

# HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

## November 26, 2023—December 3, 2023

### CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY 11/26/23

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

### MONDAY 11/27/23

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

### TUESDAY 11/28/23

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

### WEDNESDAY 11/29/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry  
11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge  
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

### THURSDAY 11/30/23

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry  
5:00PM Choir Rehearsal  
7:00PM Al-Anon

### FRIDAY 12/1/23

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

### SATURDAY 12/2/23

*No events*

### 1st Sunday of Advent 12/3/23

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

#### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

MON-WED 10:00AM-3:00PM

FRI 10:00AM-2:00PM

#### **PASTOR OFFICE HOURS**

Varies—Pastor Althea is always  
available by appointment.

#### **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

November 26, 2023

Christ the King Sunday



## **GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244  
**Church Office:** 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982  
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**E-mail:** [office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net](mailto:office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net)

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor † 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 ~

Thank you for joining with us as we worship our Lord together!

**Introduction**

*On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. In the first reading God is the shepherd who seeks the lost, weak, and injured and feeds them with justice. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.*

**WELCOME**

Rev. Althea Albright

**PRELUDE**

*Come, Ye Thankful People Come* by F. C. Woods

*Please stand as you are able.*

**GREETING**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

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

**We thank all those serving in worship today! Reader: Mary Ann Gring**

**Special thank you to organist, Ray Hunsicker!**



**The flowers sponsor this week is:** Clare Brick, in memory of husband and great grandfather, John Brick, from Clare and Marleigh.

**The candles sponsor is:** Dale Rader

**The wine sponsor is:** Carol Gallagher

**Dates to remember:**

**11/30/23** Deadline for Christmas at Sea donations

**12/9/23** Cookie Walk

**12/21/23** Blue Christmas Service at 7PM

**12/24/23** Christmas Eve Services at 7:00PM & 9:00PM with choir

**Red stockings are due at the end of December to WELCA.**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table. **Amen.**

**COMMUNION HYMN***Lamb of God***WOV page 25****DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*EVERYONE IS INVITED to come forward at the direction of the ushers. If you are unable to come to the altar, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children may come forward to receive a blessing.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. **Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**SENDING BLESSING**

May Almighty God, † Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, watch over you, guide you, and give you faith for the journey now and forever. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN***Rejoice for God is King!***ELW #430**

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

**POSTLUDE***Voluntary on "We Gather Together" by Fisk*

**DISMISSAL** Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**OPENING HYMN***All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!***ELW #634****GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **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.*

~ **WORD** ~

**FIRST READING: Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24**

*Because Israel's kings proved to be bad shepherds, Ezekiel declares that the LORD will assume the role of shepherd in Israel. The LORD will also set over them a shepherd-messiah, "my servant David," who will feed and care for the people.*

<sup>11</sup>Thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. <sup>12</sup>As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among

their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. <sup>13</sup>I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. <sup>14</sup>I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. <sup>15</sup>I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. <sup>16</sup>I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

<sup>20</sup>Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. <sup>21</sup>Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, <sup>22</sup>I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

<sup>23</sup>I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup>And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

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

### PSALM 95:1-7a



<sup>1</sup>Come, let us sing <sup>|</sup> to the LORD;

let us shout for joy to the rock of <sup>|</sup> our salvation.

<sup>2</sup>Let us come before God's presence <sup>|</sup> with thanksgiving  
and raise a loud shout to the <sup>|</sup> LORD with psalms.

<sup>3</sup>For you, LORD, <sup>|</sup> are a great God,  
and a great ruler a- <sup>|</sup>bove all gods.

## ~ HOLY COMMUNION ~

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

### THE 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.**

**OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray. **God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. As we gather these gifts from your abundance, we give thanks for your rich blessings, that we may feel your presence in this meal and continue to be good stewards of all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *Brief silence.*

A: Holy God, from Christ we receive our call to feed, clothe, and welcome. Direct your church to respond to this call with faithfulness and generous love. We pray for the work of ELCA World Hunger and partnerships with global feeding ministries. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: In Christ, the rock of our salvation, we are brought into union with all of creation. With mountains, seas, dry lands, and animals of the field, we seek your guidance and protection. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: Guide rulers of every nation in ways of humble leadership and wise decision-making. Allow aid to come to all who are underserved and care to any who are neglected. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: In Christ we feel the depth of your love and care toward us. Nourish all who hunger, connect any who are isolated, and surround all who experience rejection or abuse. We pray for those who need your healing touch *especially all those we name aloud or in our hearts...* Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A: In Christ we are made the people of his pasture. Inspire the outreach and social ministries of this congregation. We pray for all people who serve and attend to the needs of others. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

<sup>4</sup>**In your hand are the caverns<sup>l</sup> of the earth;  
the heights of the hills are<sup>l</sup> also yours.**

<sup>5</sup>The sea is yours,<sup>l</sup> for you made it,  
and your hands have molded<sup>l</sup> the dry land.

<sup>6</sup>**Come, let us worship<sup>l</sup> and bow down,  
let us kneel before the<sup>l</sup> LORD our maker.**

<sup>7a</sup>For the LORD<sup>l</sup> is our God,  
and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep<sup>l</sup> of God's hand.

**SECOND READING: Ephesians 1:15-23**

*In this passage, God is praised for revealing ultimate divine power in raising Jesus from the dead. The resurrected, exalted Christ is Lord of both the church and the entire universe, now and in the age to come.*

<sup>15</sup>I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup>so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>20</sup>God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. <sup>22</sup>And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 25th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 25:31-46**

*Jesus compares himself to a king who moves among his subjects to see how he is treated: what is done for the least of those who belong to his family is truly done for him.*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>31</sup>“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup>and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup>Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ <sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup>And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ <sup>40</sup>And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.’ <sup>41</sup>Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ <sup>44</sup>Then they also will answer, ‘Lord,

when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ <sup>45</sup>Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ <sup>46</sup>And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

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

*Please be seated.*

**SERMON**

Rev. Althea Albright

*Please stand as you are able.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Son of God Eternal Savior*

**ELW #655**

**THE APOSTLES' CREED**

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

**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.**

**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.**

**OFFERING****OFFERTORY**

*Now Thank We All Our God*

by J. S. Bach

*Please stand as you are able.*

**PRESENTATION OF GIFTS**

*Let the Vineyards*

**WOV page 21**