

SPIRIT OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 4 & 5, 2021

2nd Sunday of Advent

Ministers: Every Member of Spirit of Grace

Pastor Scott Hackler – Pastor Gary Benson

OUR VISION

“To help our congregation and community know Christ and grow in faith, so we can run the race of life with grace, hope, peace, and joy.”

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINISTRY MINUTE: “Finishing 2021 Strong”

..... Sue Kopcha, Congregation Council President

..... Phil Nelson, Finance Committee Chairman

CALL TO WORSHIP: “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” Henry Halon

INVOCATION

P: We worship in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

C: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P: We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

C: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: “On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry”

On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry / announces that the Lord is nigh; / awake and hearken, for he brings / glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin; / make straight the way for God within, / and let us all our hearts prepare / for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord, / our refuge and our great reward; / without your grace we waste away / like flow'rs that wither and decay.

All praise to you, eternal Son, / whose advent has our freedom won, / whom with the Father we adore, / and Holy Spirit, evermore.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite. Public Domain.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

God for whom we wait, come with mercy upon us.

C: When we fail in believing that your good news is for us; when we falter in our call to tend your creation; when we find our sense of self in possessions; when we fear those different from ourselves; when we forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy.

C: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE: “Christ, Be Our Light”

Christ, be our light! / Shine in our hearts. / Shine through the darkness. / Christ, be our light! / Shine in Your church gathered today.

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

SPECIAL MUSIC: “I Wonder as I Wander” Ken Carnes

THE FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

P: Word of God, Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God!

THE SECOND READING: Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God’s grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you

may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

P: Word of God, Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Sing)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? / You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

P: The Gospel of the Lord,

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: “Pause, Pray, and Prepare with Purpose!” *Pastor Gary Benson*

HYMN OF THE DAY: “Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak”

Lord, speak to us, that we may speak / in living echoes of your tone; / as you have sought, so let us seek / your straying children, lost and lone.

Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead / the wand'ring and the wav'ring feet; / oh, feed us, Lord, that we may feed / your hung'ring ones with manna sweet.

Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach / the precious truths which you impart; / and wing our words, that they may reach / the hidden depths of many a heart.

Oh, fill us with your fullness, Lord, / until our very hearts o'erflow / in kindling thought and glowing word, / your love to tell, your praise to show.

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879, alt. Public Domain.

APOSTLES' CREED

C: 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 into hell. 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 (*Response: Your mercy is great.*)

OFFERING PRAYER

P: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.

C: Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S SUPPER: WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Holy, almighty and merciful God. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

C: Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray,

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.

DISTRIBUTION

BLESSING AND PRAYER

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Most High God, you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

C: Amen.

BENEDICTION

P: The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father; / there is no shadow of turning with thee; / thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not; / as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! / Morning by morning new mercies I see; / all I have needed thy hand hath provided; / great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, / sun, moon, and stars in their courses above / join with all nature in manifold witness / to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. *Refrain*

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, / thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide; / strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, / blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! *Refrain*

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866-1960. Public Domain.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

C: Thanks be to God.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Scripture Reader: Barbara Lyes

Audio & Lighting: Jim Miller

Producer & Editor: Jerry Huston

See Announcements and Events on the following pages

*****Announcements & Upcoming Events*****

BE KIND – As more people return to church and activities, please refrain from wearing perfume or cologne as many people have a high sensitivity (and some a complete allergic reaction) to fragrances. Thank you for considering others.

WELCOME SESSIONS – are an opportunity for new and long-time visitors to learn why our church exists and how you can be more connected and committed to our ministry. You will meet other prospective members, learn about our mission and vision, and our various ministries. Our next Welcome Session is **Monday, December 13th, at 10:00 am**. So that we may have sufficient materials, please call the church office (623-977-6000, ext. 100) to register. Hope to see you there!

ADVENT GIVING TREE – This year we are supporting Children of Military Personnel at Luke Air Force Base. Purchase a gift card (Amazon, Visa, Target, Walmart), and the families will buy gifts for their children. Write the amount on the gift card if it isn't already specified. Place it in a Christmas Card with a short note to the family if you wish to write one. *Sign your first name only. Do not seal the envelope.* Bring your gift card to the church between now and December 12th and place in the box in the Narthex. (It is labeled “Advent Giving Tree Card Drop Off Box” and is colorfully wrapped.) The gift cards will be given to needy families on the base. Contact Deborah Frusciano if you have any questions. 623-977-6000 or cell 602-909-8369.

2022 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES – For those *who have contribution envelopes assigned to them*, they are available for pick-up in the Fellowship Hall beginning this Saturday, December 4th. If you did not pick-up or use your 2021 envelopes, the 2022 envelopes were not issued to you. *However, if you still want them for next year*, please notify Sheila in the office (email: sheila@spiritofgrace.com or 623-977-6000, ext. 100).

JUDY LINTON MEMORIAL SERVICE – Family, friends, and Spirit of Grace worshippers will gather in the sanctuary to honor and remember Judy Linton this Friday, December 10th, at 10:30 am. Judy went home to the Lord last October 21st.

MEN'S CHOIR – will rehearsal in the Fellowship Hall every Tuesday at 3:00 pm beginning January 4th. All men are welcome! It will be exciting to join voices to sing God's praises. Contact Ken Carnes with any questions at 402-217-9274.

“CHRIST IN OUR HOME” DEVOTIONALS – The complimentary January – March 2022 issues of “Christ in Our Home” are in the reception area (near the office and Fellowship Hall doors). This devotional is printed in standard and large-sized print.

*Everyone is welcome to participate in all Spirit of Grace events and ministries:
you do not need to be a registered member.*

SPIRIT OF GRACE CALENDAR ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 4 - December 12, 2021

Saturday, December 4

Food Ingathering Donations
5:00 pm Worship Service

Sunday, December 5

Food Ingathering Donations
9:00 am Worship Service
Reception of New Partners
in Ministry

Monday, December 6

12:30 pm "Hand & Foot"
Cardplayers

Tuesday, December 7

9:00 am Staff Meeting
9:30 am Internal Audit Committee
12:00 pm Counseling Ministry*
*By appointment only
with Dr Joe Dramise
1:00 pm Library Ministry
3:00 pm Grace Chimes
4:15 pm Joyful Spirit Singers

Wednesday, December 8

9:00 am Counseling Ministry*
*By appointment only
with Dr Joe Dramise
10:00 am Executive Council

Thursday, December 9

8:30 am Online Worship Service
Video Recording
9:45 am Deborah Circle
1:00 pm Elizabeth Circle

Friday, December 10

9:30 am Bulletin Assembly
10:30 am Judy Linton Memorial

Saturday, December 11

5:00 pm Worship Service

Sunday, December 12

9:00 am Worship Service

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