

January 26, 2025

3rd Sunday After Epiphany



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

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

Please make a nametag and write your favorite name for God.

INTRODUCTION

God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

WELCOME

Rev. Jeffrey Eaton

PRELUDE

One Bread, One Body

setting by Ron Schmoltze

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life. **Amen.**

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God, you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment or indifference. When we ignore the needs of our neighbors; when we resist your call to oppose injustice; when we give in to scarcity and fear; when we assume the worst about one another, cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine."

In + Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN*Arise, Your Light Has Come***ELW #314****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**WOV #28****HYMN OF PRAISE****WOV #29****PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our 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.

READING: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that “the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

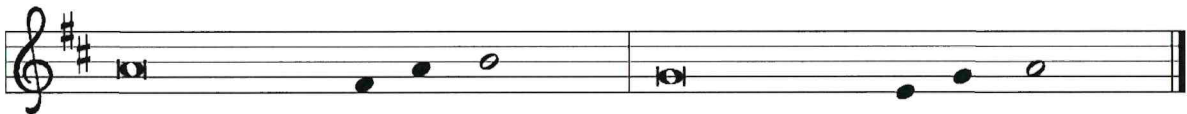
¹ All the people [of Israel] gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who

could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

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

PSALM 19



¹ The heavens declare the glo-¹ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its¹ maker's handiwork.

² **One day tells its tale¹ to another,
and one night imparts knowledge¹ to another.**

³ Although they have no¹ words or language,
and their voices¹ are not heard,

⁴ **their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends¹
of the world,
where God has pitched a tent¹ for the sun.**

⁵ It comes forth like a bridegroom out¹ of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to¹ run its course.

⁶ **It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of¹ it again;**

nothing is hidden from its¹ burning heat.

⁷ The teaching of the LORD is perfect and re-¹vives the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom¹ to the simple.

⁸ **The statutes of the LORD are just and re-¹joice the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light¹ to the eyes.**

⁹ The fear of the LORD is clean and en-¹dures forever;
the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous¹ altogether.

¹⁰ **More to be desired are they than gold, more than¹ much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey¹ in the comb.**

¹¹ By them also is your ser-¹vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is¹ great reward.

¹² **Who can detect one's¹ own offenses?
Cleanse me from my¹ secret faults.**

¹³ Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get
dominion¹ over me;

then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a¹ great offense.

¹⁴ **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be
acceptable¹ in your sight,**

O LORD, my strength and¹ my redeemer.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

The apostle and pastor Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to describe how intimately connected we are in the church. For this struggling congregation in Corinth, Paul delivers a vital message of unity that is a mark of the church today.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where

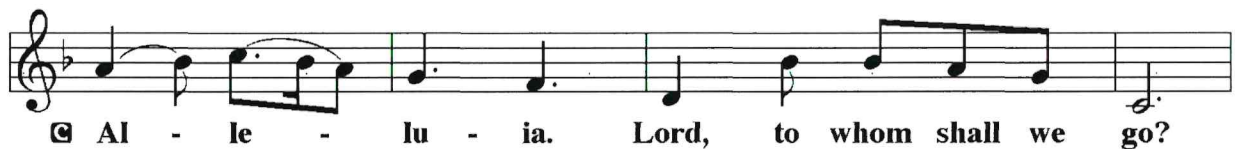
would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ^{31a} But strive for the greater gifts.

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

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 4th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Luke 4:14:21

Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

"A God's-Eye View"

Rev. Jeffrey Eaton

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Christ, Be Our Light

ELW #715

VERSE 1, 3, 5 ALL, VERSE 2 MEN, VERSE 4 WOMEN

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.

Please be seated.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Carol of Beauty

by Dennis Krause

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Let the Vineyards be Fruitful* [WOV #35](#)

OFFERING PRAYER

God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. Amen.

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *Brief silence.*

At the end of each prayer petition when the worship assistant or pastor says, "God of grace," please respond with "hear our prayer."

P: We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. Amen.

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.**

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

WOV #36

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Together, we pray as our Lord taught us, saying:

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

The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

COMMUNION HYMN

Lamb of God

WOV #39

COMMUNION HYMNS

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

ELW #742

One Bread, One Body

ELW #496

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to come down the center aisle at the direction of the ushers. If you are unable to come up to the front, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children or those who have not received a first communion are welcome to come for a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray, Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING

BLESSING

The Spirit of the triune God ☩ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

We All Are One in Mission

ELW #576

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

POSTLUDE

We All Are One in Mission

by Mark Sedio

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Live in hope.
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: Meg La Spina**



The flowers sponsors this week are:

Mary Ann & Stephen Gring, in memory of their brother-in-law,
Jim Kohl.

*Please join us for Fellowship following worship in the Social Hall,
sponsored by the Dolans and Gay Rowland.*

Announcements and Information

Please pick up your February-March Messenger in the narthex if you typically receive a hard copy (in alphabetical order by last name).

Pastor Wendolyn will be away on vacation from January 21-February 12. If a pastoral emergency should arise during that time, please call the church office and Corinne will put you in contact with Rev. Heidi Link who will be on call for emergencies.

Please mark your calendars for our
Annual Congregational Meeting
Next Sunday, February 2 immediately following the 10:15 AM Worship Service. No 8:00 AM Worship.
Zoom link will be printed in Messenger and emailed.
 Your attendance for this is very important!

Sunday, February 9: Super Bowl of Caring

Please bring a can of soup for our Food Pantry, and place in the designated area. Soups other than tomato, chicken noodle, and chicken and rice would be most appreciated.

Friday, February 14: Bring Your Heart to Grace

6:00 PM Dinner & Movie "The Sound of Hope"

Donation Drive for children in foster care.

Please pick up a flier in the narthex and spread the word!

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

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

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

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

January 26, 2025—February 2, 2025

3rd Sunday of Epiphany 1/26/25

(Guest Pastor: Rev. Jeffrey Eaton)

8:00AM Spoken Worship

10:15AM Traditional Worship

**Fellowship sponsored by
The Dolans and Gay Rowland**

MONDAY 1/27/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 1/28/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 1/29/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge

6:00PM AA Book Study

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 1/30/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry

12:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

5:00PM Choir Rehearsal

6:00 AA 12-Step

7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 1/31/25

10:30AM Grace Stitchers

7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 2/1/25

7:30AM & 8:30AM Weight Watchers

4th Sunday of Epiphany 2/2/25

(Worship Leader: Jim Ehrardt)

No 8:00AM Worship

No Adult Forum

10:15AM Traditional Worship

Joyful Noise Offering:

Atlantic City Rescue Mission

Annual Congregational Meeting

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