

Grace Lutheran Church, School, ECC

Oak Creek, Wisconsin
www.graceoakcreek.org

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21st, 2025

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

*Celebrate
Teach
Share
God's Grace*



Image: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel" (which means, God with us)." (*Matthew 1:23*)

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 “*They Shall Call His Name Immanuel*”

It is still Advent, but today we hear an account of the Christmas story early so that we may know what to look for later this week. The Son of Mary by the Holy Spirit is Jesus, who saves us from our sins and who fulfills the promise of Immanuel: *God is with us*. Perhaps the richness of the details of Luke's account sometimes distracts us from the message. The Lord has come to keep His Word, to save us from our sins, and to keep us in His hand so that we may be His eternally. None of this was obvious to either Mary or faithful Joseph, and yet the Lord was at work through it all to deliver to us His Son to be our Savior. We will still worry when things do not go as we plan, and we will still struggle with doubts and fears, but the angel of God's presence is no mere messenger sent in His place. No, the angel of God's presence is His only-begotten Son, whose name is Jesus and whose work is our salvation.

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 339 Lift Up Your Heads, You Everlasting Doors (vs. 1-4)

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 130:5-8; antiphon: Isaiah 64:1, read responsively*)

Oh that you would rend the heavens | and come down,*
that the mountains might quake at your | presence.

I wait for the LORD, my | soul waits,*

and in his | word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the | morning,*

more than watchmen for the | morning.
O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is | steadfast love,*
and with him is plentiful re- | demption.
And he will redeem | Israel*
from all his in- | iquities.

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.

Oh that you would rend the heavens | and come down,*
that the mountains might quake at your | presence.

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. Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 7:10-17

(“The virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”)

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. ¹⁷The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father’s house such days

as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria.”

- 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 *Romans 1:1-7*

(Long promised by God, the Savior, Jesus Christ, has come.)

¹Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- 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 4th Sunday in Advent—“*Alleluia. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel. Alleluia.*” (Verse Matthew 1:23a)

Holy Gospel *Matthew 1:18-25*

(“The birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.”)

- P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.
C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

- ²³“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

- 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 everlasting. Amen.

Sit

Children's Message "Call His Name Jesus" (Matt. 1:18-25) (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 357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (vs. 1-4)

Sermon "A Light with a Special Purpose!" (Rom. 1:1-7)

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. 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

-361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

-900 Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love

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. O Lord, God Almighty, everlasting Father, we pray You to open our hearts to Your Spirit that we may enter into the holy contemplation of our Savior's birth with sins forgiven and hearts at peace, knowing that He who moved time and eternity for us and our salvation will preserve us in all uncertainty and fear and bring us to the perfect fulfillment of heaven; 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 341 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates (vs. 1-2, 5)

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); Cindy 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; Steve (liver transplant) Son in law of Dawn Jantz; Alex (Milwaukee firefighter, healing & strength) friend of Bailey Miles & Sue Krueger.

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

We mourn with the families of Ginny Schmeiser, as they grieve the death of her brother, George, and relative, Jim Wilbert, and the family of Marlene Leonard, who were recently 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 George, Marlene, and Jim 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. **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

Funeral Announcement

Marlene Leonard was called to her eternal rest. Her funeral will be held on Saturday, December 26, at Heritage Funeral Home (27th & Ryan Rd.). Visitation will be from 10:00–11:30 a.m., with the service at 11:30 a.m. at the funeral home. Interment will be private for the family.

As I will be away on vacation Dec 26-31, Pastor Doug Schroeder of Our Shepherd Lutheran Church in Greendale, LCMS, will officiate the funeral. Pastor Schroeder is also covering my pastoral calls during this time. If you are in need of pastoral care while Pastor Taggatz is away, Pastor Schroeder can be reached at: (414) 840-6016 or dougs@ourshepherdlutheran.org.

Please keep Marlene's family in your prayers as they grieve with the sure hope of the resurrection in Christ.

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 12/18 6:30pm</u>	<u>Sunday 12/21 8:00am</u>	<u>Sunday 12/21 10:30am</u>
<u>Elders</u>	Greg Nowakowski	Adam Voss	Mike Huber
<u>Readers</u>	Edward Taggatz	Erica Vitek	Lisa Kamprath
<u>Communion Set-up</u>		Kathy Szefflinski	Kathy Szefflinski
		Morgan Parker	Morgan Parker
<u>Linens</u>	Gail Nowakowski	Gail Nowakowski	Gail Nowakow
<u>Acolyte</u>	Celine Mould	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!

“Poinsettias for Christmas!” (Given in Honor/Memory of)

The Pankow Family - John Peplinski
 Lori Kachelmeier - Norman, Jim and Steve
 Bailey Miles - Mel & Lolly Krueger
 Mark & Jennifer Olen - Susan Olsen
 Bob & Lynn Buzzell - Rev. James Reichmann
 Steve Pawlak - Oleta Partl
 Susan Krueger - Barb Krueger
 Rick & Kathy Weeks - Mother
 Tony & Suzie Mirenda
 Greg & Gail Nowakowski
 Sharon Russell
 Ron & Mary Savarino
 Sarah Goodle
 Dawn Jantz
 Sharon Bzdawka
 Mike & Barb Huber
 LeRoy Handle
 Janice Barrett
 Anonymous



Special thanks to those who placed poinsettias in the chancel area this year! Thank you for making our Church Sanctuary beautiful during the seasons of Advent & Christmas!!! God bless you all!!!

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 16th with Concordia Mequon Students from around 6:30pm that night through Saturday January 17th by 7:00am... This lock in is open to our 5th 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 Tagatz at: 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 13th. 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

Please note, due to our special holiday worship there will be no Thursday night worship service on Thursday December 25th, as we will be having worship that morning on Christmas Day. Also, Sunday December 28th will have one service with Holy Communion at 9:30am.

Holiday Worship Service Schedule

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 25th)

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

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, February 9th**, 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, February 9th – May 18th **Time:** 6:30–8:00pm

Where: Grace Lutheran School Library, 8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave, Oak Creek, WI **Cost:** \$20.00. 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/57tkvjy8 For more information, please call our Church Office at **414-762-8990** or email church@graceoakcreek.org **Jeanne Meyer –** meyorch@sbcglobal.net **Lori Kachelmeier –** 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 Note: We are taking a break during the holidays but will resume on January 7th, 2026

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

(Please note, there will not be Bible Class on Sunday December 28th, since Pastor Taggatz will be on vacation that weekend)

—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 "Everybody Is Somebody" Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler.

God sends His people—the Church—to be His letters to the world, delivering His Word of promise. (Romans 1:7) Listen online at: 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

“As we celebrate the birth of our Lord, let us pray for all mothers who find themselves pregnant and afraid. Abortion is never the answer. We pray daily that the Lord will strengthen all expectant mothers who find themselves alone and seemingly without hope and that He will help them choose life. Every human being’s life is a precious and beautiful miracle.” *Judie Brown, American Life League - A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • lutheransforlife.org Are you struggling with a crisis pregnancy or guilt after an abortion? Word of Hope can help. www.word-of-hope.org; 888-217-8679. Word of Hope can help. www.word-of-hope.org; 888-217-8679.

IN THE WORD FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Catechism: Creed—Second Article

Verse of the week: John 1:14, “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*”

Psalm of the week: Psalm 98

Hymn of the week: LSB 357 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Bible Readings for the Week:

Sunday— Christ’s Birth Foretold to Joseph—Matt. 1:18-25

Monday— St. Thomas, Apostle—John 20:24-29

Tuesday— Christ’s Birth Is Foretold to Joseph—Matthew 1:18-25

Wednesday—David’s Son Will Build the House of the Lord—2 Samuel 7:1-16

Thursday— The Nativity of Our Lord—Luke 2:1-20

Friday— The Word Became Flesh—John 1:1-18

Saturday—St. Stephen, Martyr: Acts 6:8—7:60 & St. John, Apostle and Evangelist: John 21:20-25

Stewardship Minute Christmas is about giving. Giving is a joyful experience. Jesus said, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive*” (Acts 20:35). As God gave, so do we give. One of the best gifts that we can give Jesus is to allow Him, through God’s grace, to use us as channels of His love to others. To be His channels, we must always be on guard, so we don’t fall prey to the commercial trap and the materialistic ways of our society. We must stay focused on the most indescribable gift, the gift of Jesus. When we give gifts to our friends and family this Christmas, may we always remember the birth of baby Jesus Who came to us as our Savior wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger.

Like the shepherds who traveled to Bethlehem in response to the Good News the angels brought, we have the greatest message to share.

“The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them” (Luke 2:20).



Growing in Grace – December 11th & December 14th

<i>General Offering</i>	\$2172.00		
<i>Online Giving</i>	\$948.54		
<i>Debt Fund</i>	\$100.00		
<i>Mortgage Fund</i>	\$160.00		
<i>Portals of Prayer</i>	\$0.00	<i>Total Attendance</i>	47/71
<i>Lutheran Schools</i>	\$0.00	<i>Total Communed</i>	55
<i>Missions</i>	\$20.00		
<i>Total</i>	\$3400.54		

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	12/21	8:00am	Divine Worship
		9:15am	Adult Bible Class & Sunday School
		10:30am	Divine Worship
		6-8:30pm	Stephen Minister Training
Monday	12/22	-----	-----
Tuesday	12/23	7:00am	Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)
Wednesday	12/24	4 & 5:30pm	Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday	12/25	9:30am	Christmas Day Worship w/ Communion
Friday	12/26	-----	-----
Saturday	12/27	-----	-----
Sunday	12/28	9:30am	Divine Worship

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
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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
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