

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Liturgical Setting: Schubert

December 21, 2025
10:30 am

Grace Lutheran Church
Wenatchee, WA



Welcome to Grace!

The stained-glass windows in our church display a beautiful collection of glass pieces, each one unique and important. The same is true for all of God's children. As people of Grace Lutheran Church, our diversity makes us stronger and more resilient.

We strive to welcome all. We want to be a church where all are safe, all are welcome. Believers, non-believers, doubters, seekers, and questioners: You are welcome here. Old and young. Able or disabled. People of all sexual orientations and gender identities: You are welcome here. Rich and poor. Black, brown, and white: You are welcome here. Jeans and a t-shirt or a suit and tie. Addiction and mental health concerns: You are welcome here.

You are welcomed and valued here, because we are all pieces of stained glass, broken and beautiful in our own way.

As a church, we resolve to open our hearts, our minds, and our doors. We seek to reconcile ourselves to one another and to God, the master artist.

Holy Communion: We celebrate the grace of God with Holy Communion each Sunday. All are welcome!

If you are worshipping with children: Children are welcome and encouraged to join us in worship! We have a few options, especially for our young worshipers. Children's bulletins are available from the ushers. Quiet toys are located just outside the back door of the sanctuary for young children and caregivers. Most Sundays we have nursery staff available to help watch the children in that space. You are also welcome to use the quiet area under the balcony, beside the stained-glass window.

Our Mission Statement: "To proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ through word and sacraments so that a community of believers is created, trained, nurtured, and sent into mission."

Grace Lutheran is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation



INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

+++ GATHERING +++

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME AND KIDS' TALK

PRELUDE

Come Soon, God of Love
Growing in Grace

James Aalgaard, Cameroon trad.

Come soon, God of love, God of light. Come soon, God of peace, God of joy. Come soon, God of love, we are waiting for you. Open our lives, may we welcome you. Treasure what you find. We are born in you!

Please stand as you are able.

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence for reflection.

Long-expected God,
we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
☩ You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.
Amen.

GATHERING SONGELW #254, *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

1. Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
 2. Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;
 from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.
 Is - rael's strength and con -so -la -tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
 By thine own e - ter -nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;
 dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Music: JEFFERSON, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835**GREETING**

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

KYRIE*Harmonies may be found in ELW #152, the cranberry hymnal.*

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
 Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.
 Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
 Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

+++ WORD +++

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

A reading from Isaiah.

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

The cantor introduces the refrain; all repeat it.

All sing verses responsively, beginning with the cantor.

Let your face shine up - on us, and we shall be saved.

*Cantor: ¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up - | on the cherubim.*

*All: ²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and | come to help us.*

³ Restore | us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.



⁴ O Lord | God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your | people pray?

Refrain:



Let your face shine up - on us, and we shall be saved.

⁵ You have fed them with the | bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.

⁶ You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.

⁷ Restore us, O | God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

¹⁷ Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand,
the one you have made so strong | for yourself.

¹⁸ And so will we never turn a- | way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.

¹⁹ Restore us, O Lord | God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved. **Refrain**

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

A reading from Romans.

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

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel.”

which means, "God is with us."²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW #263, *Savior of the Nations, Come*
Harmonies may be found in ELW – the cranberry hymnal.



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
3 Won-drous birth—oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path-way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340–397; Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. hymnal version
Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524
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APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our Christian faith:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

After each portion of the prayers:

God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

PEACE

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

+++ MEAL +++

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Please be seated.

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion from “Messiah”

Georg Frideric Händel

Voices of Grace

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion arise, shine, for thy light is come. And the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

**O Mighty One,
you have done great things for us, and holy is your name. Bless all we offer you—our selves, our time, and
our possessions—that through us your grace and favor may be made known to all the world; for the sake of
Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right ... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Harmonies may be found in ELW #190, the cranberry hymnal.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

You are indeed holy... ... we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is ris'n. Christ will come a - gain.

Remembering therefore... ...now and forever.

Amen, a-men, a-men. Amen, a-men.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

DISTRIBUTION SONG *Harmonies may be found in ELW #199, the cranberry hymnal.*

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mer - cy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION SONG

ELW #245, *Creator of the Stars of Night*



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
 2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
 3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all
 4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -
 5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,

last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,
 splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child
 hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,
 ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low
 Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be

we pray you hear us when we call.
 of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.
 like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
 from all as - saults of our dread foe.
 from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. *Hymnal 1940*, alt.

Music: CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM, plainsong mode IV

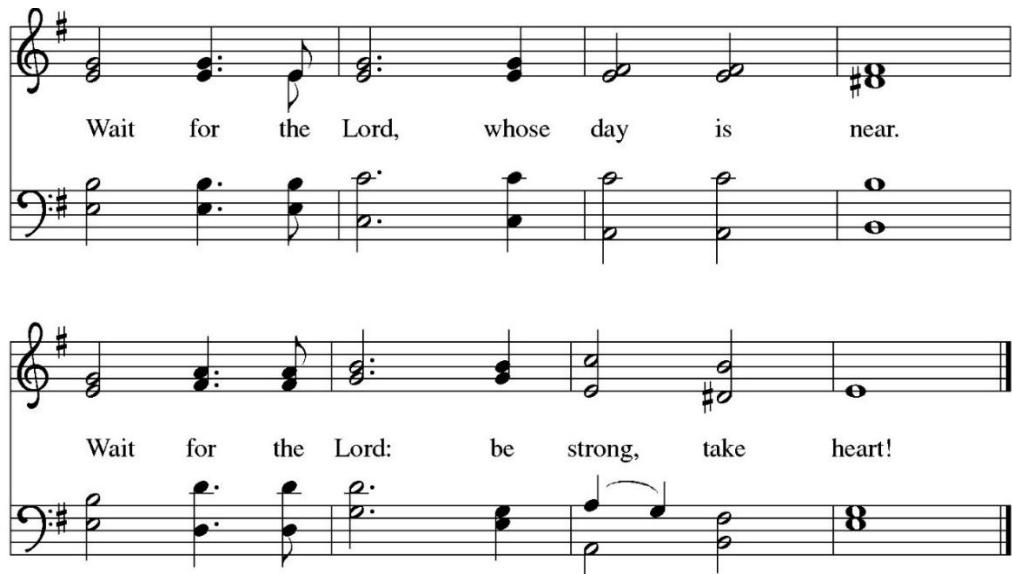
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DISTRIBUTION SONG

ELW #262, *Wait for the Lord*

Sing repeatedly, in harmony.



Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community

Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

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Please stand as you are able.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God for whom we wait, in this meal you give us a foretaste of that day when the hungry will be fed with good things. Send us forth to make known your deeds and to proclaim the greatness of your name, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

+++ SENDING +++

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

Please be seated.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and $\text{\textt{T}}$ give you peace.

Amen.



SENDING SONG

ELW #257, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
Harmonies may be found in ELW – the cranberry hymnal.

1-All O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2-Right side O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3-All O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4-Choir O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,

Refrain

un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

5-All O come, O Key of David, come,
 and open wide our heav'ly home;
 make safe the way that leads on high,
 and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

6-Left side O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

7-Organ
 (read text silently) O come, O King of nations, come,
 O Cornerstone that binds in one:
 refresh the hearts that long for you;
 restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*

8-All O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Toccata on "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Austin Lovelace

Serving in Today's Worship

Presiding Minister:	Rev. James Aalgaard
Pastoral Intern:	Laura Olsen
Assisting Minister:	Kate Gregg
Altar Guild:	Rose Applegate
Tech:	Chad DuLac

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A note regarding livestreaming at Grace: With your participation in our worship services, we assume you have granted us permission to include you in our videos. If you have a concern about being included, please let the staff know, and we will help find a solution that meets your needs.

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