December 28, 2025 First Sunday of Christmas 10:00am

Service of Lessons & Carols

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- P God loves you all the time.
- C All the time God loves you.



Please stand as you are able.

GATHERING SONG

Once In Royal David's City

ELW 289





- P Come! Look upon the baby Jesus, cradled in the arms of his mother.
- C Seeing this wondrous sight, may our hearts be comforted and our spirits filled with peace.
- P Come! Listen to choirs of angels announcing good news to all people.
- C Hearing this marvelous song, may we too sing: Glory to God in the highest!
- P Come! Receive this ancient story in your heart, not as history but as a gift.
 Opening our hearts to this great mystery, may Christ be born in us today.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the in fant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.



FIRST READING: Luke 2:1-7

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And 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 in the guest room.

REFLECTION: Luther's reflections on the birth of Jesus

Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother. . . . What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother! . . . Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden. Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace. . . . You will see how great is the divine goodness, which seeks above all else that you should not despair. Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom is salvation. To me there is no greater consolation given to mankind than this, that Christ became man, a child, a babe, playing in the lap and at the breasts of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to judge this gurgling Babe and believe that he is come, not to judge you, but to save. (Martin Luther's Christmas Book, p. 33)



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



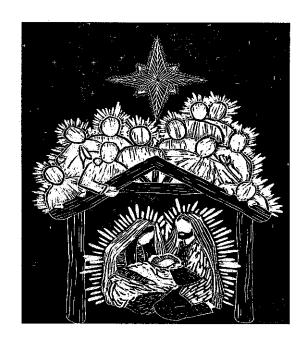
ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know-ing Christ the child is Lord of all. saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



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 you! Christ the child was born for you!





SECOND READING: Luke 2:8-16

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

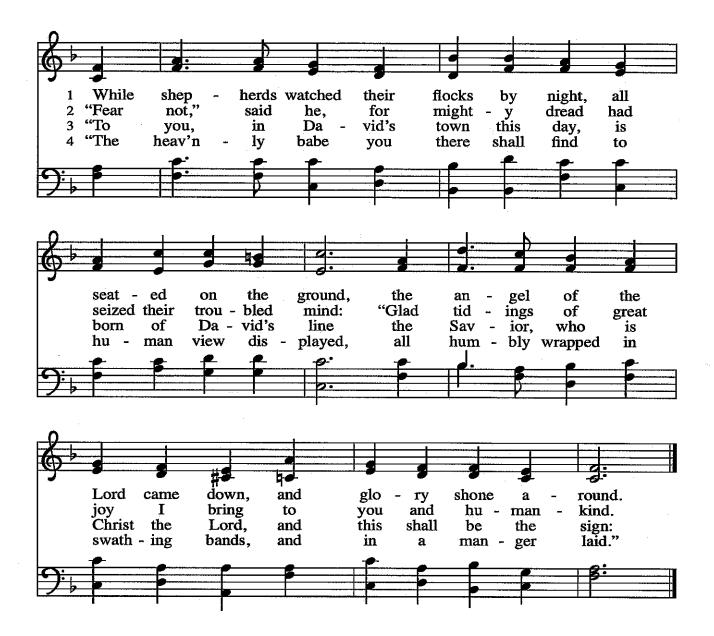
14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

 15 When 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." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.

REFLECTION: Luther's reflections on the shepherds and angels

Look at the shepherds. They were watching their flocks by night, and an angel came and made them apostles, prophets, and children of God. . . . This is a great miracle that the shepherds should have believed this message. They might easily have thought to themselves, "Are we two shepherds worthy that the whole host of heaven should be marshaled for us and all the kings on the earth and the dwellers in Jerusalem be passed by?" I know I would have appealed to common sense and I would have said: "Who am I compared to God and angels and kings? It is an apparition." But the Holy Spirit, who preached through the angels, caused the shepherds to believe. They were so strong in the faith that they were worthy to be spoken to by angels and to hear every angel in heaven singing a cantata just for them. This is a pure wonder that enters not into the heart of man. Our God begins with angels and ends with shepherds. Why does he do such preposterous things? He puts a Babe in a crib. Our common sense revolts and says, "Could not God have saved the world some other way?" (Martin Luther's Christmas Book, pp. 36, 40)

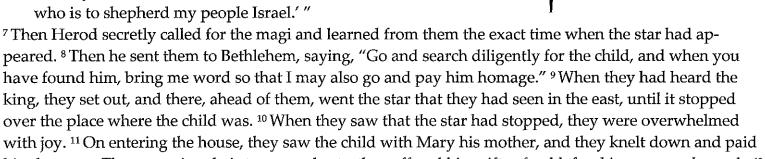


- 5 Thus spoke the seraph, and forthwith appeared a shining throng of angels praising God, who thus addressed their joyful song:
- 6 "All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace; good will to all from highest heav'n begin and never cease!"

THIRD READING: Matthew 2:1-12

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

6'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"



him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

REFLECTION: Luther's reflections on Herod and the wise men

When the Wise Men received the divine revelation that the king of the Jews was born, they made straight for Jerusalem, for, of course, they expected to find him at the capital in a lordly castle and a golden chamber. Where else would common sense expect to find a king? But because they were so sure of themselves, the star left them. Then they were sorely tried, and had they relied solely on human wisdom, would surely have said: "Confound it! We have come all this way for nothing. The star has deceived us. The devil has led us by an apparition. If a king had been born, would he not be in the capital and in a palace? But when we come, the star disappears and we find no one who knows anything about him. Can it be that we foreigners should be the first to have news of him in the royal city? Everyone is so cold and unfriendly that no one offers to go with us and show us the child. They do not believe themselves that to them a king is born, and shall we come and find him? How desolate for the birth of a king! If a puppy were born there would be some little stir, and here a king is supposed to be born and everything is so still. . . . Should not the people be singing, capering, lighting lamps and torches, bedecking the streets with roses and mayflowers? What a miserable king we are seeking! What fools we have been to let ourselves start on this quest!" Nature wants to feel and be certain before believing, but grace will believe before she feels. Faith steps gaily into the darkness, trusting simply in the Word.

But having come, they decided to inquire of the king before returning. At their report, Herod the king "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Why was Herod terrified and all Jerusalem with him? He had good reason to be afraid because he had tyrannized over the Jews for thirty years. . . . Now Herod had a crafty plan. "The Jews," thought he, "will hide the truth from me, but I will find out the town where this king is to be born and also the time, and then if they hide him, I will catch him anyway. I will kill so many babies that he cannot escape." So he called the scribes to him and said, "Where is Christ to be born?" Then perhaps through fear, the scribes answered him that in the Prophet Micah it is written that He should be born in Bethlehem. (Martin Luther's Christmas Book, pp. 50-52)





FOURTH READING: John 1:1-5, 14-18

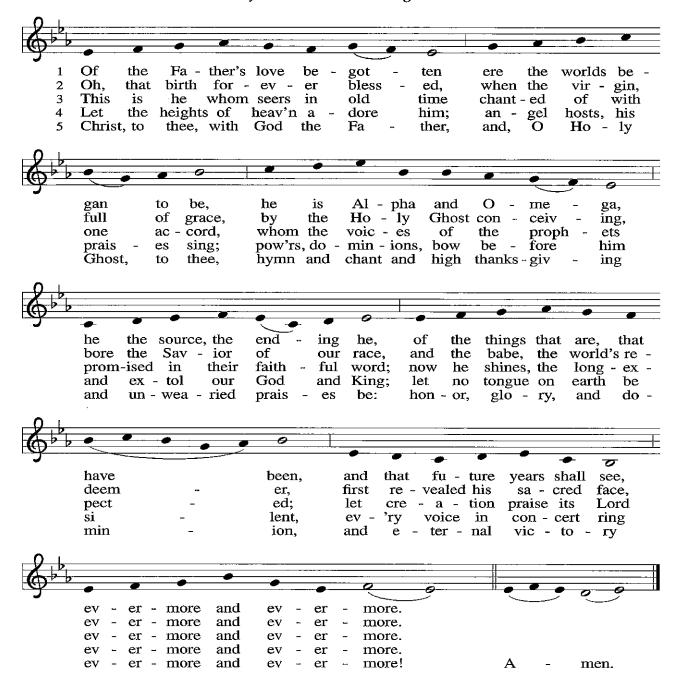
¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

¹⁴ And 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. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Reflection: Luther's reflections on the Word made flesh

Let us, then, meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify man. Inexpressible majesty will crush him. That is why Christ took on our humanity, save for sin, that he should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor he should console and confirm.

This is the word of the prophet: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). This is for us the hardest point, not so much to believe that He is the son of the Virgin and God himself, as to believe that this Son of God is ours. That is where we wilt. . . . Truly it is marvelous in our eyes that God should place a little child in the lap of a virgin and that all our blessedness should lie in him. And this Child belongs to all mankind. God feeds the whole world through a Babe nursing at Mary's breast. This must be our daily exercise: to be transformed into Christ, being nourished by this food. Then will the heart be suffused with all joy and will be strong and confident against every assault. (Martin Luther's Christmas Book, pp. 33, 16)



RESPONSIVE PRAYER

- A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people of earth.
- C Blessed are you, Prince of Peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.
- A Blessed are you, Son of Mary, you share our humanity.
- C Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.
- A Blessed are you, Son of God. You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.
- C Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world.
- P The peace of the Lord be with you always
- C And also with you
- P Let us share signs of God's peace.

OFFERING

Thank you so much for your support of Grace ministry through your worship.

If you wish to make a donation to Grace, you can follow this link <u>www.glcde.org</u> or scan the QR code to make a donation on our website through the "GIVE" button in the upper right corner. You can also make a donation by placing your gift in our offering plates located inside both sanctuary doors.



"Sanctuary" (Thompson/Scruggs) **OFFERTORY** D/A Em/A D G Em7 pure and ho - ly, to be a sanc - tu - ar - y, tried and Lord, prepare me Em7 Ffm/A A7 D A F#m/A Em/A D G D A

for

You.

With thanks - giv - ing, I'll be a liv - ing sanc - tu - ar - y

OFFERTORY PRAYER

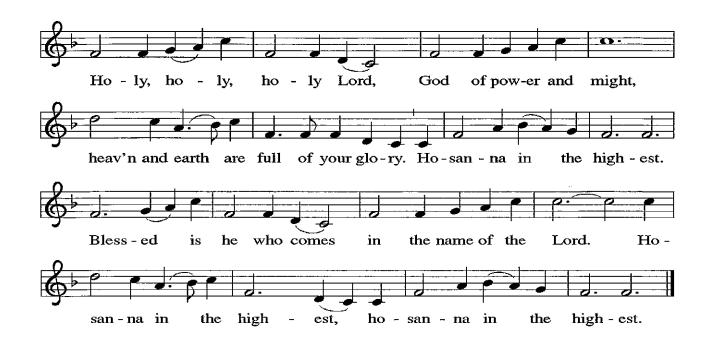
true;

- A God of glory,
 great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow.
 Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.
- C Amen.

DIALOGUE

- 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 God thanks and praise.
- P 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:



EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P 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:

- C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
- P 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.
- C Come, Lord Jesus.

- P 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.
- C Come, Holy Spirit.
- P All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

- P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
- C Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,

Give us today our daily bread.

on earth as in heaven.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P God is now in flesh appearing.

Come to the feast of joy!

All are welcome at the table of the Lord.

You may be seated

COMMUNION

Communion will be received at the head of the Sanctuary. Starting with the section closest to the sound room and worshippers may make their way to Pastor at the head of the Sanctuary and receive the communion elements. Elements at worship are red wine and white grape juice.

All bread is gluten-free.

HYMNS DURING DISTRIBUTION

What Child is This ELW 296





HYMN DURING COMMUNION

The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came

ELW 295



POST COMMUNION BLESSING

- P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen and keep you in his grace.
- C Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- A Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.

 May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence.

 Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.
- C Amen.

BLESSING

- P The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, © bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.
- C Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Go Tell It On the Mountain

ELW 290



DISMISSAL

- A Glory to God in the highest!
- C And peace to God's people on earth!
- A Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.
- C Thanks be to God.

The chancel flowers are presented to The Glory of God By The Magoons in celebration of their Christmas 26th anniversary.

Worship Assistants

Assisting Minister: Lynda Martinez

Greeter: Jay Snyder

Ushers: Julie Auger, John Auger

Readers:

Lesson 1: Beth Fenner

Lesson 2: Bill Brizendine

Lesson 3: Pam Adams

Lesson 4: John Auger

Sound: Mark Maurer

Streamer: Gerry Teig

Counters: Peter Tuhy, Gerry Teig

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

2033 Graves Road, Hockessin, Delaware 19707 (302) 239-6481 www.glcde.org

The people of Grace Lutheran Church, Ministers

The Rev. Tara Magoon, Pastor Jordan Irazabal, Director of Music Susan Wells Allen, Office Manager Louis Jones, Custodian