

Sunday Service

December 10, 2023 - 8:30 AM & 10:15 AM

Livestream at 10:15 AM



Grace Lutheran Church

555 SW Cashmere Blvd.
Port St. Lucie, FL 34986-2034

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Pastor Cris Escher

Email: cris@gracelutheranpsl.com

Phone: (770) 328-5078

Welcome...

We are so happy that you are here with us today. Our desire is to be like another home for you. If you are new to Grace or to the area and are looking for a church home, we hope you will consider joining our family here at Grace. A Fellowship Time is held after each Worship Service, and we invite you to stay for a few minutes so we can get acquainted.

To our many members and friends worshiping at home, whether near or far, we are so happy that you are sharing this worship with us from your homes. www.GraceLutheranPSL.com

Kids at Grace

By the entrance into the sanctuary, busy bags are available for children to use. During the 10:15 service, before the sermon, Ms. Coli will take children (3 and older) to the other building for an engaging lesson about our hope in Jesus. Children are returned to their families right after the prayers. There is also a quiet room outside the sanctuary with toys and the live stream, if families need a place for younger children throughout the service.

Holy Communion

This meal is weird and wonderful: weird because we actually believe that the bread and wine are the Body and Blood of Jesus the Christ; wonderful because Jesus is with us. We take this meal very seriously here at Grace. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out and allow us to answer your questions. **Children** who have not been instructed in the meaning of the Sacrament may come to the Lord's Table with their parents for a blessing but are asked to fold their arms across their chests to indicate they are to receive a blessing.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMMUNION: After the closing hymn, Pastor Cris will pronounce the sending and then for those who wish to share in the celebration of communion shall remain. ***For those who have an intolerance to wine, grape juice is lighter colored on the tray, center.*** Those who find it difficult to walk to the altar can be communed at your seat. Please inform the usher of your need. After Pastor Cris has given your group the blessing at the altar, you may place your cup in the basket and depart from the Sanctuary down the center aisle, and enjoy fellowship in the hall.

Emmanuel: Joy In the Midst

The Christmas story is filled with struggle where unbelief, loneliness, wasted life, and acceptance fill the pages of the story. But where there is struggle we find songs filled with Joy and discover God has come, He is Emmanuel, and brings joy in the midst.

Oh Christmas Tree

Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners. He is there when the new little family almost splits up. He is even Emmanuel when the dreams of wonderful Christmas trees come crashing down.

---- THE OPENING HYMN

“SAVIOR OF THE NATIONS, COME” (LSB 332 Vs. 1-5)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Savior of the nations, come;
Virgin's Son, make here Thy home!
Marvel now, O heaven and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth. | 3. Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child
Of the virgin undefiled!
Though by all the world disowned,
Still to be in heaven enthroned. |
| 2. Not by human flesh and blood;
By the Spirit of our God
Was the Word of God made flesh,
Woman's offspring, pure and fresh. | 4. From the Father forth He came
And returneth to the same,
Captive leading death and hell
High the song of triumph swell! |
| 5. Thou, the Father's only Son,
Hast over sin the victory won.
Boundless shall Thy kingdom be;
When shall we its glories see? | |

--- Opening

'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."
Matthew 9:13

--- THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

(Take a moment of silent reflection upon our need for God's forgiveness)

Pastor: *O Almighty God,*

PEOPLE: GOD, OUR LOVING FATHER,

WE CONFESS THAT WE ARE OFTEN IMPATIENT AND RUSH TO CRITICIZE.

WE TAKE OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOR GRANTED.

WE ARE OFTEN UNGRATEFUL AND NOT GRACIOUS.

WE OFTEN EXPECT CHURCH TO MIRROR OUR OWN BIASES.

WE FORGET TO ASK FOR OUR CHURCH TO MIRROR YOU.

WE OFTEN USE YOUR SCRIPTURES TO SUPPORT OUR OPINIONS.

WE FORGET THAT THEY ARE A LAMP TO OUR FEET AND A LIGHT TO OUR PATH.

OUR HOPE IS CENTERED ON OURSELVES AND NOT ON YOU.

RENEW US, LORD, THAT WE MAY DELIGHT IN YOUR WILL

AND WALK IN YOUR WAYS, TO THE GLORY OF YOUR HOLY NAME. AMEN.

Pastor: The story of Jesus is about life and forgiveness.... You are God's beloved; you are a child of the resurrection. Live in the hope of new life. God loves you, and God is the restorer of hope. Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN

--THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. Help us by His coming to serve you with pure hearts and minds. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

--THE HYMN OF PRAISE

"Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel" (LW 31/LSB 357 Vs 3-4)

- 3. Oh, come, oh, come, our Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times gave holy law, in cloud and majesty and awe.**

REFRAIN

REJOICE! REJOICE! EMMANUEL

SHALL COME TO YOU, O ISRAEL!

- 4. Oh, come, O Rod of Jesse's stem, from ev'ry foe deliver them
That trust your mighty pow'r to save; bring them in vict'ry through the grave. REFRAIN**

THE FIRST LESSON Isaiah 7:10-16

Jesus would be the perfect King who would rule from a position of humility and grace, not tyranny and self aggrandizement.

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, "Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights."

But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test."

Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: THANKS BE TO GOD

THE SECOND LESSON

Matthew 9:9-13

Tax collectors were local people hired by Rome or the ruling Jewish class to collect taxes. Because they often made their living by extortion, they were hated and here Jesus is eating with them.

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: THANKS BE TO GOD

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph does not initially believe Mary's story that she is pregnant without another man having been involved. Joseph wanted to fulfill the law but also show compassion to his fiancée.

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David,

do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

PEOPLE: PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST

--- PROFESSION
THE APOSTLES CREED

--THE OFFERTORY

“O Come, Let Us Adore Him”

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord. | 3. For he alone is worthy.
For he alone is worthy.
For he alone is worthy,
Christ the Lord. |
| 2. We'll give him all the glory.
We'll give him all the glory.
We'll give him all the glory,
Christ the Lord. | 4. We'll praise his name forever.
We'll praise his name forever.
We'll praise his name for ever,
Christ the Lord. |

--- THE SERMON

Emmanuel: Joy in the Midst - Oh Christmas Tree

--- HYMN OF DAY

“Angels We Have Heard on High” (LW 55 Vs. 1-3)

1. Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria....in excelsis Deo; Gloria....in excelsis Deo.
2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria....in excelsis Deo; Gloria....in excelsis Deo.
3. Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Gloria....in excelsis Deo; Gloria....in excelsis Deo

--- PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

(after each petition)

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,

PEOPLE: HEAR OUR PRAYER.

--- THE LORD'S PRAYER

----- THE BLESSING

*Pastor: May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord look upon you with grace and redemption.
May the Lord always walk before you and give you peace*

PEOPLE: AMEN

----THE CLOSING HYMN

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!
2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.
3. Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee
Though the eye made blind by sin thy glory may not see,
Only thou art holy, there is none beside thee,
Perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.
4. Holy, holy, holy in a manger lowly;
Christ the Son, now veiled in flesh, in our humanity.
Kingdoms bow before Him; Heav'n and earth adore Him.
God here in person; hail His majesty.

----- SENDING

*Pastor: Have peace knowing we are all with you.
Serve others knowing God walks before you.*

Those who wish to share in the celebration of Holy Communion may be seated.

--- THE ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: May the Lord be with you!

PEOPLE: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.



PEOPLE: WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD.

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

PEOPLE: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

Pastor: The tree of life in the midst of the garden was the tree of our defeat. Christ was lifted up on the tree of victory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored. And so we praise you ..

PEOPLE: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD, GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT, HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY. HOSANNA, HOSANNA, HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST. BLESSED IS HE THAT COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST

---- THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

After the pastor has consecrated the elements you are invited to come to the altar and receive communion. Please use the right or left aisle as you come forward to the altar. After the pastor has pronounced the blessing for your side, you may place your cup in the basket and depart the sanctuary down the center aisle. Go in peace, Serve the Lord.

(Please remember that as you are leaving the sanctuary, others are still communing, please refrain from talking to others until you are in the Fellowship Hall, Thank You.)

--- ADDITIONAL HYMNS (On Projection Screens)

"Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming"

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

"Once in Royal David's City"

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

"As with Gladness Men of Old"

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

---- THIS WEEK AT GRACE

Today

Services

Voter's Meeting

Live-streamed on www.gracelutheranpsl.com

Second Sunday School

Korean Church Worship

Star Gazing (doors open at 2:30)

December 10, 2023

8:30 & 10:15 AM

9:30 AM

10:15 AM

11:45 AM - 12:45 PM

1:00 PM

Doors close at: 3:00 PM!

Rest of the Week

12 Step AA Meeting
Adopt-A-Street
Olivet School
Pastor Circuit Conference
Advent Meal
Advent Service
Bible Study
AA Meeting
Korean Church Prayer Gathering

December 11 - 16

Monday, 6:30 PM
Tuesday, 8:30 AM
Tuesday, 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Tuesday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Wednesday 5:30 PM
Wednesday, 6:30 PM
Thursday, 11:00 PM
Thursday, 7:15 PM - 9:30 PM
Saturday, 6:00 AM

For complete calendar information, go to www.gracelutheranpsl.com/calendar

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK: Fred Kutschinski - 12/12, Pete Schultz & Cheryl Nolte - 12/13, Bernard Mullins - 12/14, Lena Weiler - 12/16

THE FLOWERS ADORNING THE ALTAR are given to the glory of God by Dayre Horton in memory of Darleen Merritt.

ADVENT SEASON IS HERE!: Our next Advent event will be THIS Wednesday, December 13th! Everyone is invited to the fellowship potluck meal starting at 5:30 PM followed by a casual service and various, favorite Christmas Carols starting at 6:30 PM. For the meal, bring a favorite dish or two and enjoy sharing with fellow friends. Drinks, plates, utensils, and fellowship will be provided. **Everyone is invited**, even if you are not able to bring a favorite dish. (soups, salads, meats, and casseroles welcome!) **Meal - 5:30 PM and Service 6:30 PM**

VOTER'S MEETING: The quarterly Voter's meeting will be TODAY starting at 9:30 AM.

NEW CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS: in and around the church were donated and hung by ladies of the LWML in celebration of Christ's birth! Thank you, Shirley

STAR STRUCK?: TODAY at the IRSC Planetarium. **Please remember to be on time, 3 PM,**

OFFICE HOURS: The "Church Office" is open in the ACC Complex from 9:00 AM through 12:00 (Noon) daily, Monday - Friday. The office is overseen on Monday by Diane Heinz, Tuesday - Thursday by Kevin Garbers and Friday by Vance Ablott. Please feel free to stop by or call anytime during those hours. Office phone is 772 - 871 - 6599 After hours you can contact Kevin at 772-971-9200 or Pastor Cris at 770 - 328 - 5078.

ALTAR GUILD: if you would like to help with setting up the altar for Sunday services, Please talk with Betsy Ablott, Diane Heinz, Joyce Strickler or Shirley Mullins.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY: THIS Thursday at 11:00 AM. Come here to the church or watch the Live Streamed for those at home.

SECOND SUNDAY SCHOOL: Children ages 3 and above, please stay after fellowship time today for Second Sunday School. We'll have fun with Bible themed activities from 11:45 AM to 12:45 PM every second Sunday of the month.

GIVING: We are here to provide “Grace and Peace in a Confusing and Trying Time” to those in our church and community. Thank you for your past and continual prayers and financial support to Grace and your community.

THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBER? \$202.00 was received on December 7th!! Thank You! If you have “Choice Dollars” available, please consider directing them to Grace Lutheran Church. All “Choice Dollars” that are received go to paying down our mortgage on the new building. For the nine months this year we have received \$2,631 from Thrivent Choice! Thank you: Joe, Shirley, Vance, Bernard, Bertha, Sandra, Robert Z., Carol, Jacqueline, Leona, Kevin, Robert, Elizabeth and Cheryl. for your Grace designation of Choice Dollars.

CHRISTMAS DÉCOR: Praise the Lord through your gift of a donation to purchase poinsettias and other decorations to decorate for our Christmas services. As in the past, you may designate your gift as a “memorial” or “in honor of.” Fill out & place the form into the offering plate, or put it in the mail, along with your donation marked “Christmas Décor”. Thank you.
P.S. You can also send in a check with a note. You don’t need the form.



ADOPT-A-STREET will be THIS Tuesday, December 12th at 8:30 AM! The meeting place will be on the corner of Torino and Conus. For more information contact: Judy Fredrich (561) 315-9555 or retslvnlg@outlook.com

COMMUNION: If you, or someone you know, would like to celebrate Holy Communion but prefer a small group or are unable to attend Sunday service, Pastor Cris is happy to celebrate the meal in a small group with you. **Please call the church at (772) 871-6599**, and Pastor Cris would be happy to set aside a time for you to come in and receive communion and partake of this wonderful meal.

FROM THE ALZHEIMER’S COMMUNITY CARE CENTER! There is a wish list of needs to assist in the operation of this center to help provide care for our clients. If you could help, it would be greatly appreciated. **December & January Wish list:** Candy Canes - 12/26, Fig Newtons - 01/16, Popcorn - 01/19, Hot Chocolate - 01/31. (Dates listed indicate a special celebration on that day)

These items are needed regularly: Seasonal Crafts/Decorations, Beach Balls/Balloons, Wild Bird Feed, Gift cards to Walmart for crafts, Assorted Bingo Prizes, Assorted Sugar Free Chocolate and Decaf Coffee. Thank you for your support!

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS: ARE HERE! These coupon books are chalked full of various discount coupons. The books sell for \$35.00 each, and \$10.00 will go to the church . They are available in the fellowship hall, or you can stop by the office, 9:00-Noon, during the week!

REAL LIFE CHILDREN'S RANCH TREE: Thank you for supporting us! If you forgot your gift or have questions please contact Vivian Barto @ 810-423-7877.

12/10 *Worship assistants: 8:30 - Bob F. & 10:15 - Dave V.*
Scripture Readers: 8:30 - Jay H. & 10:15 - Pamula H.

12/17 *Worship assistants: 8:30 - Phil F. & 10:15 Ed B.*
Scripture Readers: 8:30 - Betsy A. & 10:15 - Jan L.
Readings: Micah 5:2-4, John 5:1-15, Luke 2:8-20 (NIV)

QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK: *EMMANUEL: JOY IN THE MIDST - Oh Christmas Tree*

1. Describe a time when a Christmas celebration didn't quite go as planned.
 2. Read Matthew 1:18-25. How does Joseph's life not quite go as planned? How does God work anyway?
 3. Read Matthew 9: 9-13. Why did Jesus eat with Matthew's friends? Why did the Pharisees complain about it?
 4. Think of some shortcomings in your life? What does it mean that Emmanuel comes even for those times?
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CHRISTMAS DÉCOR: Praise the Lord through your gift of a donation to purchase poinsettias and other decorations to decorate for our Christmas services. As in the past, you may designate your gift as a 'memorial' or 'in honor of.' Fill out & place the form into the offering plate, or put it in the mail, along with your donation marked 'Christmas Décor'.



Thank you.

P.S. You can also send in a check with a note. You don't need the form

UPCOMING SERVICES

Wednesday, December 17th, Advent, Meal at 5:30PM, Carol Singing at 6:30 PM
Sunday, December 24th, 10:15 AM - abbreviated worship and Communion service,
Christmas Eve services: 4 PM (With Korean congregation) & 7 PM service
Monday, Christmas Day with Communion and Sunday, December 31st - 10:15 AM
(No 8:30 service on December 24th and 31st.)

REMEMBER THOSE ON THE PRAYER LIST In an effort to keep our prayer list up to date and be sure everyone is listed, please make your requests in writing or email.



- **place the** pink completed prayer form into the offering plate or on the office desk.
- **or by email** to: www.GraceLutheranPSL.com/pray

Your loved one/ones will remain on the list for three weeks. If you wish someone to remain longer, you will need to make another request. By doing this, we will also ensure that Pastor Cris is aware of updates to the status of everyone's needs.

***PINK PRAYER REQUEST FORMS CAN BE FOUND ON THE COUNTER IN THE NARTHEX.**

PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF...

Susan Becker (Port St. Lucie Rehabilitation and Healthcare)

Gerald (Jerry) Davis (Harbor Place, Senior Living Community)

Diane Fox (Port St. Lucie Rehabilitation and Healthcare)

Debra Lemke

Norm Neuberger (Palms of St. Lucie West)

Family and wife Vanessa of Michael Mocerino (Who Passed away last week)

Bill Creelman

Karen Albano

Marita Albano

Joe Gannon

Richard & Marie Harms

Fred Kutschinski

Thomas & Marilyn Piotrowicz

Barbara Scheer

Claren Kerstner

Jenny Brendlinger

Marita Albano

Al & Doris Vollmann

Friends and Family

Marty Lauth (Father-in-law to Mark Adrian (Cris' Pastor Friend))

Carolyn Bouvier (entering Hospice Care)

Maurice Bouvier

Don Medlin (Heart issues, Cousin of Cheryl Nolte)

Josh (surgery, mrsa & sepsis found)

Charles and family (Friends of Dave Vik)

Gary Pistner (Hospitalized - Lyn's Husband)

Nathan (Katie McNally Father)

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

The lost and lonely people in the world that the message of Christ's love and forgiveness will be shared with them and they are able to find peace and joy in the knowledge of His resurrection

Meschac and the Habitat For Children's Ministries. May those who work with Habitat Ministries in Haiti remain safe and healthy while assisting those in need on this island nation.