke 2:7*

#### **Thursday, December 25 – 9:30am**

*Christmas Day – "Became Flesh" – John 1:14*  
(Note: No Thursday evening worship on December 25<sup>th</sup>)

#### **Sunday, December 28 – 9:30am only**

*Worship with Communion – 1st Sunday after Christmas*

(Note: One service only this Sunday)

#### **Thursday, January 1 – 6:30pm**

*New Year's Day Worship with Communion – "Digging in Dirt, Finding the Name of God" – Numbers 6:22–27*

#### **Sunday, January 5 – 8:00am & 10:30am**

*The Epiphany of Our Lord – "The Singing Camels of Sheba" – Isaiah 6*

**Join the Grace Oak Creek VBS Committee!** Plans are underway for **Vacation Bible School in June 2026**, and we're forming a committee to help with planning and preparation. Volunteers are needed for areas such as **decorations, supplies, recruitment, fundraising, and more**. If you're interested in serving, please email [apankow@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:apankow@graceoakcreek.org)

### **Grief Share Seminar and Support Group at Grace**

No matter what the circumstances, grief recovery is a painful process. Have you or someone you know experienced the death of a loved one recently? On **Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>**, Grace Lutheran will be starting a **Grief Share Seminar and Support Group** to help those walking through the difficult journey of grief. This group is designed to offer comfort, understanding, and encouragement through God's Word and the fellowship of His Church. Many who have attended Grief Share have found that it helps them begin putting their lives back together again with the Lord's help.

**When:** Mondays, September 15<sup>th</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup> **Time:** 6:30–8:00pm

**Where:** Grace Lutheran School Library, 8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave, Oak Creek, WI **Cost:** \$20.00 There will also be a **special session, "Surviving the Holidays,"** on **Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>**—a time when grief can often feel even heavier. Our Grief Share group will be led by **Lori Kachelmeier** and **Jeanne Meyer**, who will walk alongside participants as they learn from nationally recognized experts on grief recovery. Topics include: "*Is This Normal?*" "*The Challenges of Grief*," "*Grief and Your Relationships*," "*Why?*" and "*Guilt and Anger*." **Register online here:** [tinyurl.com/57tkyjy8](https://tinyurl.com/57tkyjy8) For more information, please call our Church Office at **414-762-8990** or email [church@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org) Jeanne Meyer – [meyorch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:meyorch@sbcglobal.net) Lori Kachelmeier – [jlkachel2@gmail.com](mailto:jlkachel2@gmail.com)

Please share this opportunity with anyone you know who may be struggling with the loss of a loved one. May our gracious Lord use this ministry to bring His comfort, peace, and hope to many.

### **Wednesday Morning Ladies Bible Study**

Please join us on Wednesday mornings at Church at 9:30 a.m.  
We are studying, “Joy: A Study of Philippians” By Deb Burma.

### **Sunday Morning Bible Class from 9:15-10:15am in the School Library**

#### **—Matthew: “His Kingdom Forever.” (10 sessions)**

Each study in the *God’s Word for Today* series provides an in-depth exploration of a book of the Bible. Each session includes:

- background information on the book of the Bible, its author, audience, occasion, and purpose;
- learning experiences that promote exciting and challenging discussions;
- notes for leaders that answer questions, suggest a learning process, and provide additional information;
- discussion starters that help participants apply God’s Word to their daily lives.

The apostle Matthew writes his gospel to proclaim to the world that its promised Savior has come. Pointing to Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, Matthew proclaims the universality of Jesus’ love. Let’s take a look at the Gospel of Matthew and learn and grow!

### **The Lutheran Hour “Pictures of Patience” Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler**

Patience can be practiced, tested, strained, and lost. Christians are called to return the patience God in His mercy has shown us, in Christ. (James 5:7-8) Listen online at: [lutheranhour.org](http://lutheranhour.org) or listen to any of these local radio stations on Sunday mornings:

WTMJ	620 AM	Milwaukee, WI	Sun 6:30 am
WGN	720 AM	Chicago, IL	Sun 6:30am

“And every life matters to God. It is impossible to live—even for a few moments on this earth—and not influence somebody in one way or another. We are all always influencing somebody—either for good or for bad. Life matters. Your life matters. Lives of kings and lives of shepherds all matter. We all matter and are important to God.” Dennis D. Nelson, Lutheran CORE - A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org) Are you struggling with a crisis pregnancy or guilt after an abortion? Word of Hope can help. [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org); 888-217-8679. Word of Hope can help. [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org); 888-217-8679.

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

**Catechism:** Lord’s Prayer—Fifth and Sixth Petitions

**Verse of the week:** Psalm 51:5, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

**Psalm of the week:** Psalm 146 (antiphon vs. 5)

**Hymn of the week:** LSB 345 “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding” (stanzas 1-5)

**Bible Readings for the Week:**

**Sunday**— Tell John What You See and Hear—Matt. 11:2-15

**Monday**— Gabriel Appears to Zachariah—Luke 1:5-25



Tuesday— The Annunciation of Our Lord—Luke 1:26-38

Wednesday— Watch and Pray—Luke 21:25-38

Thursday— The Visitation—Luke 1:39-56

Friday— The Nativity of St. John the Baptist—Luke 1:57-66

Saturday—Advent 4: Isaiah 7:10-17

**Stewardship Minute** God demonstrated His amazing love for us by sending His only Son to earth to be born in a manger that would lead to the Cross and His resurrection. Through His Son, God has given us the gift of being His children, and He will always care and provide for us. God wants us to use our blessings and gifts for His glory and purpose. First and foremost, God wants us to share the gift of the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus, the Baby born in the manger to save us from our sins. *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you”* (Matthew 28:19-20). Don’t disappoint God by not using the gifts that He has entrusted to you in service to Him.

**WE ALL ENJOY OPENING THE GIFTS  
PLACED BENEATH THE CHRISTMAS  
TREE, BUT NONE CAN COMPARE TO  
THE GIFT GOD GAVE US IN CHRIST.**



“Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!”  
(2 Corinthians 9:15)

### ***Growing in Grace – December 4<sup>th</sup> & December 7<sup>th</sup>***

<i>General Offering</i>	<i>\$3240.00</i>		
<i>Online Giving</i>	<i>\$1310.75</i>		
<i>Debt Fund</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>		
<i>Mortgage Fund</i>	<i>\$3000.00</i>		
<i>Portals of Prayer</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>	<i>Total Attendance</i>	<i>34/86</i>
<i>Lutheran Schools</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>	<i>Total Communed</i>	<i>120</i>
<i>Missions</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>		
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$7550.75</i>		

**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 week!*

Sunday	12/14	8:00am	Divine Worship
		9:15am	Adult Bible Class
		10:30am	Divine Worship (Voter's Meeting after Worship)
		6-8:30pm	Stephen Minister Training
Monday	12/15	6:30pm	Confirmation Class
		6:30pm	Grief Share
Tuesday	12/16	7:00am	Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)
Wednesday	12/17	9:30am	Ladies Bible Study
Thursday	12/18	6:30pm	Advent Midweek Worship
Friday	12/19	-----	-----
Saturday	12/20	-----	-----
Sunday	12/21	8:00am	Divine Worship
		9:15am	Sunday School & Adult Bible Class
		10:30am	Divine Worship
		6-8:30pm	Stephen Minister Training

## 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	Mrs. Lisa Hengst	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>
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Principal		<a href="mailto:principal@graceoakcreek.org">principal@graceoakcreek.org</a>
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