

*December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020*  
*Second Sunday in Advent*



*WHILE you are waiting... BE at PEACE WITH EVERYONE*  
2 PETER 3:14

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
MISSOURI ~ SYNOD  
308 Byrne Street  
Smithville, TX 78957  
512-237-2108  
Divine Service 10 AM

**Pastor Timothy Appel**



**Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church!** We give thanks that our gracious Lord Jesus Christ has gathered us together here for his Divine Service. Today again our Lord comes to serve us and lavish us with his gifts of life, forgiveness, and salvation. Rejoicing in those wonderful gifts, we sing with David in Psalm 84: “How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! A day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.”

**In our readings today:** *“The gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”* (Mark 1:1) begins when John the Baptist appears and comes *“proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins”* (Mark 1:4). As the prophet Isaiah had written, John is the messenger of the Lord, sent before His face to prepare His way. To this day, the ministry of the forerunner continues in the preaching of the Law and the Gospel and in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. By these ways and means, *“the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together”* (Is. 40:5), and the Good Shepherd *“will gather the lambs in his arms”* (Is. 40:11). He speaks *“tenderly to Jerusalem,”* and He comforts His people by pardoning their iniquity (Is. 40:1–2). What is more, He promises *“new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells”* (2 Peter 3:13). Repent, therefore, and humble yourself as you wait for His coming in peace (2 Peter 3:14), because He *“is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9).

**Hearing,** Ask an usher for one of the wireless hearing assistance units.

**Holy Communion** is a sacred gift from Christ to His Church. In this meal, He gives His true body and blood under bread and wine into our mouths in order to forgive our sins and strengthen our union with Him and with one another (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17). Christians receive this Sacrament trusting Jesus’ own words, repenting of all their sin, and confessing the faith taught in Holy Scripture together in unity (Matthew 5:23-24; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 11:17-26). For this reason, and because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm (1 Corinthians 11:27-34), we ask that those who have not yet been instructed and those who are not members of a congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to speak with the pastor before receiving Holy Communion.

### **A Prayer Before Worship**

*O Lord, our creator, redeemer, and comforter, as we come together to worship You in spirit and in truth, we humbly pray that You would open our hearts to the preaching of Your Word so that we may repent of our sins, believe in Jesus Christ as our only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear us for His sake. Amen*

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP BELL**

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

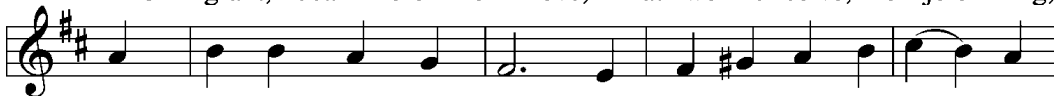
**WELCOME**

# When All the World Was Cursed

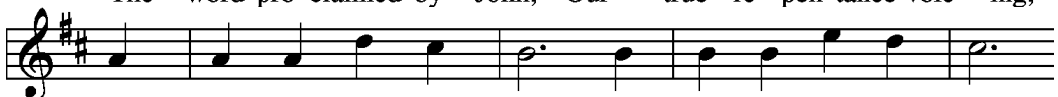
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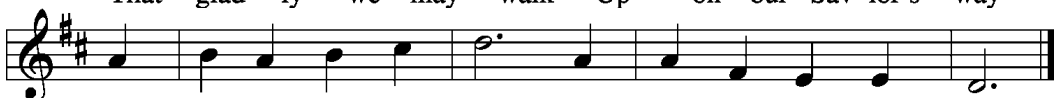
1 When all the world was cursed By Mo-ses' con-dem-na - tion,  
2 Be - fore he yet was born, He leaped in joy - ful meet - ing,  
3 Be - hold the Lamb of God That bears the world's trans-gres - sion,  
4 O grant, dear Lord of love, That we re-ceive, re-joic - ing,



Saint John the Bap - tist came With words of con - so - la - tion.  
Con - fess - ing Him as Lord Whose moth - er he was greet - ing.  
Whose sac - ri - fice re - moves The dev - il's dread op - pres - sion.  
The word pro - claimed by John, Our true re - pen - tance voic - ing,



With true fore - run - ner's zeal The great - er One he named,  
By Jor - dan's roll - ing stream, A new E - li - jah bold,  
Be - hold the Lamb of God, Who takes a - way our sin,  
That glad - ly we may walk Up - on our Sav - ior's way



And Him, as yet un - known, As Sav - ior he pro - claimed.  
He tes - ti - fied of Him Of whom the proph - ets told:  
Who for our peace and joy Will full a - tone - ment win.  
Un - til we live with Him In His e - ter - nal day.

*Stand*

**Invocation** (*God has given us our beginning in Baptism, so the Divine Service begins in His Name.*)

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the  $\text{✠}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**Confession:** (*We cannot come into the presence of our holy God on our own. We recognize our sinfulness and plead for mercy on account of Christ.*)

**P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C** who made heaven and earth.

**P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**C** and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

- P** O almighty God, merciful Father,  
**C** I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

**Absolution:** (*God speaks His words of forgiveness to us through His servant, the pastor.*)

- P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

## Service of the Word

**Introit:** (*Forgiven by God, He invites us into his presence as we speak words from the Psalms.*)

*Ps. 80:1, 8a, 9b, 7; antiphon: Ps. 80:3*

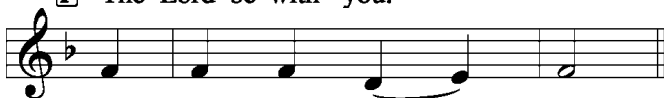
Restore us, O God;  
 let your face shine, that we may be saved!  
**Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!  
 You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.**  
 You brought a vine out of Egypt;  
 it took deep root and filled the land.  
**Restore us, O God of hosts;  
 let your face shine, that we may be saved!**  
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
 and to the Holy Spirit;  
 as it was in the beginning,  
 is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Restore us, O God;  
 let your face shine, that we may be saved!

**Salutation:** (*The pastor and congregation greet each other in the Lord's presence.*)

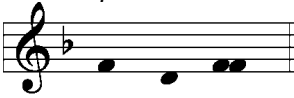


**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.

**Collect:** (Many of these prayers have been used in the church for over 1,500 years. They “collect” the Gospel theme for the day.)



**P** Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**G** A - men.

Sit

**Scripture Readings:** (Jesus speaks to us in His Word as our crucified and risen Savior.)

### Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:1–11

**P** Today's Old Testament reading is from Isaiah, the fortieth chapter

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,  
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades  
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;

lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;  
lift it up, fear not;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Behold your God!"  
<sup>10</sup>Behold, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
behold, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.  
<sup>11</sup>He will tend his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms;  
he will carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead those that are with young.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Gradual:** (*The Gradual is a portion of a psalm or other Scripture passage that responds to the Old Testament reading and transitions us toward the words of Jesus in the Gospel.*)

*Zech. 9:9; Ps. 118:26, alt.*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

**Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.**

Behold, your king is coming to you;

**righteous and having salvation.**

Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

**From the house of the Lord we bless you.**

## Epistle

*2 Peter 3:8–14*

**P** Today's Epistle reading is from 2 Peter, the third chapter.

<sup>8</sup>But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! <sup>13</sup>But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## Holy Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the first chapter.



**C** Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord. <sup>1</sup>The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,  
"Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way,

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
'Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,"

<sup>4</sup>John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C** Praise be to Thee, O Christ. **Creed:** *(God works faith in us by His Word that we hear in Scripture. We confess that faith using one of three creeds that the church has used throughout the years and across the world.)*

## Nicene Creed

**C** I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures

and ascended into heaven  
 and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
 And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
 whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the Lord and giver of life,  
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
 who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
 who spoke by the prophets.  
 And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
 I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
 and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
 and the life  $\text{†}$  of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

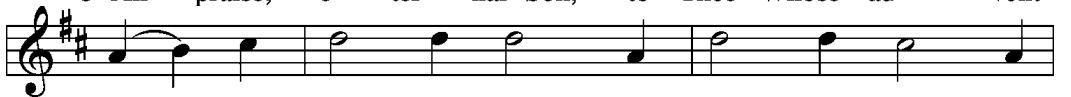
**Hymn of the Day:** *(This hymn especially relates to the Gospel theme for the day. Each hymn provides a way for us to hear God's Word set to music.)*

**On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry**

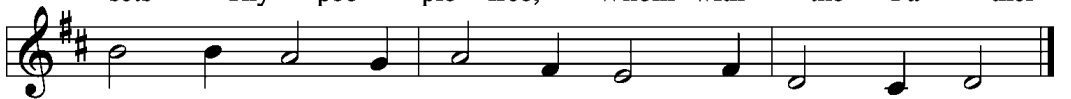
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1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An - nounc - es  
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; Make straight the  
 3 We hail Thee as our Sav - ior, Lord, Our ref - uge  
 4 Lay on the sick Thy heal - ing hand And make the  
 △ 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to Thee Whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and hear - ken,  
 way for God with - in, And let us all our  
 and our great re - ward; With - out Thy grace we  
 fall - en strong to stand; Show us the glo - ry  
 sets Thy peo - ple free, Whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
 hearts pre - pare For Christ to come and en - ter there.  
 waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
 of Thy face Till beau - ty springs in ev - 'ry place.  
 we a - dore And Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

**Sermon "Stir Up Our Hearts"**

Mark 1:4

*(Based on one of the Scripture readings, the pastor proclaims God's Word of Law and Gospel for our lives today.)*



## Votum

- P** The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.  
**C** Amen.

Stand

**Offertory:** *(The congregation responds to God's forgiveness with a sacrifice of praise.)* LSB 192



**C** Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -  
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it  
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -  
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

**Prayer of the Church:** *(The congregation joins together to pray for ourselves, for the Church, and for people throughout the world.)*

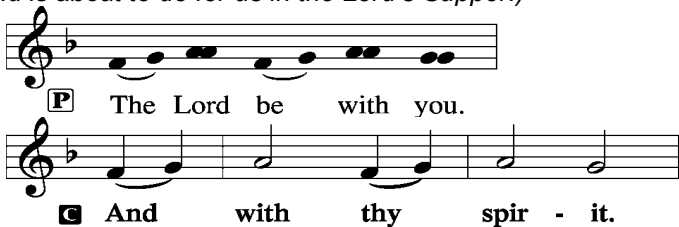
- P** Lord, in Your mercy,  
**C** hear our prayer.

*Close of the Prayers*

- P** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
**C** Amen.

## Service of the Sacrament

**Preface:** *(The Service of the Sacrament begins with praise and thanksgiving for what God has done and is about to do for us in the Lord's Supper.)* LSB 194



**P** The Lord be with you.  
**C** And with thy spir - it.



**P** Lift up your hearts.



**C** We lift them up un - to the Lord.



**P** Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.



**C** It is meet and right so to do.

**P** It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**Sanctus:** (Latin for "holy." The division between heaven and earth is gone, and we cry out to God with the heavenly host, "Holy, Holy, Holy!" to welcome our Savior Jesus (Is.6:3; Mt. 21:9).) LSB 195



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

**Lord's Prayer:** *(We pray the words that Jesus gave us to pray.)*

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C** **Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
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.**

**Words of Our Lord:** *(We hear Jesus' words that in the Sacrament He gives us His very body and blood in, with, and under the bread and the wine.)* LSB 197

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\dagger$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\dagger$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**Pax Domini:** *(Latin for "The peace of the Lord." The pastor holds the body and blood of Jesus before the congregation and speaks the Lord's peace as the very Gospel.)* LSB 197

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** **Amen.**

**Agnus Dei:** *(Latin for "Lamb of God." As John the Baptist cried (John 1:29), so we sing to Christ, our Lamb who was sacrificed for our sins.)* LSB 198

**C** **O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.**

Sit

## Distribution

*In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:*

- P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart † in peace.
- G** Amen.

**Post-Communion Canticle:** *(Having received Christ in our mouths and into our lives in the Sacrament, we give thanks and go forth in peace.)*

## Nunc Dimittis

LSB 199

**G** Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gen-tiles and the glo-ry of Thy peo-ple Is-ra-el. Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ev-er shall be, world without end. A-men.

## Thanksgiving

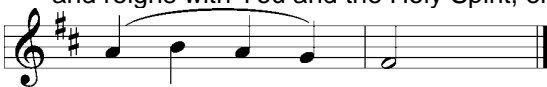
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**A** O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
**G** and His mercy endureth for - ev - er.

**Post-Communion Collect:** *(We thank God for all He has done in the Sacrament and ask that it would show forth in our lives.)*

**P** Let us pray.

O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



**C** A - men.

### Benedicamus



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.

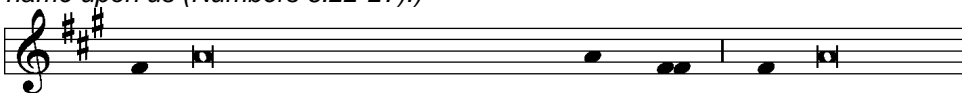


**A** Bless we the Lord.

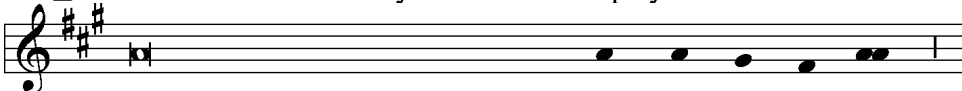


**C** Thanks be to God.

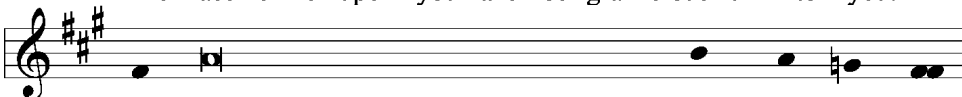
**Benediction:** *(Just as the Divine Service began, so it ends. We go forth with our Lord's blessing and His name upon us (Numbers 6:22-27).)* LSB 202



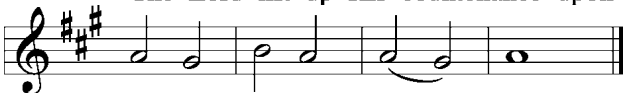
**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



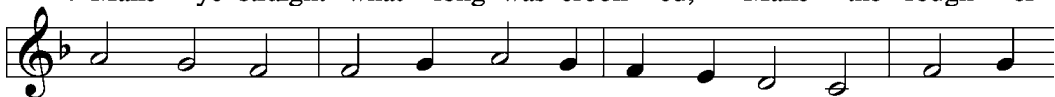
**C** A-men, a-men, a - men.

# Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

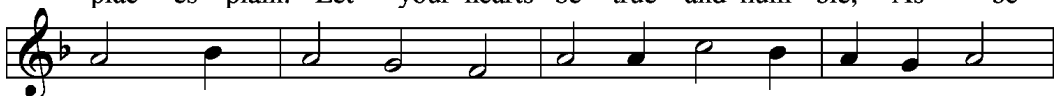
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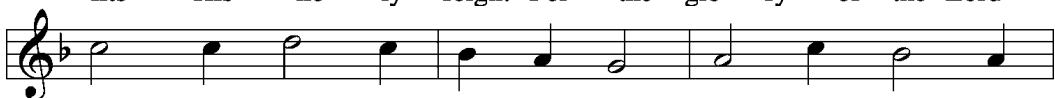
1 "Com - fort, com - fort ye My peo - ple, Speak ye peace," thus  
2 Yea, her sins our God will par - don, Blot - ting out each  
3 Hark, the her - ald's voice is cry - ing In the des - ert  
4 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed; Make the rough - er



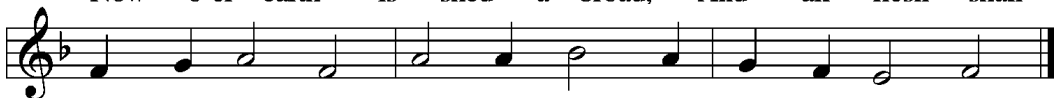
saith our God; "Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, Mourn - ing  
dark mis - deed; All that well de - served His an - ger He no  
far and near, Call - ing sin - ners to re - pen - tance, Since the  
plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, As be -



'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem  
more will see or heed. She hath suf - fered man - y a day,  
King - dom now is here. O that warn - ing cry o - bey!  
fits His ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



Of the peace that waits for them; Tell her that her  
Now her griefs have passed a - way; God will change her  
Now pre - pare for God a way; Let the val - leys  
Now o'er earth is shed a - broad, And all flesh shall



sins I cov - er And her war - fare now is o - ver."  
pin - ing sad - ness In - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.  
rise to meet Him And the hills bow down to greet Him.  
see the to - ken That His Word is nev - er bro - ken.

## Silent Prayer After Worship

*Almighty and merciful God, we have again worshiped in Your presence and received both forgiveness for our many sins and the assurance of Your love in Jesus Christ. We thank You for this undeserved grace and ask You to keep us in faith until we inherit eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**The Mission of Grace Lutheran Church is to joyfully and enthusiastically Model and share the gospel with the lost.**

Grace Lutheran Church  
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Office Phone: 512-237-2108  
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Email: [gracelutheransmithville@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheransmithville@gmail.com)  
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Learning Center Director, Angel Hurst  
401 Wilkes Street, Smithville, TX 78957  
Office Phone: 512-360-2800  
Fax Number: 512-237-5990  
Email: [gracelutheranlearningcenter@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheranlearningcenter@gmail.com)

**Serving the Lord During Today's Worship Service**

<b>8:30am</b>	<b>C. Johannessen</b>	<b>Organist(s):</b>	<b>June Parker</b>
<b>Elders:</b>	<b>Jack Page</b>		<b>Esther Wolff</b>
<b>10am Elders:</b>	<b>Davey Kadlecek</b>		<b>Kim Appel</b>
	<b>Brad Zimmerhanel</b>		<b>Ruth Eaton</b>
<b>Trustees:</b>	<b>Ronnie Pietsch</b>	<b>Altar</b>	<b>Linda Read</b>
	<b>Colby Zimmerhanel</b>	<b>Guild:</b>	<b>Frances Mynar</b>
	<b>Allan Riddle</b>		

**AT GRACE THIS WEEK**

<b><u>Sun. Dec. 6</u></b>	<b><u>Mon Dec. 7</u></b>	<b><u>Tue. Dec. 8</u></b>	<b><u>Wed. Dec. 9</u></b>
8:30am-Worship/Communion 10am- Worship/Communion 11am-Family Bible Study	7pm- Elders Mtg	9am-Pastor Circuit Mtg	5:30- Youth Confirmation 7pm-Advent Service
<b><u>Thurs. Dec. 10</u></b>	<b><u>Fri. Dec. 11</u></b>	<b><u>Sat. Dec. 12</u></b>	<b><u>Sun. Dec. 13</u></b>
	Pastor Away- Family Day		8:30am-Worship/Communion 10am- Worship/Communion 11am-Family Bible Study

**Ongoing Worship Services at Grace**

In order to continue to receive the gifts of God in the Divine Service together at Grace, all the while protecting the physical health of our neighbors during this time of pandemic, the following plan has been put in place by our elders for the coming weeks:

- Two worship services will be offered each Sunday, one at 8:30 AM and one at 10:00 AM. Each week, you will need to sign up for your desired service ahead of time, either by using the online tool sent by e-mail and posted on Facebook or by calling the church office.
- We will practice social distancing throughout the sanctuary. We will skip every other pew in the first service, and then switch the pews for the second. Households will sit together, leaving at least 6 feet of space between other households.
- Families will be ushered forward one at a time for the distribution of the Sacrament. Rather than kneeling at the rail, this will take place immediately in front of the chancel, in a method similar to what we use during our service before the bazaar. Individual cups and the chalice will both continue to be offered; the purificator, used to wipe the chalice, will be soaked in neutral spirit with extremely high alcohol content in order to sanitize the chalice between communicants
- Commonly touched surfaces will be sanitized between services.

- The assisting elder and I will wear masks during the distribution of the Sacrament. In accordance with current city and state ordinances, those who come to in-person worship should wear a mask or other face covering.
- Previously implemented health-conscious practices will be continued. The service will be printed fully in bulletin so you will not need to use the hymnal. We will forgo the passing of offering plates, the sharing of the peace, and handshakes during greeting. Please enter the church through the doors that open to the parking lot (these will be held open for you), and avoid going into the parish hall. We will also avoid congregating in the narthex.
- Additional services may be added to accommodate more worshippers.

For those who are unable or choose not to attend due to health concerns, opportunities will continue for you to stream services live on Facebook, and the Sacrament will continue to be offered on an individual basis by appointment. For those who are not leaving their homes at all, I will also begin to offer to visit you with the Sacrament in a way that will expose you to the least risk possible, all the while delivering the Body and Blood of Christ to you. Upon setting up a time to visit you, I'd arrive and set up the Sacrament on a table on your front porch and then sit in my lawn chair at least six feet away. At that point, you can come out; we'll visit and receive the Sacrament. Once you've gone back inside, I'll take care of clean up.

### **Supplies for Increased Gatherings**

As Grace gathers together for worship again, it is important that we are able to prepare our facilities properly with appropriate cleaning supplies. We do not want to hoard these materials; we only want to make sure we have what is needed. The items we need most are disinfecting wipes, disinfecting spray, and hand sanitizer. If you are able to donate one of these items, it is greatly appreciated. They can be left on one of the benches outside of the parish hall during normal office hours (9 AM-2 PM, Tuesday-Friday); call the office to let us know, and items will be brought inside. Although we know these items are hard to find right now, we hope that everyone in the congregation looking for them will help us have the items that we need. Thank you for supporting Grace in this way!

### **Visit with Pastor**

If you need to contact Pastor Appel, you can do so via e-mail ([timothyappel@gmail.com](mailto:timothyappel@gmail.com)) or phone (512-237-2108 at church or 512-237-9664 at home). Pastor Appel is normally in the office between 9:00am and 12:00 noon, Monday through Thursday. He is available in the afternoons as well, but often uses that time to make nursing home, hospital or home visits. If you are unable to reach Pastor, please contact your Elder (listed on bulletin board outside of Office).

### **Online Resources**

Each week, our congregation live streams the 10:00 AM Sunday morning on our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/gracelutheranchurchsmithville/](http://www.facebook.com/gracelutheranchurchsmithville/)). If you are unable to be in worship on a particular week, this is a great way that you can still hear the Word of God. It's also a great way to introduce someone to our congregation and the good news about Jesus. You can also go back and listen to sermons from previous weeks. Bulletins and newsletters are also available online at our website, [www.glcs.org](http://www.glcs.org).

### **LWML Christmas Card Sale**

Are you in need of Christmas cards? Check out the selection provided by the LWML in the Narthex. The cost of cards is indicated on each box. Payment can be placed in the container on the table; checks should be made out to "Grace Lutheran LWML."



## KFUO Bible Study Resources

Please make use of the fantastic resources for growth in your Christian faith produced by the LCMS radio station, KFUE, where Pastor Appel hosts the Bible study, *Sharper Iron*, every weekday morning at 8 AM. **This week on [kfuo.org](http://kfuo.org)**, hear Advent midweek service from Village Lutheran Church 12/9 at 12:00 p.m. CT, study Advent with the Prophets on *Sharper Iron* (weekdays at 8:00 a.m. CT), and consider the practical application of our Lutheran Confessions on *Concord Matters* (12/8 at 2:00 p.m. CT). Find your favorite programs on demand at [kfuo.org](http://kfuo.org) or wherever you get your podcasts!

## Family Sunday School



Continuing at least through the end of 2020, Grace is having a family Sunday school class. This class is intended for anyone and everyone; whether you are single or married or have lots of kids or have no kids, you are welcome to join us to learn God's Word together. We start each week about 11:10 am, or as quickly as we are able after the 10:00 am service ends (if you attend the 8:30 am service, plan to come back and start gathering in the parish hall at 11:00 am). Tables are spaced appropriately throughout the parish hall, with one family per table. Pastor introduces a new Bible story each week, and our learning includes both activities done as individual families and as a large group. We also include a hymn and a craft each week. We finish about 11:45 am. Please join us to learn God's Word together as families and as a congregation!

## The Season of Advent

The season of Advent began on Sunday, November 29. This season, which begins a new Church Year, is a season of repentance and preparation for the coming of our Savior, Jesus. Not only do we prepare ourselves to celebrate His birth on Christmas, but we also prepare ourselves to receive Him in faith as He comes to us now in Word and Sacrament and to receive Him in faith when He comes again in glory on the Last Day. To that end, **special Advent devotions** are available in the narthex for you to pick up and use at home. We will also have **special midweek services** during the season of Advent at **7 PM** on the following Wednesdays: **December 2, 9, and 16**. The offerings for these three services will go to support the mission work of the Lord in three places: our Learning Center, Faith Lutheran High School, and pastoral education costs at Zion Lutheran Church in Schulenburg. Due to the ongoing pandemic, we will not have soup suppers this year, but we will still gather each Wednesday to be fed by the Word of the Lord and sing His praises in preparation for His coming. Please join us!

## Special Voters Meeting



The voters meeting to elect congregational officers and approve the congregational budget for 2021 will be held after midweek Advent worship on Wednesday, December 16. Please plan to join us to participate in these important congregational decisions.

**December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

**Third Sunday in Advent**

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Epistle Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28



### **“Faith at Christmas” Program**

FLHS students will present a Christmas concert, “Faith at Christmas,” on Tuesday, December 8th at 7:00 pm at FLHS. Program will include a collection of choir pieces, handbell pieces, hymns, scripture readings and more. Refreshments will be served following the program. Masks are required for those in attendance. Please join us!!!

\*This event will also be live streamed on Facebook, for those who would prefer to view the sounds of Christmas from home.

### **Shadow Days**

Shadow days are a great opportunity for prospective students to follow us for a day and experience what FLHS is all about. Parents, call us today at (979) 242-2889 to set up a shadow day for your child.

### **End of Year Giving**

In Proverbs 2:6, God’s Word promises: "The LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding." Faith Lutheran High School exists to instill Christ’s wisdom in His Word to prepare faithful leaders for tomorrow. Thank you for being a part of this mission through your prayers and financial support. Please prayerfully consider how you can give to further Lutheran education in our area. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mrs. Nikki Kueck at (979) 242-2889.

### **Raffle Items**

The Spring Raffle is just around the corner. The Board of Directors is currently looking for valuable items or monetary donations to be used in the raffle. Please contact Nikki Kueck if you have something to donate! Thank you!

### **Accreditation Visit**

FLHS had a very successful accreditation visit on November 8th - 10th. FLHS has been recommended for accreditation in good standing, with no major deficiencies from both the visiting team and the Texas LSAC Board. We are awaiting final approval from the National Accreditation Board next week. Praise the Lord for the wonderful blessings He continues to bestow on FLHS.

### **Thank you!**

Everyone at FLHS is blessed by each gift that we receive from our supporters. It’s not about the size of the gift, but the cheerful attitude that gives thanks to God (2 Corinthians 9:7). Whether your gift seems big or small, it is greatly appreciated and makes a bigger impact than you know!