

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

January 28, 2024—February 4, 2024

4th Sunday after Epiphany 1/28/24

8:00AM Spoken Worship
8:45AM Adult Forum Group
10:15AM Traditional Worship
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
**4:00PM Catechism Class at
Reformation**

MONDAY 1/29/24

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

TUESDAY 1/30/24

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
**10:30AM 100th Anniversary
Committee Meeting**
6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 1/31/24

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

THURSDAY 2/1/24

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

FRIDAY 2/2/24

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

SATURDAY 2/3/24

No events

5th Sunday after Epiphany 2/4/24

10:15AM Traditional Worship
**Annual Congregational Meeting
immediately following worship**
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-3:00PM
FRI 10:00AM-2:00PM

PASTOR OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Althea is often in the
office and she 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

January 28 2024

4th Sunday After Epiphany



1924 - 2024



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ

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

Website: www.gracelutheranspnj.org

E-mail: 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

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

Salzburg

by James Biery

Please stand as you are able.

GREETING

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

Amen.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned away from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We come before you in a spirit of repentance. We are eager to be close with you again. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. By grace you have been saved. In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit

STRONGER TOGETHER Grief Support Group

Pastor Althea has picked two different days with an afternoon and evening time. They will meet every other week. The first group will meet on **Monday, February 5 at 7:00 PM**, and the second group will meet on **Thursday, February 8, at 2:00 PM**. Anyone is welcome to attend the group that fits best fits your schedule.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The 100th Anniversary Committee is in need of volunteers to help at the kick-off luncheon following the 10:15 AM worship service on 2/25/24. If you are willing and able to volunteer, please contact Jim Foreman.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

February 4, 2024

MEETING WILL BE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 10:15AM

WORSHIP

IN THE SANCTUARY

(PLEASE NOTE: THERE IS NO 8:00AM WORSHIP ON THIS DAY)

ACCESS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE VIA ZOOM

REMINDER: All members watching worship from home on the day of the meeting

must close YouTube and log into ZOOM

in order to hear and participate in the meeting.

BY VIDEO ON ZOOM WEBSITE:

Go to Zoom website and "join a meeting" or go to this link:

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/83844583877?pwd=9D6GyZmoelY1mcxHSnIDtM61zzp8z8.1>

Enter our **Meeting ID: 838 4458 3877**

and then you will be prompted for our **Password: a1kiE2**

SENDING HYMN *Sing Praise to God, The Highest Good* **ELW #871**

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

POSTLUDE *Allergro Moderato* by Arnold Cooke

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Christ is with you.
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!
Reader: Meg La Spina

The flowers sponsor this week is: Grace Church Council, in loving
memory of Corinne's mother and Carol's sister, Gwen Freed.



all your sins are forgiven. May Almighty God strengthen you with power
through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.
Amen.

OPENING HYMN *Open Your Ears, O Faithful People* **ELW #519**

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.**

KYRIE **ELW (front of hymnal) p. 147**

HYMN OF PRAISE **ELW (front) p. 148**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant
presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to
all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will
see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

*Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an
updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter
the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to
guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.*

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: “If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die.” ¹⁷Then the LORD replied to me: “They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die.”

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

PSALM 111



¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with ¹my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the ¹congregation.

²**Great are your ¹works, O LORD,
pondered by all who de- ¹light in them.**

³Majesty and splendor ¹mark your deeds,
and your righteousness en- ¹dures forever.

⁴**You cause your wonders to ¹be remembered;
you are gracious and full ¹of compassion.**

⁵You give food to ¹those who fear you,
remembering forev- ¹er your covenant.

⁶**You have shown your people the power ¹of your works
in giving them the lands ¹of the nations.**

⁷The works of your hands are faithful- ¹ness and justice;
all of your pre- ¹cepts are sure.

⁸**They stand fast forev- ¹er and ever,
because they are done in ¹truth and equity.**

⁹You sent redemption to your people and commanded your cove- ¹nant
forever;

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.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. **Come, Lord Jesus. 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All are welcome at the table of Christ. Come, taste and see that the Lord is good. **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION *Lamb of God* ELW (front) p.154

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

God of abundance, **with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may be your hands and feet in the world and proclaim your redeeming love to all. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING BLESSING

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

P: Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer *especially all those we name aloud or in our hearts...* God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A: Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A: Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives (*especially Thomas Aquinas whom we commemorate today*). We trust that all who have died rest in your loving care. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

P: Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

~ HOLY COMMUNION ~

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW (front) p. 152

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

ELW (front) p. 153

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: Endless is your mercy and eternal is your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full 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

holy and awesome ¹ is your name.

¹⁰**The fear of the LORD is the begin-¹ning of wisdom;
all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise en-¹dures forever.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.

¹Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸“Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

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

Please stand as you are able.

The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 1st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Mark 1: 21-28

Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit,²⁴ and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.”²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!”²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

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 *Songs of Thankfulness and Praise* **ELW #310**

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

CHOIR ANTHEM *Arise; Shine* by George J. Elvey, edited
(arr. By Crawford L. Thoburn)
Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Create in Me a Clean Heart* **WOV #732**

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. **Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation. *Brief silence.*

A: Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A: Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A: Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**