

**Enter to Worship --- Depart to Serve**  
**Mission and Ministry Moments**

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 the church stay in good financial standings.

This morning we **welcome** to Grace, **Pastor Bob Forsberg**. Pastor Bob has served in four Lutheran parishes over 42 years. He is now retired, living in Fairborn, Ohio. He considers himself on "Active Reserve" for the Lord. That is why he is here today. He has been married to his wife Sandy for 45 years, has two children and five grandchildren.

In need of **volunteers to help take down Christmas decorations** at the church on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm. If you are available, please come out and help.

**Thank you very much** for the Christmas cards and gifts. I greatly appreciate them. Thank you for your generous Christmas gift of money. I am blessed and thankful to have all of you as my Church family. Blessings to all of you!  
Nikki Tontrup

**Congratulations** to Patrick & Michelle Shuff on the birth of their son Quin Rostorfer Shuff born December 21<sup>st</sup>. Quin weighed 7lbs. 11oz. and is welcomed home by brothers Jax & Rocco and sister Bellamy. Proud grandparents are Joyce Regula and Roy Shuff.

**Thrivent Choice dollars** need to be designated for next year, Thrivent members can designate by going online.

**Altar Flowers** If you would like to provide altar flowers for a special occasion, you can do so by ordering them from your chosen florist. Please have them delivered to Grace Lutheran and placed on the altar. Also notify Nikki, in the church office, regarding the bulletin announcement of the occasion.

**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:  
© 2022 Christian Copyright Licensing International. All rights reserved. License # 1903179 & Streaming License # 20263402



*My times are in your hands*

*First Sunday after Christmas  
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Jackson Center, Ohio  
December 31, 2023  
Traditional Service  
9:00 am*

Welcome to  
**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
*First Sunday after Christmas*  
December 31, 2023 ~ 9:00 A.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**

Father, make me as eager as young Jesus to be in your house and to learn your teachings. Amen. We believe God has a purpose for you being with us today and our desire is to be an instrument in helping you discover and fulfill that purpose. You are always invited to come and worship with us. Please let us know if the pastor or we may be of service to you in any way.

**As We Gather**

God has clothed us with salvation because he has covered us with himself. Robed in his righteousness, the Church is given a new name, the name given to a bride in marriage—his name. For he is our bridegroom and redeemer. We who were once under the condemnation of the law, now live under our redeemer's wings, adopted into the family of God. Our bridegroom redeemer is the salvation of the whole world, a light to reveal God to the nations.

**Gathering**

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

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

The Prelude

Lighting of the Candles

Welcome

Invocation and Call To Worship

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Jesus said: "I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End." Let us end this year and begin another in the name of Him who is the source of all things.

**C: Let us go forward in the name of Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

\*Opening Song

**“Angels We Have Heard on High”**

LBW # 71

The Confession and Forgiveness

P: As we close out this year and prepare for the arrival of the next, let us reflect on our sins and shortcomings of this past year and confess them to God, our Father:

*(An extended period of silence  
will be observed as we reflect  
on the year that is past.)*

P: Merciful God, we confess that during this past year we have not always been faithful to You and to Your holy laws. The times we have sinned against You and against one another are too numerous to count. We have not been the disciples You have called us to be.

**C: Have mercy on us and forgive us, O Lord.**

P: Forgive us for the poverty of our worship, our neglect of the means of grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our evasion of responsibility in Your service, our imperfect stewardship of Your gifts.

**C: Have mercy on us and forgive us, O Lord.**

P: Forgive us that so little of Your love has reached others through us, that we have been thoughtless in our judgements, hasty in condemnation, grudging in forgiveness, slow to seek reconciliation, unwilling to love our sisters and brothers as we ought.

**C: Have mercy on us and forgive us, O Lord.**

P: Forgive us, we pray, and by Your Spirit give us the resolve to live the new year and every day of our lives for You.

**C: Amen.**

P: Hear the Good News: As a called and ordained servant of the Word I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus Christ the past is forgiven and forgotten. We are given a new opportunity to live new lives of love and service. Your sins are indeed forgiven-live in peace and joy!

**C: Amen.**

\*Hymn of Praise

“This is the Feast”

LBW pg. 60  
(In Unison)

\*Prayer of the Day

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Eternal Father, You have placed us in a world of time and space and through the events of our lives You bless us with Your Love. Grant that in this new year we may know Your presence, see Your love at work and live in the light of the event which gives joy forever-the coming of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## Word

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

First Lesson: Isaiah 61:10-62:3

ESV pg. 621

Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 111 (read responsively)

**111** Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

**<sup>2</sup> Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.**

**<sup>3</sup> Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.**

**<sup>4</sup> He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and merciful.**

**<sup>5</sup> He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.**

**<sup>6</sup> He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.**

**<sup>7</sup> The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy;**

**<sup>8</sup> they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.**

**<sup>9</sup> He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name!**

**<sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever! Praise the LORD!**

Second Lesson: Galatians 4:4-7

ESV pg. 974

Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation (sung)

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

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

**Glory to you, O Lord** (sung)  
The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.** (sung)

Sermon

**“Simeon’s Prophecy”**

Pastor Bob

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**

## **Thanksgiving**

We give thanks for the saving Word and all God’s gifts.

Gathering of the Gifts

\*The Offering Hymn      **“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”**      LBW # 50

\*The Offertory      **“Let the vineyards be fruitful”**      LBW # 66

\*Offertory Prayer      Page 67

Pastor: Gracious God:

**All: we give You thanks and praise for all the blessings You have bestowed on us in the year that is coming to a close. Receive these offerings as a token of our thanks. Grant that in the new year we may offer our whole selves to You and to Your service; in the name of Him who gave His all for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## Remembering 2023

P: We reflect this day upon the year that is now past, with all its tragedies and triumphs. We remember that this year was filled with good news and bad, joy and sorrow. We remember...

P: In our personal lives this year has been one of triumph and tragedy as well. In silent prayer let us remember this year our own lives, thanking God for its joys and its struggles as well. For it is the difficulties of life which lead us to acknowledge our reliance upon our gracious God.

*(A time of silent prayer)*

P: O Lord, we remember, and give thanks.

**C: Amen**

## Prayers of the Church

P: Let us pray to the Lord- the Alpha and the Omega- the beginning and the end of all things.

*(a time of silence)*

P: Lord of all time, from year to year You love and sustain us. You shower upon us Your love and grace. Fill us with thankfulness for the year that is past and the abundant blessings which You have bestowed on us.

**C: Hear us, O Lord, and lead us onward.**

P: Lord of all time, grant us Your peace as we face the New Year. Fill us with trust that You are always with us and You will never leave us nor forsake us.

**C: Hear us, O Lord, and lead us onward.**

P: Lord of all time, fill us with expectation as we await the joys and challenges of the year ahead. Grant us confidence that whatever the future holds we rest securely in Your loving hands.

**C: Hear us, O Lord, and lead us onward.**

P: Lord of all time, in this new year, use us to help those in need, that those who are hungry and homeless, sick and suffering, might experience Your tender care through us.

**C: Hear us, O Lord, and lead us onward.**

P: Hear us, O Lord, and guide us onward. Grant that Your hand would lead us and Your love support us all our days; through Christ, our Lord.

**C: Amen**

## Lord's Supper

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Proper Preface

Holy, Holy, Holy (Sanctus)

LBW pg. 69

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Distribution of Holy Communion

Communion Hymn "Lamb of God"

LBW pg. 72

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

LBW # 60

\*Communion Blessing

\*Prayer after Communion

## Sending

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

\*The Benediction

Mission and Ministry Moments

\*Closing Hymn "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

LBW # 70

Sending

Pastor: Go now from this place in the name of Him who is the Alpha and the Omega- beginning this New Year in Jesus' name.

**C: Let us go forth in joy.**

P: The blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

**C: Amen.**

Silent Prayer and Meditation

Organ Postlude