

ROMANS 16:27, ESV

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 15, 2024 | 8:00 and 10:30am

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Thornville, Ohio

VISITORS

We welcome you in the name of Christ and hope his word of forgiveness and freedom finds you while you are with us this morning. If you are visiting or are new to our church, we ask that you complete a yellow Connection Card and pass it to the center isle for collection during the Entrance Hymn. We would like to be in touch with you and to let you know more about Grace Lutheran. We are glad you are with us.

OUR WORSHIP

Lutherans think of worship not in terms of something we do for God, but rather what God does for us. We often call our worship a "service," and that means that God serves us in our need. At the end of his life in 1546, Martin Luther famously said, "We are beggars" before God. In our liturgy (order of worship), which includes hymns and songs, specially selected Bible readings, preaching, and Holy Communion, God serves us by delivering to us sinful human beings the good news of Jesus Christ as Savior, which we grasp by faith. We respond with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, which carries over into our everyday lives.

PARENTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." The presence of children in worship, even when they are noisy, is a gift to the Church and a reminder that our parish is growing. If you have to leave worship with your children, feel free to do so, but even more so, feel free to come back in!

PRAYER BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION

We do not presume to come to your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son, Jesus Christ, and so to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us. Amen

1

ORDER FOR WORSHIP - LBW SETTING 1

Watchword: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Behold, the Lord God comes with might. - Isaiah 40:3, 10 ESV

PRELUDE | WELCOME | OPENING PRAYER



Confession and Absolution

INVOCATION

The people stand.

P: In the Name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The people kneel for silent reflection and self-examination.

- P: Most merciful God,
- C: we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

ABSOLUTION

The pastor stands and addresses the assembly.

- P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.
- C: Amen.

The people stand.



ENTRANCE HYMN

On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry

Green Book 36

Connection Cards/Prayer Requests should be passed to the center isle at this time.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

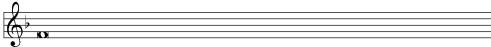
- P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C: And also with you.





A For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.





A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.





A For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,







P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you once called John the Baptist to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us, your people, the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The people may be seated.

Choir Anthem (10:30 only):



The Liturgy of the Word

THE FIRST LESSON

Malachi 4:1-6

L: A reading from Malachi.

Those who fear God's name need not fear the judgment that is to come. God promises to send a messenger to share His good news for the world.

¹For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. ²But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. ³And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts. ⁴"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

⁵"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."

L: The Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY

Psalm 89:1-5, 19-29

The verses are chanted alternately by the cantor and the congregation.



¹Your love, O Lord, forever | will I sing;* from age to age my mouth will pro- | claim your faithfulness.

²For I am persuaded that your love is estab- | lished forever;* you have set your faithfulness firmly | in the heavens.

³"I have made a covenant with my | chosen one;* I have sworn an oath to Da- | vid my servant:

4'I will establish your | line forever,* and preserve your throne for all | generations.'"

⁵The heavens bear witness to your won- | ders, O Lord,* and to your faithfulness in the assembly of the | holy ones

¹⁹You spoke once in a vision and said to your | faithful people:* "I have set the crown upon a warrior and have exalted one chosen out | of the people.

²⁰I have found Da- | vid my servant;* with my holy oil have I a- | nointed him.

²¹My hand will | hold him fast* and my arm will | make him strong.

²²No enemy | shall deceive him,* nor any wicked man | bring him down.

²³I will crush his | foes before him* and strike down | those who hate him.

²⁴My faithfulness and love shall | be with him,* and he shall be victorious | through my name.

²⁵I shall make his domin- | ion extend* from the great sea | to the river.

²⁶He will say to me, 'You | are my Father,* my God, and the rock of | my salvation.'

²⁷I will make | him my firstborn* and higher than the kings | of the earth.

²⁸I will keep my love for | him forever,* and my covenant will stand | firm for him.

²⁹I will establish his | line forever* and his throne as the | days of heaven.

THE SECOND LESSON

Romans 16:25-27

L: A reading from Romans.

The preaching of Jesus Christ strengthens us in the present and calls us to obedience.

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

L: The Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

THE VERSE

The people please stand.



Luke 7:18-28



¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to him. they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me." ²⁴When John's messengers had gone, 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? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.' ²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

P: The Gospel of our Lord.



CHILDREN'S SERMON

The people may be seated.

Come, O Precious Ransom

Green Book 24

The people stand.

THE NICENE 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; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

After each petition:

A: Lord, in your mercy, **C: hear our prayer.**

P: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.



The Liturgy of Holy Communion

THE PEACE

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The people greet one another in the name of the Lord and then are seated.

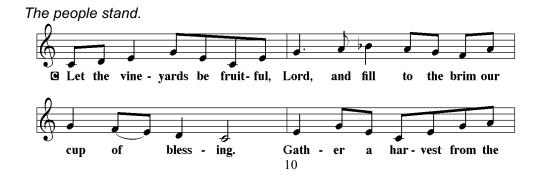
OFFERING

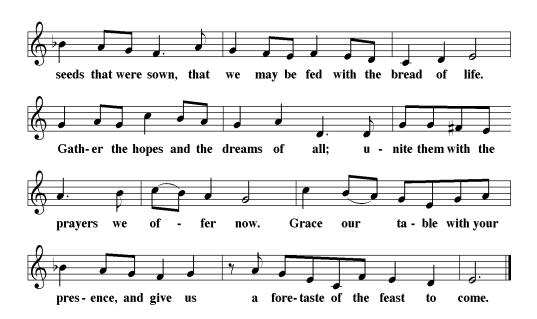
Stationary plates have been placed in the sanctuary for giving offerings before or after service. Online giving through the church's website is also highly encouraged. Music will play to provide a time for prayer and reflection.

Grace Notes Handbells (10:30 only): "El Shaddai/O Come, O Come" - Emmanuel is "God with Us". El translates as "God of Eternity" or "Eternal One". Shaddai is a compound of two words which means "The One Who Is All-Sufficient"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY RESPONSE



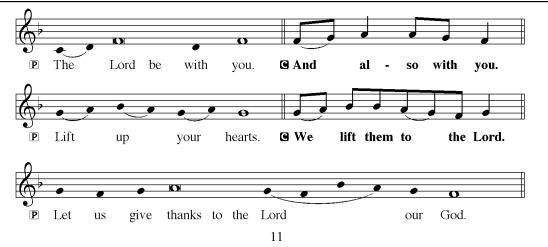


THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

A: Let us pray. Merciful Father,

C: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us — our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

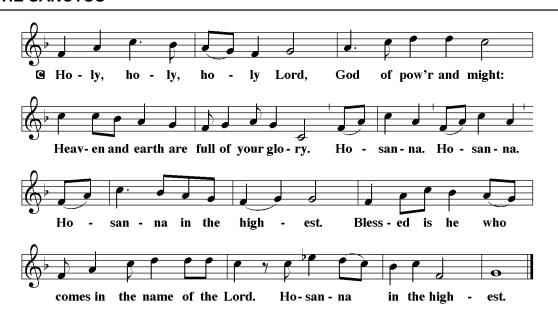




THE PREFACE

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

THE SANCTUS



THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

THE 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.

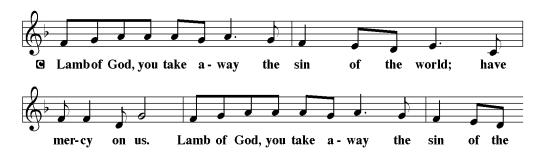
THE FRACTION

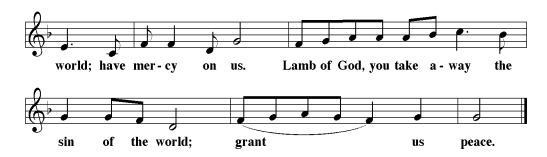
P: Our Lord, Emmanuel, shares his life with us.

C: Hosanna in the highest!

The people may be seated.

LAMB OF GOD





DISTRIBUTION

Lutherans teach that Holy Communion (the Lord's Supper) was instituted by Jesus Christ himself for us to eat and drink. As his words declare, with bread and wine, he imparts to us his body and blood, and with it the grace of God. This sacrament is God's way of giving us the good news of Jesus in a concrete, physical way as we continue our pilgrimage on earth. We are rightly prepared to receive this great gift when we come before God with humility and faith. All are welcome to receive the Lord's Body and Blood who are baptized and believe that Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is truly present in, with and under the forms of bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

To receive Holy Communion, come forward in two lines (10:30) or one line (8:00) as the ushers direct you. With open hands, you will receive the bread from the pastor or assisting minister. For those not able to receive regular bread, some gluten free wafers are available. Then proceed to receive the wine from an assistant on your side of the sanctuary. Take an empty cup, which will be filled using a pouring chalice. For those not able to receive wine, there are some pre-filled cups of grape juice available. After receiving the Lord's Supper, the communicant may say "Amen" and return to your pew for prayer. Those choosing not to receive Holy Communion may come forward for a brief prayer and blessing. You may indicate that by crossing your arms over your chest.

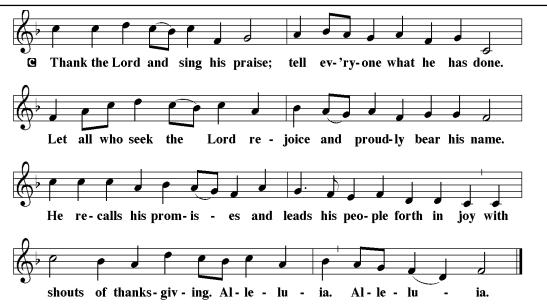
Hymns during distribution: Green Book 198, 197, 34

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The people stand.

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

C: Amen.



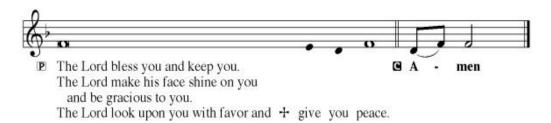
POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.



THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL



A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

SENDING HYMN

Comfort, Comfort, Now My People

Green Book 29

THE POSTLUDE

We are sent into the world to proclaim God's grace in word and deed.

PRAYER AFTER WORSHIP

Almighty God, grant that the words we have heard this day with our ears may be grafted onto our hearts through your grace, that they may produce in us the fruit of a good life, to the praise and honor of your name, through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen

16

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

65 E. Columbus St.
Thornville, OH 43076
(740) 246-6576
office@gracethornville.org
www.gracethornville.org
The Rev. Dr. Thomas Jacobson, Pastor



COMMEMORATIONS:

As Christians in the twenty-first century, we are called to remember that God's people of the past form a great "cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1). In that spirit, we commemorate memorable Christians of the past, usually on the day of their death. Though imperfect, their witness inspires us today as we run the race of faith. This week, the Church commemorates:

Dec. 21 St. Thomas, Apostle

WEDNESDAY ADVENT SERVICE - DEC, 18, 2024 - 7:00PM

Advent hymn: Come, O Precious Ransom (LBW 24)

Scripture reading: Romans 16:25-27

Christmas hymn: Angels, from the Realms of Glory (LBW 50)

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR 4 ADVENT (DECEMBER 22)

19

Micah 5:2-5a Psalm 80:1-7 Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-56



18