



# PEACE

The Sunday after Christmas

# GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | Seward, NE

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*December 27, 2020*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

We are pleased that you have chosen to worship the Lord with us today. Large print hymnals and personal assisted listening devices are available on request. The service can be heard throughout the building so that you can participate even if you have to take your child out for a while. Restrooms are in the hall between the chapel and fellowship area. If you have any questions please feel free to ask an usher.

**CONNECTION CARDS:** Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at [www.gracesewar.org](http://www.gracesewar.org) the member connect tab, or scan this code.



## **SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY**

### ***Communion***

We are celebrating the Lord's Supper today. Scripture tells us that we need to examine ourselves before we receive the Lord's Supper so that we do not take it in a harmful manner. (1 Cor. 11:27-29) For help in preparation see page 156 in the front of the hymnal.

Visitors: Because we do not want you to receive the Lord's Supper in a harmful manner we ask that you do not come forward for the Lord's Supper today if you are not members of a WELS or ELS church. The pastor will be happy to share with you the Biblical basis for this practice.

## **SERVING IN WORSHIP**

**Worship Leader**  
**Organist**

Pastor Mark A. Haefner  
Mr. Quinton Corwin

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## DIVINE SERVICE II

Divine Service II is a version of the historic liturgy of the Christian church. This order is intended to be used when Holy Communion is celebrated.

### OPENING HYMN

Peace Came to Earth | 707

707

## Peace Came to Earth



1 Peace came to earth at last that cho - sen night  
2 And who could be the same for hav - ing held  
3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen,  
4 How else could I have known you, O my God!



When an - gels clove the sky with song and light And  
The in - fant in their arms and lat - er felt The  
In flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pain, In  
How else could I have loved you, O my God! How



God em - bod - ied love and sheathed his might— Who could but  
wound-ed hands and side, all doubts dis - pelled— Who could but  
bread and wine you vis - it us a - gain— Who could but  
else could I em - brace you, O my God! Who could but



gasp: Im - man - u - el! Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!  
sigh: Im - man - u - el! Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!  
see: Im - man - u - el! Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!  
pray: Im - man - u - el! Who could but praise: Im - man - u - el!

*The picturesque language of this Jaroslav Vajda hymn vividly illustrates the weighty significance of God becoming man in Christ.*

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Tune: PEACE CAME TO EARTH (10 10 10 88) Richard Jeffrey, b. 1952 © 2000 Bimamwood Publications (ASCAP),  
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## INVOCATION<sup>1</sup>

*please stand*

**M** In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

## CONFESSION

**M** Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

**C** **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin. For faithless worrying and selfish pride, For sins of habit and sins of choice, For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do, You should cast me away from your presence forever. O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

## ABSOLUTION<sup>2</sup>

**M** Christ was born. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

## LORD, HAVE MERCY<sup>3</sup>

**M** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

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<sup>1</sup> *The name of the triune God and the sign of the cross remind worshipers of their baptisms.*

<sup>2</sup> *The use of the keys is that special power and right which Christ gave to his church on earth: to forgive the sins of penitent sinners" [The Small Catechism, First: What is the use of the keys?]. See John 20:21-23.*

<sup>3</sup> *Kyrie is the Greek word for Lord. The expression "Lord, have mercy" is one of the oldest worship responses in the Christian church.)*

**M** For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

**C** **Christ, have mercy.**

**M** For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

**C** **Lord, have mercy.**

**M** Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

**C** **Amen.**

## **GLORY BE TO GOD**

*Tune | 5*

**All glory be to God on high!  
Your name, O Lord, we glorify;  
We praise you for your peace and grace,  
Your favor toward our fallen race.**

**Our grateful thanks to you we bring,  
For your great glory, heav'nly King,  
For all, O Father, you have done  
Through Jesus Christ, your only Son.**

**O Lamb of God, to you we pray.  
You take all human sin away.  
Have mercy, Lord; receive our prayer;  
From God's right hand, your mercy share.**

**You, Christ, are holy—Lord alone;  
The Father's glory you made known.  
We by your Spirit sing again:  
"All glory be to God!" Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**M** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**M** Let us pray.

Almighty God, in mercy you sent your one and only Son to take upon himself our human nature. By his gracious coming deliver us from the corruption of our sin and transform us into the likeness of his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

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## *The Word*

### **FIRST LESSON**

*Isaiah 45:20-25*

<sup>20</sup>Gather! Come! Draw near together,  
you survivors from the nations.  
They have no knowledge—  
those who are lifting up their idols of wood  
and praying to a god that cannot save.  
<sup>21</sup>Make an announcement and come close.  
Let them consult together.  
Who made this known ahead of time?  
From time past who announced it?  
Was it not I, the LORD?  
There is no god except me,  
a righteous God and Savior.  
There is no one except me.  
<sup>22</sup>Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth,  
because I am God,  
and there is no other.  
<sup>23</sup>I have sworn by myself.  
From my mouth a righteous word has gone out,  
and it will not return unfulfilled.  
Indeed, to me every knee will bow,  
and every tongue will swear allegiance.  
<sup>24</sup>“Only in the LORD,” they will say of me,  
“Only in the LORD is there true righteousness and strength.”  
To him they will come and be ashamed—  
all those who are angry at him.  
<sup>25</sup>In the LORD, all the descendants of Israel will be justified.  
They will be praised by him. (EHV)

**M** The Word of the Lord

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND LESSON

*Colossians 3:12-17*

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's elect, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with one another and forgive each other if anyone has a complaint against anyone else. Forgive, just as Christ forgave you. <sup>14</sup>And, in addition to all these things, put on love, which ties things together in perfect unity. <sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, to which you were also called, in one body. And be thankful.

<sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup>And everything you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (EHV)

**M** The Word of the Lord

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## VERSE OF THE DAY

*Colossians 3:15*

Alleluia. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Alleluia.

♪ **A great and mighty wonder, A glorious mystery:**

**A virgin bears an infant Who veils his deity.**

**Refrain:**

**Repeat the hymn again:**

**"To God on high be glory And peace on earth to men."**

## GOSPEL

*Luke 2:25-40*

*please stand*

**M** The Gospel according to Luke chapter 2.

**C** **Glory be to you, O Lord.**

<sup>25</sup>Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, waiting for the comfort of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him.

<sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he

had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup>Moved by the Spirit he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary according to the law, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him into his arms and praised God. He said,

<sup>29</sup>Lord, you now dismiss your servant in peace, according to your word,

<sup>30</sup>because my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared before the face of all people,

<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.

<sup>33</sup>Joseph and the child's mother were amazed at the things that were spoken about him. <sup>34</sup>Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Listen carefully, this child is appointed for the falling and rising of many in Israel and for a sign that is spoken against, <sup>35</sup>so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup>Anna, a prophetess, was there. She was a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>and then she was a widow of eighty-four years. She did not leave the temple complex, since she was worshipping with fasting and prayers night and day. <sup>38</sup>Standing nearby at that very hour, she gave thanks to the Lord. She kept speaking about the child to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup>When they had accomplished everything according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town, Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God's favor was on him. (EHV)

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

**C** **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*O Light of Gentile Nations* | 78

1 O Light of Gentile nations, O Savior from above,  
Drawn by your Spirit's leading, We come with joy and love  
Into your holy temple And wait with rev'rent mind  
As Simeon once had waited His God and Lord to find.

2 Dear Lord, your servants meet you In ev'ry holy place  
Where your true Word has promised That we should see your face.  
Today you still allow us Who gather round you here  
In arms of faith to hold you As did that aged seer.

3 Lord, when life's troubles touch us, You seem to hide your face,  
And through our tears we often Can scarcely sense your grace.  
Then be our joy and brightness, Our cheer in pain and loss,  
Our sun in darkest terror, The glory round our cross.

4 Let us, O Lord, be faithful Like Simeon to the end  
So that his prayer exultant May from our hearts ascend:  
"O Lord, now let your servant Depart in peace, I pray,  
Since I have seen my Savior And here beheld his day."

## SERMON

*Luke 2:25-35*

*please stand*

## NICENE CREED<sup>4</sup>

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,  
and became fully human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,**

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<sup>4</sup> Public confession is faith's response to God's saving Word. Christians composed the Nicene Creed in the fourth century to defend the Bible's teachings that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are true God, equal to the Father in one eternal, undivided Trinity.

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*be seated*

**OFFERING**      *Please place your offering in the plate in the entry.*

*On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income. 1 Corinthians 16:2 (NIV)*

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

Eternal Lord God, in the fullness of time, You sent forth Your Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem us and give us the adoption as Your sons and heirs with Jesus of eternal peace. Hear us, Father, as we call to You in His name. Give us grace to rejoice in Christ's blessed incarnation, and grant us a glad new year. Lord, in Your mercy, **grant us peace.**

Heavenly Father, from whom all fatherhood on earth is named, bless the families of all Christians with Your promises. Give parents diligence and delight in their work, and grant Your favor on all children, that they may grow in strength and wisdom. Bless all widows, orphans and broken families with Your mercy, and give them joy in the redemption You have won for us in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy, **grant us peace.**

O worthy Judge, from You proceeds the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Give wisdom to those who make, administer and judge our laws, that they may serve faithfully in their tasks, according to Your good pleasure, for the benefit of our people. Lord, in Your mercy, **grant us peace.**

Gracious Lord, receive our prayers for those who suffer from loneliness. Comfort them with the sure and certain knowledge that they will never be forsaken by You. Give them family and friends within the household of faith with whom they can find loving companionship. Lord, in Your mercy, **grant us peace.**

Blessed Lord, help the sick and suffering, surround them with Your love in Christ and, according to Your gracious will, heal them. Comfort all those who mourn and fill their hearts with the certain hope of the resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy, **grant us peace.**

Father of lasting peace, show Your mercy to those who receive the Lord's Supper this day, that they would behold their salvation in the very body and blood of Christ given for them and, with Simeon, be well-prepared to depart in peace according to Your Word.

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

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## *The Sacrament*

*Those who have prepared themselves and who have declared their fellowship with us through membership in this or another WELS or ELS congregation are invited to receive the Lord's Supper.*

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### **THE PREFACE AND PRAISE** (sung to Angels We Have Heard)

**M** May the Good Lord be with you  
Lift your hearts to God in praise.

**C** **May the Lord be with you too**  
**To the Lord our hearts we raise.**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**

**In the Word of God made flesh**  
**Great and wondrous mystery**  
**Now we see with vision fresh**  
**God's abundant majesty**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**

**Therefore with the church on earth**  
**And the hosts of heav'n above**  
**Let us praise His name, whose birth**  
**Brings to us eternal love**

**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** *Jesus took bread and gave thanks [Matthew 26:26]*

Holy Father, in the beginning, you spoke and created light. But we loved the darkness of sin and unbelief. When the time had fully come, you sent your Son to be a light for those walking in darkness and in the shadow of death.

We praise you and give you thanks that Jesus, the eternal Word, became flesh and made his dwelling among us; that born of a woman, born under law, he lived without sin as our substitute; that as the Lamb of God, he suffered and died to take away the sin of the world; that he rose from death and lives forever to proclaim peace to all.

As the shepherds came to the manger, we now approach your altar with reverent joy. Here we find our Savior, Christ the Lord, who gives us his body and blood for forgiveness and peace. Through this meal, bring us life and light.

☉ **Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

☉ **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 INSTITUTION** <sup>5</sup>

*Matthew 26:26-28, 1 Corinthians 11:24,25*

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<sup>5</sup> *As he speaks the Words of Institution, the minister both proclaims the words of Jesus to the congregation and sets apart the bread and wine for the Lord's use. The sign of the cross reminds us of Christ's death*

**M** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my ✝ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my ✝ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** **Amen.**

**LAMB OF GOD** *John 1:29*

*(tune CW 53)*

**C** **O Lamb of God, You take away  
The sin of all; now hear us pray,  
And grant us from our sin release;  
Have mercy on us! Grant us peace!**

**DISTRIBUTION HYMN**

*From Heaven Above* | **38**

1 "From heav'n above to earth I come To bear good news to ev'ry home;  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, Whereof I now will say and sing:

2 "To you this night is born a child Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This little child of lowly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.

3 "This is the Christ, our God most high, Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will himself your Savior be From all your sins to set you free.

4 "He will on you the gifts bestow Prepared by God for all below,  
That in his kingdom, bright and fair, You may with us his glory share.

5 "These are the signs which you shall mark: The swaddling clothes and manger dark.  
There you will find the infant laid By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

6 How glad we'll be to find it so! Then with the shepherds let us go  
To see what God for us has done In sending us his own dear Son.

7 Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes, And see what in the manger lies.  
Who is this child, so young and fair? It is the Christchild lying there.

8 Welcome to earth, O noble Guest, Through whom the sinful world is blest!  
You came to share my misery That you might share your joy with me.

9 Ah, Lord, though you created all, How weak you are, so poor and small,  
That you should choose to lay your head Where lowly cattle lately fed!

10 Were earth a thousand times as fair And set with gold and jewels rare,  
It would be far too poor and small A cradle for the Lord of all.

11 Instead of soft and silken stuff You have but hay and straw so rough  
On which as King, so rich and great, To be enthroned in royal state.

12 And so it pleases you to see This simple truth revealed to me:  
That all the world's wealth, honor, might Are weak and worthless in your sight.

13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled  
Within my heart, made clean and new, A quiet chamber kept for you.

14 My heart for very joy must leap; My lips no more can silence keep.  
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue That sweetest ancient cradle song:

15 Glory to God in highest heaven, Who unto us his Son has given!  
While angels sing with pious mirth A glad new year to all the earth.

## **THANKSGIVING** (Sung to God Rest Ye Merry)

All sing

**Oh, thank the Lord and sing His praise,  
What He has done proclaim!  
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice  
And proudly bear His name  
Who leads His thankful people forth  
His promises to claim.**

**Refrain:**

**Oh, tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy,  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!**

**Lord, let your servant go in peace,  
Your word has been fulfilled.  
My eyes have seen the saving work  
Which for the world you willed:  
The glory of your chosen race  
As Light for all revealed.**

**Refrain:**

**Oh, tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy,  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!**

**Oh, praise to God the Father,  
And praise to God the Son,  
And praise to God the Spirit  
Most blessed Three in One,  
As 'twas, is now and e're shall be  
While endless ages run!**

**Refrain:**

**Oh, tidings of comfort and joy  
Comfort and joy,  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!**

## **PRAYER**

**M** We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION** (To Angels We Have Heard)

**M** May the good Lord bless and keep  
Cause His face on you to shine  
Look on you with favor deep  
Granting you His peace divine.

**C** **Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**  
**Gloria in Excelsis Deo!**

## **CLOSING HYMN**

*May the Peace* | **745**

## May the Peace of God

1 May the peace of God our heav'n - ly Fa -  
peace which pass - es un - der - stand -

ther, And the grace of Christ the ris - en  
ing, And this grace which makes us what we

Son, And the fel - low-ship of God the  
are, And this fel - low-ship of his Com -

Spir - it Keep our hearts and minds with - in his  
mun - ion Make us one in spir - it and in

love. And to him be praise for his  
heart.

glo - rious reign From the depths of earth to the

heights of heav'n. We de - clare the name of the

Lamb once slain— Christ e - ter - nal, the King of

kings.

2 May this kings.