

# You are Welcome to join us for Worship

9:00 am Christmas Day

## Assisting with Worship Today:

Organist: Shirley Schindel

Acolyte: Brendan Serr

Lay Reader: Julie Klopfenstein

**Grace Church:** Office: 937-596-6516 ~ Fax: 937-596-0516

Office hours: 8 am to 1 pm.

E-mail: [jcgracelutheran@outlook.com](mailto:jcgracelutheran@outlook.com)~

WEB Address: [www.jcgracelutheran.org](http://www.jcgracelutheran.org)

Pastor Bert Schultz ~ Cell phone: 715-418-1037

Pastor Shelly Schultz ~ Cell phone: 715-418-1761

~ Email: [jcgracepastor@outlook.com](mailto:jcgracepastor@outlook.com)

Facebook: JC Grace Lutheran

John Pence, Church President:

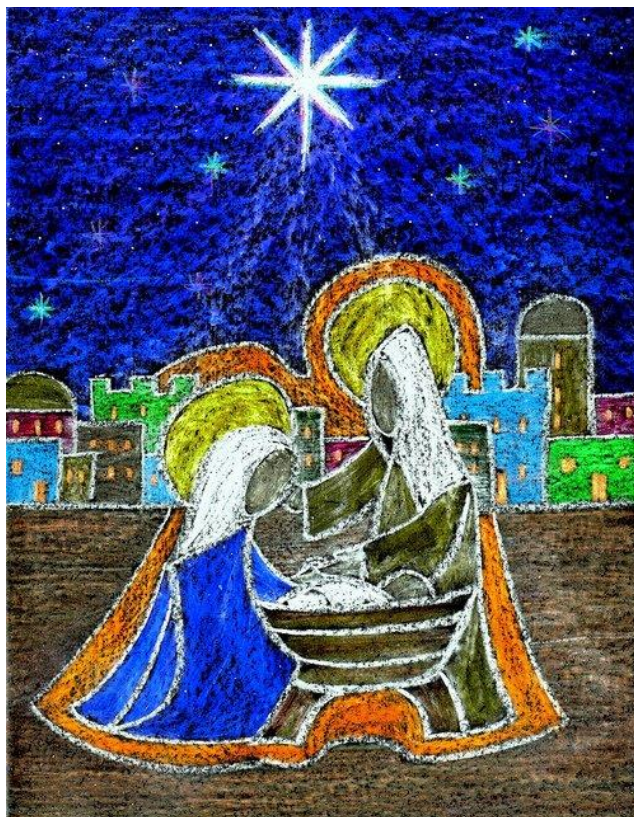
Nikki Tontrup, Secretary Rhonda Burch, Janitor

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# Christmas Eve

Carols + Candlelight + Communion



**7:00 PM Sunday, December 24, 2023**

**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Jackson Center, Ohio**

Welcome to  
**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
*Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*  
December 24, 2023 ~ 7:00 P.M.



*Holy  
Communion*

*Beliefs and Customs*

We Celebrate Holy Communion today. All who are baptized and believe Jesus Christ is truly present in this sacrament are invited to dine at the Lord's Table. If you desire a pastoral blessing please come forward with your hands folded. Gluten free wafers are available from the server. White grape juice is in the center of the tray. Lined baskets are available on each side aisle to dispose of your used cup.

**Welcome to Our Guests**

The birth announcement reads: "It's a boy!" And his name is "God with us." Welcome to the bedside of the newborn King! We believe God has a purpose for you being here today and our desire is to be an instrument in helping you discover and fulfill that purpose. You are invited to come and worship with us again. If you are a visitor, we ask that you sign the guest register in either entrance and fill out a card found in your pew. Please let us know if the pastor or we may be of service to you in any way.

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*\* Indicates times during which the congregation stands.*

**The Prelude**

Shirley Schindel

**Lighting of the Candles**

**Welcome**

**\*Processional Hymn "Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"**

**Grn. Bk. # 45**

**The Lighting of the Christ Candle**

L: In the beginning was the Word,

**C: and the Word was with God,**

L: and the Word was God.

**C: He was in the beginning with God.**

L: All things came into being through Him,

**C: and without Him not one thing came into being.**

L: What has come into being in Him was life,

**C: and that life was the light of all people.**

L: The light shines in the darkness,

**C: and the darkness did not overcome it.**

L: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

**C: and we have seen His glory,**

L: the glory as of the Father's only Son,

**C: full of grace and truth.**

P: Let us pray:

**All: God of majesty, on this holy night your light and life broke into the darkness of our human condition. Grant that your light and life will continue to shine through us into a dark and weary world until that time when your glory reigns forever; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.**

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

The New Testament Reading: 1 John 4:7-16

**Scripture Hymn "Angels We Have Heard on High"**

**Grn. Bk # 71**

\*The Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

Good News for the Children

Pastor Bert

The Christmas Eve Sermon

Pastor Bert

**\*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 worshipped 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**

Gathering of the Gifts

**\*The Offering Hymn**

**“What Child is This”**

**Grn. Bk. # 40**

**Prayer of Confession and Christ’s Promise of Forgiveness**

P: Let us draw near to God and make our confession of sin to our holy God

*Time for silent reflection and confession*

**C: Father God,**

**you are the one who leads us from darkness into light, from captivity into freedom, from anxiety into peace, from despair into joy. Yet we long to break free, choosing independence, convinced of our own wisdom, forgetting your love and grace. Forgive us, draw close to us, embrace us once again in your loving arms, and enable us to follow you in worship and grateful service each day of our lives. Lord, have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy. Amen**

P: God has had mercy on us and sent His only Son, born of the flesh, to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a minister of God’s Word and by Christ’s authority, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Holy Communion**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution- Consecration

Distribution of the Sacrament

Communion Hymns

**“Away in a Manger”**

**Grn. Bk. # 67**

**“The First Noel”**

**Grn. Bk. # 56**

**\*Post Communion Blessing and Prayer**

**Lighting of the Candles**

*(During this special music, Pastor lights a candle from the Christ Candle, the deacons light their candles from the Christ candle, then the deacons will light the candle of each person nearest the aisle. To avoid dripping wax, tip your unlit candle when lighting.)*

**Hymn**                    **“Silent Night, Holy Night!”**

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing, Alleluia! Christ, the Savior is born! Christ, the Savior, is born.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

**The Benediction**

*(Extinguish candles)*

Distribution of Christmas Gifts

**\*The Recessional Hymn**            **“Joy to the World”**

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its King; Let every heart prepare him room and heaven and nature sing, And heaven and nature sing, And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ, While fields and floods rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow Nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make his blessings flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, And wonders of his love, And wonders, wonders of his love.

Sending

P: Go in the peace of Jesus Christ to share that our Savior is born.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Eve)  
December 24, 2023**

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” - Isaiah 9:6 - Jesus of Nazareth was born in the most humble of circumstances. Caesar Augustus, the ruler of the Roman Empire, ordered a census to be taken. His father Joseph was from the line of David, but many generations separated him from any throne. Instead, Joseph was a simple carpenter from a small town. Mary, his wife, was a young girl, pregnant in extraordinary circumstances. She was well into her pregnancy when they had to travel to Bethlehem to register. The journey was long and over harsh wilderness. It was dangerous and exhausting for someone in excellent health, but it must have been difficult at best for the pregnant mother. Most of the miles traveled were done on foot with only a donkey to carry supplies. When the couple arrived in Bethlehem, they found the town crowded with others who had traveled to register, others who belonged to the house of David. There was nowhere for Mary to rest. She was feeling the early pains of childbirth as they searched for a place to stay. At last an innkeeper had mercy and allowed them to bed with the animals. There, among the smells and noises of the beasts, Mary gave birth to her son. Joseph served as the midwife, a feeding trough was the cradle. The first visitors to this humble scene were shepherds, the lowest of the low in that society. These were humble beginnings for any child, but this Jesus of Nazareth was not just any child. He was the King, and from the moment of his birth he was the target of men who feared him. That baby should have had the best of everything. His parents should have traveled with a grand procession. He should have been born in the finest room in a palace. He should have had the best doctors. His bed should have been made from the finest wood and lined with silk and down. He should never have feared the swords of men, but God never does things as we would expect. Jesus Christ, the King of kings, Lord of lords, arrived in this world in the simplest, most frightening way. It seems impossible to believe that God’s greatest promise was fulfilled that night, but in the flesh of that tiny baby was the Savior of the world.

There is a **box for offering** located on a table at the back of the church, for you to drop off offerings. All offerings are greatly appreciated to help facilitate the Lord’s work here.

Sunday, December 31, 2023 **One Worship Service at 9:00 am** as we Welcome the new year and celebrate our Lor Jesus Christ incarnate, God born in the flesh, at the right time and in our time. Sunday School for all ages to follow at 10:00 am.

