

*Grace Lutheran Church  
Welcomes you to  
The Great Thanksgiving*



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**FIRST SUNDAY OF** *Advent*

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*Everyone is Welcome!  
Taste and See that the Lord is Good,  
Let us rejoice together!*

# GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT**

**December 3, 2023**

**Pastor Jim Helgren**

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Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Opening Hymn            "Fling Wide the Door"            LBW Hymn # 32

Prayer and Lighting of the Advent Wreath

          "It's Christmas Coming Again" Verse 1            See Insert

Brief Order for Confession & Forgiveness            Page 56

Kyrie    Page 57

Hymn of Praise    Page 60

Prayer of the Day    See Insert

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9                                    See Insert

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19    See Insert

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9                            See Insert

Gospel Response    Page 63

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37    See Insert

Children's message    LBW Hymn # 25

Sermon    LBW Hymn # 25

          "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

Nicene Creed    Page 64

Prayers of the Church    Page 65

Offering    LBW Hymn # 34

Offertory "Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel" Verse 1            Page 67

Offertory Prayer    Page 68

The Great Thanksgiving    Page 71

The Lord's Prayer    Page 72

Post-Communion Canticle & Prayer                                    Page 72

Benediction & Dismissal    LBW Hymn # 33

Closing Hymn            "The King Shall Come"                    LBW Hymn # 33

**We carry the "light" out into the world! Depart to serve!**



# Today's Readings

First Sunday of Advent  
December 3, 2023

## Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## First Reading

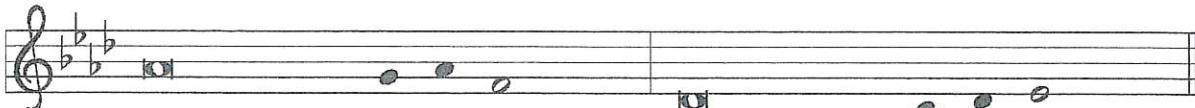
Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens  
and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at  
your presence—  
<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—  
to make your name known to your  
adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at  
your presence!  
<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we  
did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains  
quaked at your presence.  
<sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;

because you hid yourself we  
transgressed.  
<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is  
unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a  
filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take  
us away.  
<sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of  
our iniquity.  
<sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our  
potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
<sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry,  
O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

## Psalm

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; tone 3



Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading  
Joseph <sup>1</sup> like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned  
up- <sup>1</sup> on the cherubim.  
<sup>2</sup>In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin,  
<sup>1</sup> and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength  
and <sup>1</sup> come to help us.  
<sup>3</sup>Restore <sup>1</sup> us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us,  
and we <sup>1</sup> shall be saved.

<sup>4</sup>O LORD <sup>1</sup> God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume  
when your <sup>1</sup> people pray?  
<sup>5</sup>You have fed them  
with the <sup>1</sup> bread of tears;  
you have given them  
bowls of <sup>1</sup> tears to drink.  
<sup>6</sup>You have made us  
the derision <sup>1</sup> of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh <sup>1</sup> us to scorn.

continued

Psalm, continued

<sup>7</sup>Restore us, O <sup>1</sup>God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us,  
and we <sup>1</sup>shall be saved.  
<sup>17</sup>Let your hand be upon the one  
at <sup>1</sup>your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong  
<sup>1</sup>for yourself.

<sup>18</sup>And so will we never  
turn a- <sup>1</sup>way from you;  
give us life,  
that we may call up- <sup>1</sup>on your name.  
<sup>19</sup>Restore us, O <sup>1</sup>LORD <sup>1</sup>God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us,  
and we <sup>1</sup>shall be saved.

## Second Reading

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—<sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strength-

ened among you—<sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Gospel

[Jesus said:] “In those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
<sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling  
from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will  
be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell

## Mark 13:24-37

you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

TODAY'S READINGS December 3, 2023

Volume 55, Number 1

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8.

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# GO AND...

BE PRESENT

As we await and celebrate Christ's birth, we remember that God is present and shows up. The babe in the manger, God Incarnate, is God's gift of deep love for us. We are invited to pause, be still, and be fully present in this holy season. Society calls us to a different place where busyness, spending, and rushing about are marks of success. God, in Christ, offers another way: Emmanuel – God with us.

## Questions to Consider:

- What can I add to this season that would truly allow me to pause?
- What tradition do you have that nurtures being present at this time of year?
- As you are on the GO, how are you going to practice being present?

**Prayer:** Emmanuel, you are present with us. Help us be present with each other. Amen.

**Suggested Song:** O Come, O Come Emmanuel (ELW 257)

*Learn More at [www.nebraskasynod.org](http://www.nebraskasynod.org)*

## Ya viene la Navidad

*It's Christmas coming again*

*Estríbillo* Fa Do Sol<sup>7</sup> Do

Ya viene, ya viene, ya viene la Navidad; ya  
It's coming, it's coming, it's Christmas coming again; it's

Fa Do Sol<sup>7</sup> Do Fin

vie - ne, ya vie - ne, ya vie - ne la Na - vi - dad.  
com - ing, it's com - ing, it's Christ - mas com - ing a - gain.

*Estrofas*

Sol<sup>7</sup> Do Fa [1 Do] [2 Do]

1 En - cen - da - mos la ve - la, la ve - la del a - mor; mor; y  
1 Light a can - dle for love, light a can - dle for love; love; and

Fa Do Sol<sup>7</sup> Do

con e - lla pren - di - da j - lu - mi - ne - mos el a - mor; y  
light . . . up the world . . . with the love . . . of the Lord; and

Fa Do Sol<sup>7</sup> Do Esteríbillo

con e - lla pren - di - da j - lu - mi - ne - mos el a - mor.  
light . . . up the world . . . with the love . . . of the Lord.

2. Light a candle for peace . . .
3. Light a candle for joy . . .
4. Light a candle for hope . . .

If you would like to bring a **Poinsettia** to share with the church, you can bring them at any time. If the poinsettia is in memory or honor of someone, please add that information to the sheet at the back of the church or SE Office. Be sure to label your poinsettia with your name for when you come to pick it up.

***Poinsettias have been  
donated by***

*Dean & Jody Wellensiek  
Russell & Kate Dietz  
Carl & Sarah Purcell  
Colleen Naber & family  
Alta Bohling*

***In Memory of***

*Our Parents  
Our Grandparents & Russell's dad  
Our Parents & Grandparents  
Larry Naber  
Bill Bohling and Loved Ones*

The **Children's Christmas Program** will be presented Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> during the morning service at 8:30 a.m., and will be followed by the Birthday Party for Jesus.

***The Community Cantata "Bethlehem's Child"***  
*will be presented at Grace Lutheran the evening of  
December 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.  
With fellowship in the basement to follow*

There will be worship on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>  
**Christmas Eve Day**. It will be a joint worship at Hope Lutheran and will be at 10:00 a.m.

The **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** at Grace Lutheran will be at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>.

AN INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE:

We believe that with the bread and wine one receives the true body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. We welcome other Christians to receive Holy Communion with us. Children who have not had first Communion instruction may come forward for a blessing.

***We pray always for . . .***

*Luetta Bruns, Linda Daniels, Eric Fass, Haleigh Werner & Will Yank*

***We also remember in our prayers . . .***

*Anna, Vanessa, Meshack & Evance, orphans we are sponsoring  
in Tanzania.*

*Please put items for the bulletins & newsletter in the secretary's  
box in the south office. You may email the church office  
[grace68329@gmail.com](mailto:grace68329@gmail.com)*

***You may contact Pastor Helgren by calling 402-864-4201 (church)  
402-864-2113 (home) or 402-826-0613 (cell)***

**Today 12/3/23**

*Worship w/Communion – 8:30 a.m.*

*Sunday School Program Practice – 9:30 a.m.*

*Cook Community Christmas @ the Cook MS Old Gym*

*Bingo @ 3:00 p.m., Santa arrives about 4:15 p.m.  
& Pizza at 5:00 p.m.*

**Wednesday 12/6/23**

*Confirmation – 6:00 p.m.*

**Next Sunday 12/10/23**

*Worship – 8:30 a.m.*

*Sunday School Program Practice – 9:30 a.m.*

*The Noisy Coin Bucket has been set out to collect donations  
for the JCC Teacher/Staff Wish List. We are collecting to help  
our teachers/staff members from Grace Lutheran who do  
SO much for our children for items they would have to purchase  
on their own.*