

Hope Lutheran Church
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Grace Lutheran Church
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Reverend Matthew Converse, Pastor
Kirsten Jines, Preschool Director
Joyce Dubach, Organist
December 28, 2025
First Sunday of Christmas



Introduction to the day

As we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas, our gospel today confronts us with the death of innocent children at the hands of Herod. The birth of Christ does not remove the power of evil from our world, but its light gives us hope as we walk with all the “holy innocents” of past generations and today who have suffered unjustly. In our gathering around word and meal, God continues to redeem us, lift us up, and carry us as in days of old.

Food pantry need: cereal and soup
Attendance for December 28, 2025 -

PRELUDE

1

please stand if you are able.

GATHERING *The Holy Spirit gathers us into a community of prayer.*

Confession and Forgiveness

Amid the troubles and fears of this world, let us confess our sin and welcome God's forgiveness, grace, and love.

Silence is kept for reflection

Mary accepted your call to be the mother of Jesus.

Forgive our lack of faith and trust.

Your Son was born in the poverty of a stable.

Forgive our neglect of the poor.

The shepherds left their flocks and went to Bethlehem.

Forgive our selfishness and complacency.

With great joy the angels proclaimed, "Do not fear. For I bring you good news of great joy. Today is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

In + Jesus, who is Savior, Christ, and Lord, our sins are forgiven. May you know the peace which the angels sang from the heavens. Indeed, God's forgiveness is good news of great joy! **Amen.**

Gathering Carol Angels, from the realms of glory (ELW 275)

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4 Music: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who is Savior and Lord, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Canticle of Praise Angels we have heard on high (ELW 289)

Text: French carol; tr. H.F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864 Music: French carol; arr. Edward S. Barnes, 1887-1958

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

PSALM: Psalm 8

- ¹ O ¹ LORD our Lord,
how majestic is your name in ¹ all the earth!—
- ² **you whose glory is chanted above the heavens out of the mouths of infants and children; you have set up a fortress against your enemies, to silence the foe ¹ and avenger.**
- ³ When I consider your heavens, the work ¹ of your fingers,
the moon and the stars you have set ¹ in their courses,
- ⁴ **what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them, human beings that you should ¹ care for them?**
- ⁵ Yet you have made them little less ¹ than divine;
with glory and honor you crown them.
- ⁶ **You have made them rule over the works ¹ of your hands; you have put all things un- ¹ der their feet:**
- ⁷ all ¹ flocks and cattle,
even the wild beasts ¹ of the field,
- ⁸ **the birds of the air, the fish ¹ of the sea, and whatever passes along the paths ¹ of the sea.**
- ⁹ O ¹ LORD our Lord,
how majestic is your name in ¹ all the earth!

Sing or speak a setting of the Psalm appropriate to your context.

Refrain: How majestic is your name in all the earth! (Ps. 8:1)

“For unto you is born a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord”

Lesson: Isaiah 12:2-6

- ² Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust and will not be afraid,
for the Lord is my strength and my might;

he has become my salvation.”

³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say on that day:

“Give thanks to the Lord;

call on his name;

make known his deeds among the nations;

proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;

let this be known in all the earth.

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”

Response:

(ELW 283)

. **O come, all ye faithful (vs. 1 and refrain only)**

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2 Music: attr. John Francis Wade

Lesson: Matthew 1:18-21

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

A brief reflection on the lessons may follow.

Carol: That boy-child of Mary

(ELW 293)

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925-2000 Music: Malawi traditional; adapt. Tom Colvin

“For unto you is born a Savior, who is *Christ*, the Lord”

Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-3, 11

¹ The spirit of the Lord God is upon me
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Response:

(ELW 283)

. O come, all ye faithful (vs.2 and refrain only)

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2 Music: attr. John Francis Wade

Lesson: John 1:19-23, 29-34

¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but he confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said,
“I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ ”
as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared,

“Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ³¹ I myself did not know him, but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.” ³² And John testified, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Chosen One.”

A brief reflection on the lessons may follow.

Carol: Love Has Come

(ELW 292)

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950

Music: F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856

“For unto you is born a Savior, who is Christ, the *Lord*”

Lesson: Isaiah 6:1-8

¹ In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty, and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said,

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said, “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ The seraph touched my mouth with it and said, “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

Response:

(ELW 283)

. O come, all ye faithful (vs 3 and refrain only)

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2 Music: attr. John Francis Wade

Lesson: Luke 1:26-35

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.

A brief reflection on the lessons may follow.

Carol: O little town of Bethlehem

(ELW 279)

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908

CREED

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,**

**of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead,**

and his kingdom will have no end.

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

God of grace, you show us mercy not according to our worthiness, but according to the abundance of your steadfast love. Grant us the courage to go into the world and do likewise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of abundance, the sun and moon praise you and the shining stars sing of your love. Where we have desecrated your creation, make us into a healing balm for what we have broken. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of righteousness, when leaders fail to fulfill their calls to enact justice, you suffer alongside us. Propel those in power to see you reflected in the faces of all they serve. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of life, you claim us as your own and care for us as Christ's siblings. Pour out your compassion in every place your people suffer, and protect them in the palm of your hand. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of compassion, you nurture children as the apple of your eye. As you sheltered your son Jesus from Herod's grasp, shelter all children in danger. As you comforted Rachel, comfort all who have lost children to violence. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of love, you console those who weep for lost beloved ones. Even as we mourn, we offer thanks for those who have gone before us, trusting in your comfort and protection. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL *God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

OFFERING

Peace Came to Earth

(ELW 285)

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919-2008

Music: Paul Manz, 1919-2009

Offering Prayer

God of glory,

great are your wonders among us

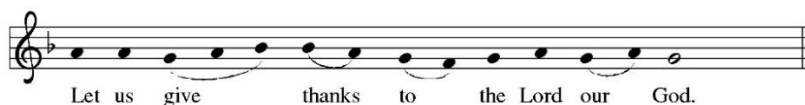
and many are the blessings you bestow.

Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,

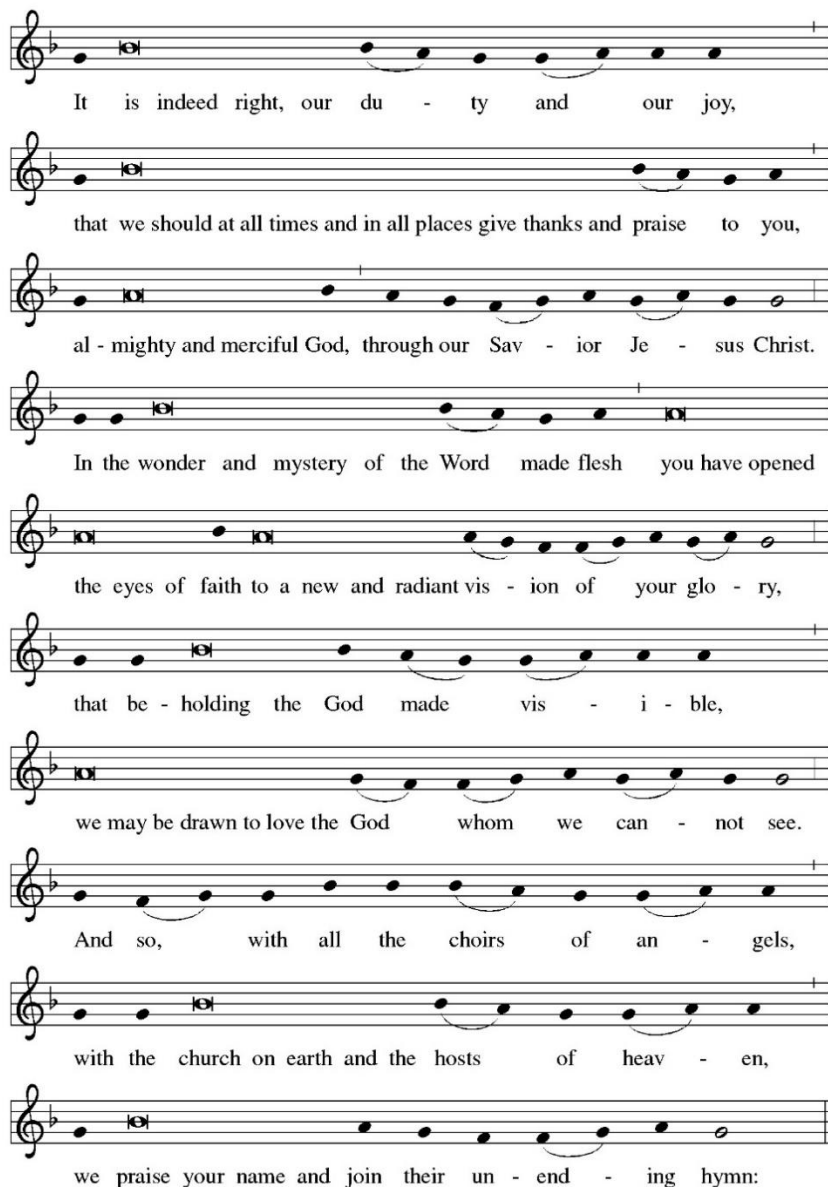
that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,

through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving Dialogue

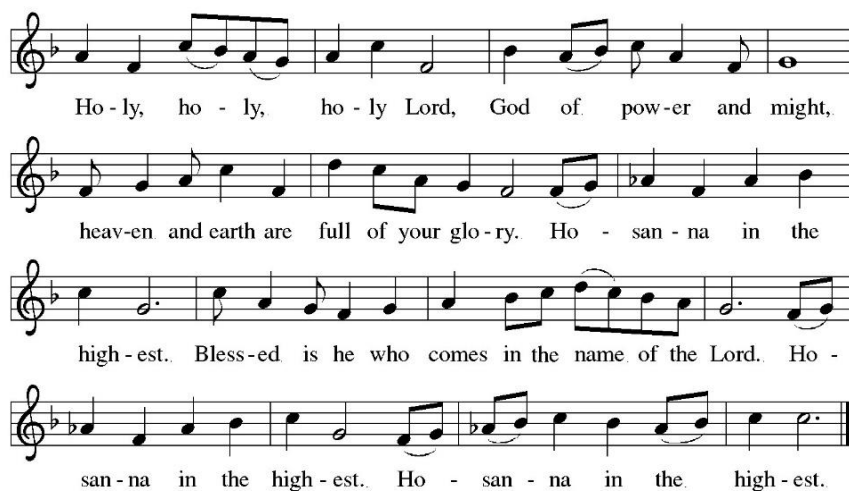


Preface



It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,
al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.
In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened
the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vis - ion of your glo - ry,
that be - holding the God made vis - i - ble,
we may be drawn to love the God whom we can - not see.
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,
we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,

you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,

his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,
we await his coming again

when all things will be restored in him.
By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.
Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing.
Come to the feast of joy!

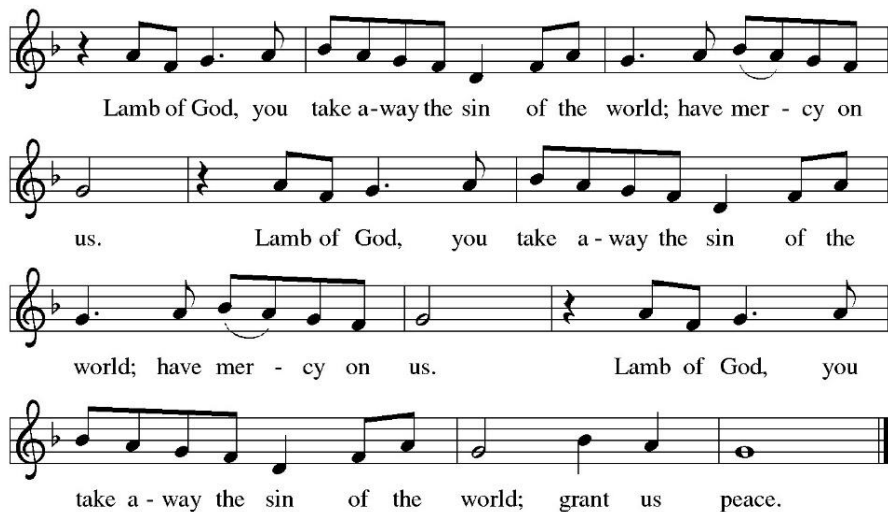
COMMUNION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
and each person may respond **Amen.**

The ministers commune either after or before others commune.

COMMUNION SONG



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.

May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts
the mystery of your presence.

Move us to discover the wonders of your love
in the everyday moments of our lives,
through Christ born in us.

Amen.

SENDING *God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

Blessing

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,
the obedience of Joseph,
the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
and the everlasting peace of Jesus
who is Savior, Christ, and Lord.

Almighty God, Father, ? Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Carol Go tell it on the mountain (ELW 290)

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt.

Music: African American spiritual

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve our Savior, Christ, and Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

BREAD LOAF OFFERING - JANUARY-

- If you would like to submit a report for the congregational meeting, please send it to Office.gracelutheran@gmail.com by Jan 15th.
- Our annual congregational meeting will be held on January 25th right after church service. The church will be providing Fried Chicken and drinks. We will be passing around a sign up sheet for sides and desserts as we get closer to the date. Please put this on your calendar. Thank You
- Food Pantry needs, with the colder weather the need for Soup increases. While we still need Cereal and Peanut Butter, we could also use Soup as well.

Weekly Agenda at Grace Lutheran Church

Monday December 29, 2025

No school Winter Break

Helping hands 12:30 pm

AA 7:30 pm

Tuesday December 30, 2025

No school Winter Break

T.O.P.S 9:30 am

WC quilters 6:30 pm

Wednesday December 31, 2025

New Year's Eve

No school Winter Break

Men's Breakfast 8 am

Thursday January 1, 2026

New Year's Day

No school Winter Break

AA 7:30 pm

Al-non 7:30 pm

Friday January 2, 2026

Pastor's Day Off

No school Winter Break

Food Pantry 12 pm

Saturday January 3, 2026

Sunday January 4, 2026

Worship @ Hope 8:15 am

Worship @ Grace 10:00 am

Fellowship 11:15 am

BP check 11:15am

sheets in the parish hall, for coffee hour. Coffee hour will be after church service, for anyone that would like to stay.