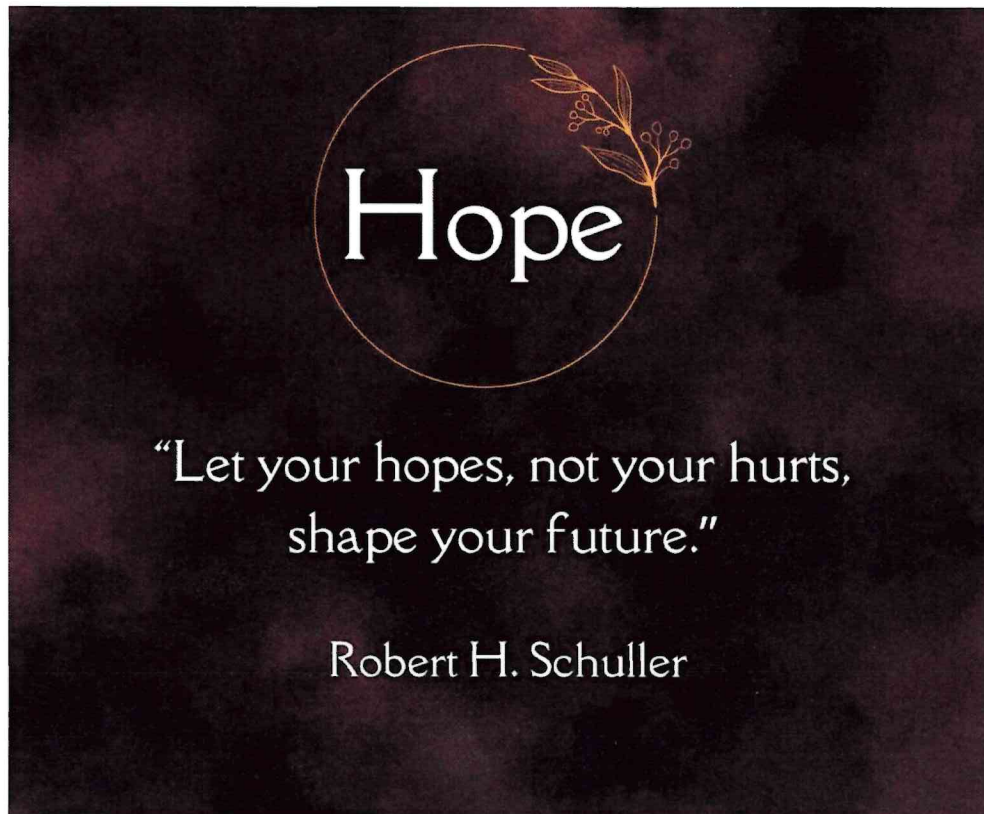


December 1, 2024

1st Sunday of Advent



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244

Church Office: 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982

Website: www.gracelutheranspnj.org

E-mail: office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net

Interim Pastor † Wendolyn Trozzo, Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant
Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.
Our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

GATHERING



WELCOME

Rev. Wendolyn Trozzo

PRELUDE

Comfort, Comfort Ye, My People

by Boehm

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

Today, as we confess our sin, we recognize how easily we overlook the gifts God gives, and we accept the sad truth that our limitations often create the conditions for sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Let us pray.

God, we want a faith that feels like more than words, but we lack your power to embody goodness. We hear your call to serve others yet feel too worn out to set the table. We hunger to taste justice but fear the burning spice of the meal. We want our place at your table but resist sitting beside a stranger. We have lost our appetites for the fullness of your grace. Forgive us and restore us with the healing wholeness of your presence.

My friends, God knows you are imperfect, but God did not invite you here today for what you have done or how you behaved. God loves you. God always cared much more for you than for your shortcomings. God forgives you all your sins.

Now repeat after me.

We accept God's forgiveness. We accept God's forgiveness.

We take our place in God's purpose. We take our place in God's purpose.

Amen. Amen.

OPENING HYMN

All Earth Is Hopeful

ELW #266

GREETING

Greetings to you in the name of the triune God, the one whose word always accomplishes: The Shaper of life, the Savior of Humanity, the Spirit of Renewal.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH



1. When twi - light leaves the even - ing sky and night re - veals the
 2. When bit - ter days and bar - ren ground sap strength and pow - er and
 3. When rough ter - rain makes prog - ress hard, God lev - els what's in the



stars, the far ho - ri - zon hope of God comes sing - ing to our hearts.
 voice, ten - a - cious faith will hold us fast; God's hope will say, re - joice!
 way; a ten - der jus - tice will car - ry us, and care will not de - lay.

Refrain

Your love is more than words, O God, a flame you kin - dle, a seed you sow, a



rose that blooms in the snow, and we will mag - ni - fy your love.

Each of our Advent candles represents God's generous goodness, the advent of Jesus, God's greatest gift, the Spirit's fluttering flicker of joy. As we light each candle, we recognize the gifts God has given us this week.

Together we pray:

As you light the candle for hope:

God, we reach for unreasonable hope;

and you prepare an incomparable future.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION/PRAYER OF THE DAY

Now that the warmth of God's presence fills this place, we pray that the Spirit will illuminate our lives through the words we hear, the songs we sing, and the pathways of prayer engraved on our hearts.

We pray: **Spirit, you know how shallow hope feels when our faith hides from what is real. Use your holy story to show us the human moments when you worked wonders for your people., so we can find hope in our lives too. Amen.**

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Take a brief moment to share the peace by greeting someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate if you are not comfortable shaking hands or touching.

Please be seated.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM

Dear friends in Christ, we gather today with the family of Jackson Richard Horrox, who have brought him to be baptized. Together, let us welcome them into this community of faith in Jesus Christ.

Let us pray. **O God, again and again in ages past you showed your mercy and grace to children. You saved the infant Moses from death with the help of his mother and sister. As you blessed Joseph and Mary and the child Jesus, bless also this family, that they may care for this child entrusted to them, bring them to the bread and cup of blessing, and help him mature in faith through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

God brings you in peace and joy to fullness of life in Christ and calls you to the waters of baptism.

God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word, God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

P: Who presents this child to receive the sacrament of baptism?

Parents and Sponsors: **We present Jackson for the sacrament of baptism.**

P: Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Jackson baptized into Christ?

Parents: **We do.**

Assistant: As you bring Jackson, to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with several responsibilities: to live with him among God's faithful people, bring him to the word of God and the Holy Supper, teach him the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in his hands the holy scriptures, and nurture him in faith and prayer, so that he may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace.

P: Do you promise to help your child grow in the Christian faith and life?

Parents and Sponsors: **We do.**

P: Sponsors, do you promise to nurture Jackson in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help him live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Sponsors: **We do.**

P: People of God, do you promise to support Jackson and pray for him in his new life in Christ?

Congregation: **We do.**

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God? **I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

I renounce them.

Do you believe in God, the Father?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

The Lord be with you. All: **And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

HOLY BAPTISM

Jackson Richard, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized.

Let us pray together. **We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth,**

cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain Jackson with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. Amen.

Jackson, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. **Amen.**

WELCOME

Assistant: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share. Join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

Applause may follow as a sign of welcome. All may be seated.

HYMN

I'm Going on a Journey

ELW #446

First Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

In the Old Testament, “righteousness” often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today’s reading, Jerusalem’s future name—“The LORD is our righteousness”—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

¹⁴ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

Al - le - lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 21st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

[Jesus said:] ²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴ “Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Wendolyn Trozzo

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Soon and Very Soon

ELW #439

Please be seated.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

God, we have turned to you today for a bit of quiet, a sliver of sabbath, a small moment to set down what we carry as we consider your word.

And into this minute of rest, you send your prophet with an axe for the root of the tree, and kindling for the burning fire.

Your call to action is surprising, and we are not always ready.

Yet we know we must help build the road where your people travel toward justice.

Our offering is received.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel

by Reichel

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

WOV #35

OFFERING PRAYER

Together we pray.

Holy Spirit, please bless these small gifts we give. **You set the table with plenty of love.**

Prepare room in your home **for my neighbor and me.**

Prepare a place in your vision **for my neighbor and me.**

Prepare a seat at your table **for my neighbor and me.**

Holy Spirit, you have blessed these gifts we give. **You set the table with plenty of love.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence. *Brief silence.*

At the end of each prayer petition when the worship assistant or pastor says, "Lord, in your mercy," please respond with "receive our prayer."

P: Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

God is with you. **And also with you.**

Offer your hearts to God. **We do, because we know God cares for us.**

We give thanks to God. **God always deserves our thanks and praise.**

God, yours was the first thought; before any human lived or knew your name, you whispered, and creation built itself around your words. Before your ancient people knew the depth of your love, you promised them goodness, and led them to freedom. **Your love grows unseen.**

Before the world knew your face, your own child was born in a quiet stable. **Your love blooms in the dark.**

Before we knew the depth of your love, your child died, crucified, and you forgave, and new life grew in the grave. **Your love echoes in the silence.**

Once you made Mary agelessly blessed. Once you turned turncoat disciples into the family of the forgiven. You wrote the words for their

hope, and they sang the song of joy. What you have done for them you have also done for us. So we give you praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

On a night of betrayal, Jesus pulled close friends closer to eat with them one last time. Jesus taught them, Jesus served them, Jesus took bread and said, This is my body, given for you, so you can eat it whenever you are hungry and every time you are hungry you can know my love.

Then Jesus took a cup filled with wine, and said, My forgiveness is more than words. This is my blood, poured out for you, so you can drink it to know that I forgive every sin.

This is the body of Jesus, the blood of Jesus.

Jesus, we remember you died. **We remember.**

We remember God's love sparked life in your dead body. **We remember.**

We remember you shall return to empty every grave. **We remember.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And we remember these gifts as we pray the way Jesus taught us.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

COMMUNION HYMN

Lamb of God

WOV #39

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to receive Holy Communion. The ushers will invite worshippers forward to fill the altar railings. Once you have received

the wafer and the red wine/white grape juice, place your empty cup in the tray and return to your pew. As places open up, worshippers will fill them in so that communion is a continuous process. If you do not wish to receive communion, or are worshipping with children who have not had First Communion, we welcome you to come forward for a blessing; as you kneel at the railing, cross your arms over your chest to show your preference to the pastor.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God, what you have planned for us unfolds slowly.
Your love is often unrecognizable, unappreciated, gentle and unnoticed.
 But in this place, we have noticed what others do not see.
We have tasted your unspoken goodness.
And we will magnify your love. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING

BLESSING

Where is the care in this world? Where is the faith we were promised? Where is the hope we desired, when peace moves into our homes, and joy is a constant presence, and justice is for everyone?

God, this world waits to know that your love is more than words.

People of God, you have already shared the advent of God's goodness. You carry the blessing of God, God, the First Whisper, Jesus, the Living Promise, Spirit, the Peaker of Hearts. Now go into this world expecting God's justice and nurturing God's peace.

God, we will magnify your love. Thanks be to you! Amen.

SENDING HYMN *Green* (sung to the tune of People Look East) **ELW #248**

When winter's gray is on the sky
 Rust upon the leaves that lie
 Red on the last few berries clinging
 Brown on the branch where the bitter wind's singing
 Even when white obscures the scene
 Still, in winter, there is green

Waving defiant pine tree boughs
 Cedar needles, stubborn and proud
 Hiding inside the seeds of summer
 And deep in the root where it sleeps under cover
 Patiently waiting there unseen
 In the winter, there is green

Death may raise its voice today
 O, but Life will have its say
 Speaking in lovers and in children
 In poets' pens and philosophers' visions
 Life is a planet's daring dream
 Earth's devotion, spoken in green

So keep it in your winter store
 Hang its garland 'round the door
 Grant to your heart its hopeful promise
 Fashion a wreath for its blessing upon us
 Winter brings browns and grays indeed
 But when it comes, remember green

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music.
 and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

POSTLUDE*Ye Sons of Men, Oh, Hearken*

by Bach

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Encourage one another in Christ.
Thanks be to God.

*We are glad for your presence today.
We hope you come again soon!*

We thank all those serving in worship today:

Worship Assistant: Edna Cordery

*Special thank you to organist H. Ray Hunsicker for
leading our music!*

The flowers sponsor this week is: Kathy Wopatek-Nigsch, in loving
memory of her father, Walter Wopatek.

The bulletins sponsor this week is: Roberta Blumenthal

Home Reading of the Week:

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³ And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Food Pantry Item for December:

Paper Towels and Kleenex/Tissues

These may be placed in the designated basket in the narthex.

*There will be a reception following worship to celebrate the
baptism of Jackson Horroxx!*



Cape Shore Chorale

and director of music

Scott J. Breiner

present

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

Sunday, December 8, 2024 @ 3 P M

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

30th & Bay Avenue

Ocean City, N. J.

Lite refreshments

Free will offering



COOKIE WALK HELPERS NEEDED

We are in need of bakers for our 17th Annual Christmas Cookie Walk! If you are willing and able to bake for this, please sign up in the narthex before or after church so we know what we can expect. We need an excessive amount of cookies, as it usually sells out within the first hour!

If you have any gently used Christmas decorations or kitchenware you no longer need or want, we can use them for our white elephant table at the Cookie Walk.

Helpers are needed the day before the Cookie Walk to receive and organize trays of cookies and baked goods. Helpers are also needed the day of the event. If you or anyone you know would be interested in a vendor table, please let us know. Only \$25 per table!

If you have any questions or wish to reserve a vendor table, please contact Heidi Toth 609-233-4156 or Sandy Piskun 609-226-5591.

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

December 1, 2024-December 7, 2024

1st Sunday of Advent 12/1/24

- 8:00AM Spoken Worship
- 8:45AM Adult Forum
- 10:15AM Traditional Worship
- Baptism of Jackson Horrox-reception following worship***
- 4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY 12/2/24

- 9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
- 10:00AM Clergy Bible Study
- 7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 12/3/24

- 9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
- 6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
- 7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 12/4/24

- 9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
- 11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
- 6:00PM AA Book Study
- 7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous
- 7:30PM Compassionate Friends

THURSDAY 12/5/24

- 9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
- 12:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
- 5:00PM Choir Rehearsal
- 7:00PM Antique Club
- 7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 12/6/24

- 10:30AM Grace Stitchers
- 7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 12/7/24

No events.

2nd Sunday of Advent 12/8/24

- 8:00AM Spoken Worship Service
- 8:45AM Adult Forum Group
- 10:15AM Traditional Worship
- 4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Tues 10:00AM-3:00PM
 Thurs-Fri 10:00AM-3:00PM

SHORE DINER

Present this bulletin on a Sunday and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace Lutheran Church. Present this on any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
 6710 Tilton Road
 Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
 609-641-3669