

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025 – 7 p.m.



313 S. Prospect Avenue, Champaign, IL 61820 (217) 356-6232 ● office@glccu.org www.glccu.org ● Pastor: Chris Repp

Welcome to Grace!

At Grace Lutheran Church, we strive to be a community of acceptance, reconciliation and hope. Following in the way of Jesus, we welcome all people regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, or age. God's acceptance of all compels us to stand against racism, sexism and all forms of hate and prejudice. We welcome your questions, your gifts, and your being.

We believe that God is at work in this worship service, through Word and Sacrament, to create and sustain faith in God's promises of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation in Jesus Christ. We use a rich, traditional pattern of worship that dates to the early days of Christianity. We recognize that it comes with a bit of a learning curve, but we're convinced that it's worth the effort. Don't feel like you have to get everything the first time. This way of worshipping may also include postures like standing and kneeling that may not be possible or comfortable for everyone. Please know that you are welcome to do what works for you.

KEY TO THE ORDER OF SERVICE:

Regular type: spoken by a leader **Bold type: spoken by the people** Regular Italics: sung/chanted by a leader **Bold Italics: sung/chanted by the people**

Small Italics: liturgical directions and info.

the sign of the cross may be made ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(Red Hymnal)

ACS: All Creation Sings

(Purple Hymnal)

♪ Favorite Hymn request

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR VISITORS:

- Restrooms are in the hall to the left of the main entrance, opposite the elevator.
- Hand sanitizer is available on the sanctuary windowsills.
- Please sign our guest book at the entrance.

As We Gather:

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Gathering

Prelude

Brightest and Best Paul Sjolund

In The Bleak Midwinter Harold Darke

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen arr. by Jan Sandström

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen,
aus einer Wurzel zart,
wie uns die Alten sungen,
von Jesse kam die Art.
Und hat ein Blümlein bracht
mitten im kalten Winter,
wohl zu der halben Nacht.

Lo, how a rose ever blooming,
From tender stem hath sprung.
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
As men of old have sung;
It came a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.

Sybilla Persica from Profecías de las sibilas

by Orlando DiLasso

Virgine matre satus, The son of a virgin mother pando residebit asello shall sit on a crook-backed ass, *Iucundus princeps*, The joyful prince, the only one who can unus qui ferre salutem rightly bring salvation to the fallen; rite queat lapsis: But it will happen in those days that Tamen illis forte diebus Multi multa ferent, Many shall tell many prophecies of great labor. immensi fata laboris.

Solo sed satis est oracula

prodere verbo:

But it is enough for the oracles
to bring forth with a single word:

Ille Deus casta nascetur That great God shall be born virgine magnus. of a chaste virgin.

A Stable Lamp is Lighted

David Hurd



Welcome

The service begins with the Christmas Proclamation.

The lights are dimmed and the assembly remains seated.

Proclamation of the Birth of Christ

Tonight the church is bold to claim God's incarnation in Jesus as the focal point of cosmic history. Hear now the proclamation of the birth of Christ.

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed humankind in the image of God; long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant; twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in freedom; eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king, in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by the prophets; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome; the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to reconcile the world to God by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and growing to term in the womb of his mother—now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

Entrance Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW 283

Verses 1, 3 & 4 are sung by the assembly; verse 2 by the choir alone.



Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, born of Mary, be with you all. **And also with you.**



Hymn of Praise

Angels We Have Heard on High

ELW 289



- 1 An gels we have heard on high, sweet ly sing ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep-herds, why this ju bi-lee? Why your joy ous strains pro-long? 3 Come to Beth-le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;









Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

Word

Children's Sermon

Pastor Chris Repp

First Reading Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

Gospel Procession



Gospel Luke 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

The Holy Gospel, according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

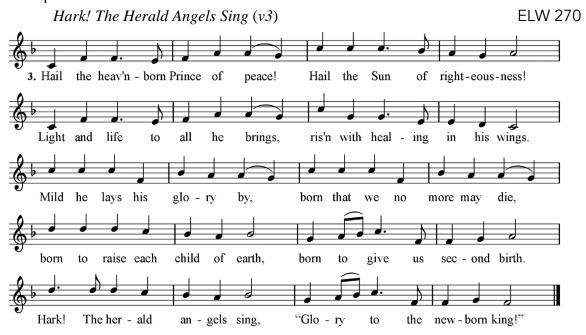
¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Gospel Recession



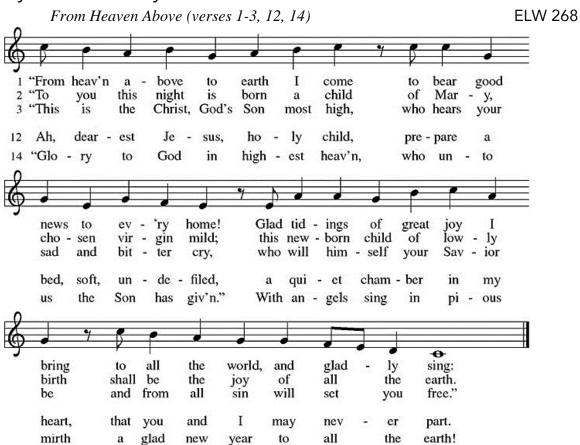
The assembly is seated.

Sermon

Pastor Chris Repp



Hymn of the Day





Prayers of Intercession

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

Each petition concludes:

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude:

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

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. After the Peace, the assembly is seated.



Meal

Offering

Please place your offering in the box on the table in the aisle as you leave. You may also give online using the QR code or at http://glccu.org/donate





Offertory O Holy Night

The Grace Choir arr. Keith Christopher

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining, It is the night of the dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till He appeared, and the soul felt its worth A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn; Fall on your knees, oh, hear the angels' voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born! O holy night!



Offering Verse

ELW 279 O Little Town of Bethlehem (verses 3 and 4) still we \mathbf{O} lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how see thee lie! 1 2 For Christ is born of gath - ered all Mar - y, and, a - bove si - lent - ly, how 3 How si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n! 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth-le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray; dream-less sleep the A - bove thy deep and si - lent stars go while mor-tals sleep, the won-d'ring love. an - gels keep their watch of God im-parts to bless-ings of hu - man hearts the his cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day. yet thy dark streets shin eth the ev - er - last - ing light. O morn-ing stars, to geth er pro-claim the ho - ly No ear may hear his com ing; but, in this world of gels the great glad tid-ings tell; We hear the Christ-mas an The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night. God the king, and prais - es sing to peace to all the earth! him, still the where meek souls will re - ceive dear Christ en - ters in.

with us, our

Lord Im - man - u - el!

The assembly stands.

come to

us,

a -

bide

oh,

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

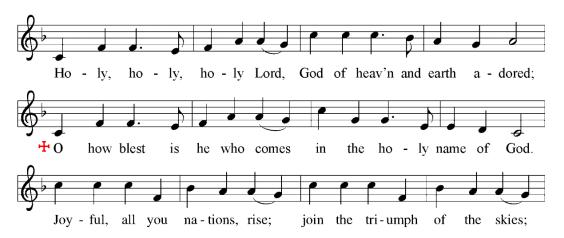
Lift up your hearts.

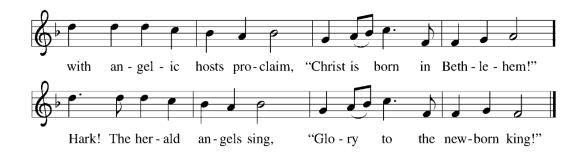
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:





Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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. Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The 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.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

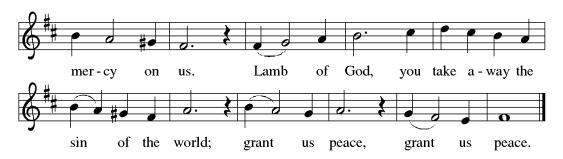
The assembly is seated.

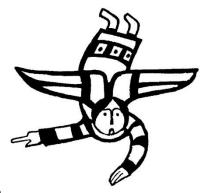
Communion

We believe that Christ is truly present for us in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, forming us into his body for the sake of the world. We welcome to the Lord's table all baptized Christians. Those who are not baptized we invite to explore with us the Christian faith and consider baptism. Those who do not commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. Please hold this bulletin in your hands as a sign that you would like a blessing.

To receive communion, please join the line in the center aisle and proceed to the pastor. (Note: gluten-free wafers are available. Just ask the pastor.) After receiving the bread, proceed to your left or right to receive the wine, taking a pre-filled glass from the tray. (Grape juice is also available.) Place your used glass in the basket provided near the stairs on the side you leave.







Communion Hymns

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, vv. 1-2

ELW 282



- 1 It came up on the mid night clear, that glo rious song of old,
- 2 Still through the clo ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un furled,

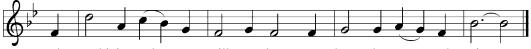


from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold: and still their heav'n-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."

A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,



The world in sol - emn still-ness lay to hear the an - gels sing. and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.



- 1 In fant ho ly, in fant low ly, for his 2 Flocks were sleep-ing, shep-herds keep-ing vig il bed a cat - tle stall;
- till the morn-ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know-ing Christ the child is Lord of all. saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of gos - pel true.



Swift-ly wing-ing, an - gels sing-ing, bells are ring-ing, tid - ings bring-ing: Thus re-joic-ing, free from sor-row, prais-es voic-ing, greet the mor-row:

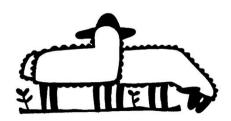


Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child was born for Christ the child was born for you! you!



Away in a Manger ELW 277







The assembly stands.

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

Prayer After Communion

Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.

Amen.



Candle Lighting

Ministers and ushers light the candle of the first worshiper in each pew. Please tip the unlit candle toward the lighted candle and keep lighted candles upright at all times.

The lights in the church will gradually dim.

Reading Luke 2:1-20

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.



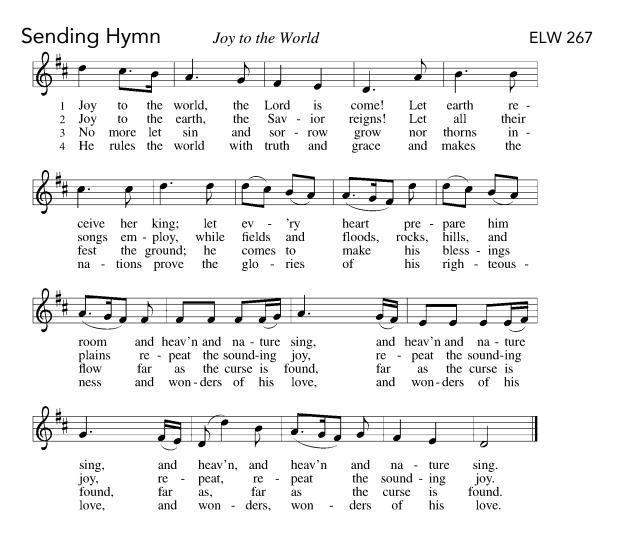
Sending

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

Amen.



Announcements

Dismissal

Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Tidings of Comfort & Joy

Alfred Fedak (b. 1953)

Worship Support

The ministry of the church is carried out by all of its people, and Christian worship is a communal activity of the whole assembly. We give thanks to the following for their worship leadership and support today.

Presiding Minister: **Pastor Chris Repp** Music Director: Nicholas Pierle Mike Keeley Assisting Minister: **Helen Repp** Organist: Reader: Leanne Wichus Sound Technician: **Kevin Vail** Van Bowersox Video Technician: Kevin Vail Deacon/Crucifer: Deacon/Book Bearer: Kathy Bowersox Karen Maher Office Assistant: Dave & Carol Larson Acolytes: **Ozzie and Alma Dorsev** Ushers: Angels: **Emery and Agatha Mever** Tina Fehrenbacher Greeters: and Carolyn Pater

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Christmas Chancel Plants

In gratitude to the following people who made donations for the beautification of the sanctuary at Grace Lutheran for Christmas 2025:

Cynthia Saylor - To the Glory of God in loving memory of Paul

Leanne, Ray, Carly & Addison Wichus - In loving memory of all our family members

Mary Jo Erickson - In loving memory of Paul & Jo Erickson

Nancy Johnson - To the Glory of God

Gail Hug - In loving memory of loved ones

Grace Schoedel - In memory of Paul

Helen & Pastor Chris Repp - In honor and memory of our parents

Bev Kieffer – In memory of loved ones

Carol & David Larson- In memory of loved ones

Karen & Doug Krusa - To the Glory of God

Gloria Rainer – In celebration of and with gratitude to our Grace musicians

Susan Monte - Peace in the world

Shirley & Art Traugott – To the glory of God

Cindy & Vlad Grigorescu - In memory of Jeanette Yewdall

Jo Ellen DeVilbiss - In honor of Nona Claggett

Alicia & Bruce Winter - To God be the glory

Jim Fleming - In memory of Jo

After the Christmas Eve service, you may take home the plant you purchased. If you wish to leave your plant at Grace for future Sundays you may do so.