

Sunday Service

December 19, 2021 - 8:30 AM & 10:15 AM

Live Broadcast at 10:15 AM



4th Sunday in Advent

Await: Daily Gifts from a Loving Father

The Empty Tomb

Grace Lutheran Church

555 SW Cashmere Blvd.

Port St. Lucie, FL 34986-2034

Office: 772-871-6599

Gracelutheranpsl@gmail.com

www.GraceLutheranPSL.com

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 worshipping at home, whether near or far, we are so happy that you are sharing this worship with us from your homes.

To Everyone: Please check Grace Lutheran's website daily! www.GraceLutheranPSL.com

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: We have moved Holy Communion to the end of our worship service. 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.

The distribution of the bread by an Elder and the wine in individual cups will be by Pastor Cris. ***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.

Await: Daily Gifts From a Loving Father

Remember being little and excitedly waiting for Christmas to come. As we await the coming messiah, it's like we are moving on a grand advent calendar, moving closer to the coming Christ. But waiting is hard and can feel like there is nothing good for us. In that struggle of waiting God leaves us daily gifts, a foretaste of what is to come.

Today: **The Empty Tomb**

"He will swallow up death forever," pronounces the prophet Isaiah as he looks across the future, seeing the shroud which is holding all the creation down. Those words from the prophet ring out with a sure hope as we look inside the empty tomb.

---- THE OPENING HYMN

“Joy to the World” (LW 53 Vs 1 - 4)

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive its King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

-- Opening

*But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel. (Matt 2:6 NKJV)*

--- 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.

Thank you, loving heavenly Father, for coming with power to the Virgin Mary and making her the mother of our Lord. Come to us with your Holy Spirit, so that we may receive your saving word and rejoice in our Savior. For he lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN

--THE HYMN OF PRAISE

“What Child is This” (LW 61 Vs. 1-3)

- 1. What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping.
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!**
- 2. Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!**
- 3. So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh: Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born. The babe, the son of Mary.**

THE FIRST LESSON Isaiah 25:4-9

The phrase, “he will swallow up death” is alluding to some of Israel’s neighbors who considered that “death” was a god.

For you have been a stronghold to the poor,
a stronghold to the needy in his distress,
a shelter from the storm and a shade
from the heat;
for the breath of the ruthless is like a storm
against a wall,
like heat in a dry place.
You subdue the noise of the foreigners;
as heat by the shade of a cloud,
so the song of the ruthless is put down.

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will
make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged
wine,
of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine
well refined.
And he will swallow up on this mountain
the covering that is cast over all peoples,
the veil that is spread over all nations.
He will swallow up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears from
all faces,
and the reproach of his people he will
take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
It will be said on that day,

“Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.

This is the Lord; we have waited for him;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: THANKS BE TO GOD!

THE SECOND LESSON

Hebrews 10:5-10

He who embodied the sins of the world
carries His own blood into the holy
presence.

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,

but a body have you prepared for me;
in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,

as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.”

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE: THANKS BE TO GOD

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 1:46-55

Mary’s response in poetry isn’t simply religious; it has powerful social and political overtones. It speaks of a great reversal, what might be called a social, economic, and political revolution

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations
will call me blessed;
for he who is mighty has done great things

for me, and holy is his name.

And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the
thoughts of their hearts;

he has brought down the mighty from their
thrones and exalted those of humble estate;

he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

as he spoke to our fathers,

to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

PEOPLE: PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST

--- PROFESSION
THE APOSTLES CREED

--- 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.**

--- THE SERMON
Await: **The Empty Tomb**

--THE OFFERTORY

“Create in me a clean heart” (LW pg 143)

***Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit with-in me.
Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold
me with Your free Spirit.***

--- PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

(after each petition)

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,
PEOPLE: HEAR OUR PRAYER.

--- THE LORD’S PRAYER

The Apostles Creed
I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ,
His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived
by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified,
died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day
He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the
right hand of God,
the Father, Almighty.
From thence
He will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Our Father who art in heav’n
Hallowed be Thy name
Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heav’n
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those
Who trespass against us
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For Thine is the kingdom
And the power and the glory
Forever and ever.
Amen

----- 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

“Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him, all creatures here below;

Praise him above, ye heav’nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

----- 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 Pastor Cris has concentrated 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 Pastor Cris 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.

--- ADDITIONAL HYMNS

"INFANT HOLY, INFANT LOWLY"

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

- 1. Infant holy, Infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swiftly winging, angels singing, Bells are ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!**
- 2. Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!**

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

- 1. It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
Peace on the earth good will to all, from heavn's all-gracious King!
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**
- 2. Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**
- 3. All you, beneath your heavy load, by care and guilt bent low.
Who toil along a drea-ry way with pain-ful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; of Him the angels sing.**

4. For lo, the days have come to pass by prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear the song the angels sing.

"Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates"

Copyright: Commissioned through the Michigan District, LCMS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of Glory waits. The King of kings is drawing near, The Savior of the world is here. Life and salvation He doth bring; Therefore rejoice and gladly sing. To God the Father raise Your joyful songs of praise.</p> | <p>3. How blest the land, the city blest, Where Christ the ruler is confessed! O peaceful hearts and happy homes To whom this King in triumph comes! The cloudless sun of joy is He Who comes to set His people free. To God the Spirit raise Your happy shouts of praise.</p> |
| <p>2. A righteous Helper comes to thee; His chariot is humility, His kingly crown is holiness, His scepter, pity in distress. The end of all our woe he brings; Therefore the earth is glad and sings. To Christ the Savior raise Your grateful hymns of praise.</p> | <p>4. Fling wide the portals of your heart; Make it a temple set apart From earthly use for heav'n's employ, Adorned with prayer and love and joy, So shall your Sov'reign enter in And new and nobler life begin. To God alone be praise For word and deed and grace.</p> |

---- **THIS WEEK AT GRACE - Today**

December 19, 2021

Worship Services

8:30 AM & 10:15 AM

Live-streamed on www.gracelutheranpsl.com

10:15 AM

Korean Church Worship

1:00 PM

Rest of the week

December 20 - December 25, 2021

Individual/Small Group Communion

Wednesday, 11:00 AM

TCFGC (ACC Hall)

Wednesday, 6:30 PM

Christmas Eve

Friday, 4:00 PM & 7:00 PM

Christmas Day - with Communion

Saturday, 10:15 AM

Next Sunday, December 26

One Service at 10:15 AM

Up-Coming! January 2, 2022 one service at 10:15 only.

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

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK: Herbert Schaus - 12/20, Dayre Horton - 12/22

THE FLOWERS ADORNING THE ALTAR are given to the glory of God by the members & friends of Grace Lutheran Church and the Korean Church.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES: This Friday there will be two services, 4PM and 7PM. Both services will be similar with the addition of the Korean congregation at the 7PM service. The 4PM service will be streamed and available for viewing. **Christmas Day** worship will be at 10:15 with communion.

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 our youth activity fund. They are available in the fellowship hall, or you can stop by the office, 9:00-Noon, during the week.

PARKING SPOTS: Please remember the two parking spaces closest to the ACC center are for their use during the week. Their clients need close access for those with walkers and handicapped.

ACC REQUEST: If you need to go into the ACC side of the building they are asking that you PLEASE check in at the front desk, FIRST. This is being requested for the health and security of the clients.

THRIVENT FINANCIAL MEMBER? 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. This month we have received \$216 through Thrivent Choice!

MINIMUM IRA WITHDRAWAL? Did you know you can make direct payments to Grace Lutheran from your IRA that can be beneficial for our church and lower your tax liability? Grace can accept transfers of stocks and bonds directly into our “AmeriTrade” account. See Kevin for info.

WEDNESDAY COMMUNION AND THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY: Will resume in the new year.

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

12/19 ***Worship assistants:** 8:30 - Kevin G. & 10:15 - Ed B.
Scripture Readers: 8:30 - Piper N. & 10:15 - Heather P.*

12/26 ***Worship assistants:** 10:15 - Phil F.
Readers: 10:15 - Judy F.
Readings: Exodus 13:1-3, 11-15, Colossians 3:12-17 and Luke 2:22-40 (ESV)*

QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK: “Await: [The Empty Tomb](#)”

1. Why can Christmas be hard for people who have lost loved ones?
2. Read Isaiah 25:6-9. How does Isaiah beautifully describe what happens to death?
3. What about this great feast, brought about by Jesus’ return, do you look most forward to?