

— A REAL —
CHRISTMAS
IS ROOTED IN REPENTANCE



GRACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

5600 West Palmyra Ave
Glendale, Arizona 85301
tel: 623-937-2010
email: info@graceglendale.org
web: <https://www.graceglendale.org>



WELCOME TO GRACE!

We're glad you're here! May the Word of God bring you comfort in Christ alone. You can follow along with the service using this worship folder or using the screens above the chancel. If you're new here, below is some helpful information about our sanctuary and our worship...

- Please reserve the **BACK PEWS** for parents with **SMALL CHILDREN**.
- A **PARENT'S ROOM** with private changing area and restroom is available through the door at the back of the middle aisle. Windows from the room allow you to still watch the service and speakers allow you to hear as well. A volume control is available on the wall by the door.
- Ask an usher to receive an **AUDIO RECEIVER** and **HEADSET** if you need hearing assistance in the sanctuary or Fellowship Hall.
- **RESTROOMS** are available in the Narthex. Exit out of the north doors from the Sanctuary and go to the left. They are located in the alcove behind Luther's Seal.
- **LARGE PRINT** bulletins are available. See an usher to receive one.
- Visit our **WEBSITE** at <http://www.graceglendale.org> for additional information about our ministries and upcoming events.

CONTACT US...

Feel free to reach out directly to our office staff via email or telephone. Call 623-937-2010 and use the extension to the right.

Rev. Mark Jacobson	x321
pastorjacobson@graceglendale.org	
Rev. Jasper Sellnow	x303
pastorsellnow@graceglendale.org	
Principal Joel Walker	x302
jwalker@graceglendale.org	
Office Manager, Debbie Petersen	x322
officemanager@graceglendale.org	
School Office Manager, Monica Assaker	x326
massaker@graceglendale.org	
Church Secretary	
secretary@graceglendale.org	

AT TODAY'S SERVICE...

Preaching Minister: Pastor Sellnow

Liturgist: Pastor Jacobson

Senior ushers: 8:00 AM – Scott Gillespie

10:30 AM – Owen Jacobson / Ryan Jacobson

Pianist: Stacey Hill

A/V Team: 8:00 AM – Mark Breiling

10:30 AM – Paul Sullivan

ABOUT THE THEME

The closer we get to Christmas, the greater the pressure. There is so much work to be done! We want our houses to look good for out-of-town guests. We want to impress people with the thoughtfulness of our gifts. What a welcome relief, therefore, to hear what is required to really be ready for Christmas: only repentance. You see, repentance is the opposite of work. It is the candid and honest admission of our sin combined with the joyful trust that everything needed to bring us close to God has already been done by Christ.

At this frenetic time of year, the call to repent is not another demand to do something more. It is gracious invitation to set down our work to make way for Christ's work. Rooted in that repentant rest, we can fully enjoy a real Christmas.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Setting 2 (CW 172)

HYMN: THERE'S A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS CRYING

CW 308

Please stand

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

CONFESSION

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

Silence for meditation and reflection

DECLARATION OF GRACE

CW 173

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.
Amen.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

CW 174

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Last Sunday we lit the first candle in our Advent Wreath, the candle of Hope. We light it again as we remember that Christ will come again to fulfill all of God's promises to us.

The candle of Hope is lit.

The second candle of Advent is the Candle of Peace. It is sometimes called the Bethlehem Candle to remind us of the place in which preparations were made to receive and cradle the Christ child.

God gives us the gift of peace when we turn to him in faith.

The prophet Isaiah calls Christ "the Prince of Peace." Through John the Baptist and all the other prophets, God calls on us to prepare our hearts so that he may come in.

Our hope is in God, and in his son Jesus Christ. Our peace is found in him. We light this candle today to remind us that he brings peace to all who trust in him.

The candle of Peace is lit.

HYMN: WE LIFT THE LIGHT OF HOPE

512 st. 2

We lift the light of peace, O God,

The Lord of truth and right.

In Your domain let justice reign

And bring us peace in Christ.

In Your domain let justice reign

And bring us peace in Christ.

Text: Ken Bible Text: © 2005 LNW Hymns, admin. LNW Hymns. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 705990

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. By his coming, give us strength in our conflicts, and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated

FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1–7b

Through God's Word and the messengers who proclaim it, the Lord encourages his people to return to him in humble repentance.

¹"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

²But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, ⁴and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.

⁵"So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.

⁶"I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. ⁷Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them.

Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

JUNIOR CHOIR (8:00)

"Shepherd Song"

ADULT CHOIR (10:30)

"He Will Come"

Rachel Kulhanek, flute

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:3–11

God began his good work in us at our baptism, empowering us to love, to demonstrate discernment, and to produce fruits of repentance.

³I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

⁷It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. ⁸God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

⁹And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

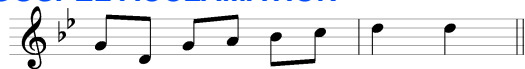
The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 3:4,6

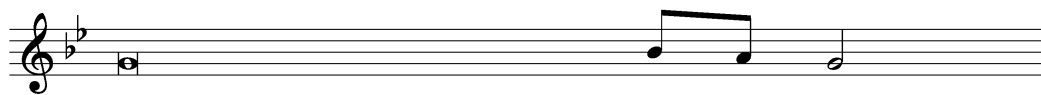


Refrain



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

Tone



Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.



And all people will see God's sal - va - tion.

Tune: © 2010 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 705990

GOSPEL

Luke 3:1–6

John the Baptist prepared people to meet their Savior by preaching a message of repentance and forgiveness.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene— ²during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.

⁵Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill made low.

The crooked roads shall become straight,
the rough ways smooth.

⁶And all people will see God’s salvation.’ ”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

At this time, children are invited to the front of the church to hear a special children's message from the Pastor.

HYMN OF THE DAY: ON JORDAN'S BANK THE BAPTIST'S CRY

CW 316

SERMON

Luke 3:1-6

PREPARED FOR THE LORD

Please stand

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

Please be seated

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Gracious Lord, you sent your Son into our world to destroy the power of Satan and restore the human race as your children and heirs. Work in us during this Advent season so that we may rejoice in the coming of our Savior and long for his coming again.

Make us eager to receive the King who comes to save us.

Use the preaching of your holy law to rid us of all delusions that we can gain your love with our own efforts. Move us to realize how hopeless we are because of sin and to feel sorrow for what we have done wrong.

Lead us to be honest about our sinful status in your sight.

Lift up our hearts to see the King who comes to save. Reveal to us his willingness to take on our human form and stand in our place. Show us the power he extends in his Word and sacraments to make us your children and keep us in faith. Thrill us with his promise to come and take us to our eternal home to live with you forever.

Open our eyes to see and believe the wonders of the Savior's love.

As we live with Christ and trust in him, move us to turn away from sin day after day with the strength your Holy Spirit provides. When we fall, forgive us and renew us to love and serve you and all people.

Empower us and guide us to walk with Christ by faith.

Protect us from the distractions that come at this time of the year. Even in gift-giving and celebrating, keep our hearts focused on Christ and his forgiving love.

Give us joy at his coming at Christmas, his coming in the gospel, and his coming again.

Special Intercessions

Move us to share with others the most important gift of this season, the truth about Jesus. Even in busy times lead us to pray for those whose joy is diminished because of sickness, pain, or loss. Give us opportunities to provide help to those in need.

May others see the love of Christ in our words and actions.

Loving Lord, work in us during this Advent season so that our joy may be genuine and may rest in the promises of the King who comes to save.
Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

OFFERINGS OF LOVE TO OUR LORD

Please complete the "Welcome to Grace" register in your pew at this time.

JUNIOR HANDBELLS (8:00)

"Angels From the Realms of Glory"

HYMN: COMFORT, COMFORT ALL MY PEOPLE

CW 312

Please stand

PRAYER

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

HYMN: ARISE, O CHRISTIAN PEOPLE

CW 310

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Liturgical and musical settings of Scripture based on text from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House.

Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2024 Concordia Publishing House.

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS:

Altar flowers are donated by Grace Faculty and staff in memory of Kim Buchholz's Grandma.

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Worship: Thanksgiving – 258

Worship: 8:00 AM – 122 – 10:30 AM – 125

Communion: 8:00 AM – 107 – 10:30 AM – 81

Sunday School: Adults: 96 – Bible Basics: 6 – Children: 21

Midweek Bible Class: Tue: 20 – Wed: 10 – Fri: 13

HOSPITALIZED OR RECUPERATING AT HOME:

Karen Barber – 3512 E Helena Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85032-2040

Don Bollmeier – 12610 W Flower St, Avondale, AZ 85392

Terry Harding – 6112 W Rose Ln, Glendale, AZ 85301-4426

Annette Hartzell – 14182 W Mountain Laurel Trl, Surprise, AZ 85374

Carlene Junas – 6735 W Golden Ln #209, Peoria, AZ 85345-4372

Tracey Moreland – 6801 N Ocotillo Rd Apt 1089, Glendale, AZ 85303-3111

Ruth Richgruber – Boswell Transitional Care of Cascadia

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The December issue of *Forward in Christ* and Bible-reading/activity calendars are in the Narthex and south entrance to the church.
2. Thank you to the crew that cleaned the church last week. The cleaning team for December 14 is led by Monica Assaker with James, Christine & Amanda Brenner, John, Lynn, Cody & Andy Graft, and Maria Ortiz.

ALTAR FLOWER SIGN-UP SHEETS... Please sign up for altar flower donations by filling out the Altar Flower binder in the narthex. Altar bouquets cost \$35 each. Enclose payment in a pink envelope (checks payable to Grace Ladies Aid) and place it in the collection plate.

SCRIPTURAL CHRISTMAS, & GREETING CARDS, AND 2025 CALENDARS... are available for purchase before Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall. The price per box varies this year. Proceeds support the ministry of Grace Ladies' Aid.

THIS WEEK AT GRACE:

TODAY : WORSHIP, 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Bible Class & Sunday School, 9:30 AM

Celebration of Christmas, 4:00 PM

MON - Choir – End of Year Party

TUE - Bible Class (Ruth), 2:00 PM

ALL Meeting Night, 6:30 PM

THU - School Music Concert, 2:00 PM

FRI - Bible Class, 10:00 AM

SAT - Caroling with Choir to Shut-ins, 1:00 PM

SUN - **WORSHIP, 8:00 & 10:30 AM**

Bible Class & Sunday School, 9:30 AM

OTHER EVENTS COMING UP...

ABC: ADULT BREAKFAST & COFFEE – Dec 18th at 8:25 AM at Grace... Sign up to join us by contacting Pat Walker by text, voice or email at numbers and address below. You may also sign up on the registration sheet in the narthex. When registering please include the names of all those who wish to attend. If this is the first time you will be attending please include a mobile phone number which may be used for text messages, or include a landline.

Pat Walker - 480-717-0131 - patwalker1950@gmail.com

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE... will be held at **6:30 PM on Thursday, December 19**. All Grace children of the appropriate ages in the congregation are welcome to participate and may join us for any or all of the practices. Packets are available on the school table in the narthex for public school families that wish to participate. We will not be having any Sunday practices this year. All practices are at 9 AM unless otherwise noted. The dates that we will be practicing for the Christmas Service are: December 6, 13, 16, and 17. There will be a dress rehearsal at 8:15 AM on December 18. Please contact Mr. Kulhanek with any questions.

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Need amounts are based on a goal of **\$968,775.00 by 6/30/2025**.

Week ending 12/01/2024:

Weekly Need:	25,225.00
Weekly Actual:	20,855.50
Weekly +/-:	-4,369.50

YTD 7/1/2023 through 12/01/2024:

YTD Need:	405,725.00
YTD Actual:	331,546.80
YTD +/-:	-74,178.20

DONATE FROM YOUR SMARTPHONE... Scan this image using your phone's QR code reader! Contact Debbie at ext. 322 if you have any questions or need help with setting this up. Automatic or one-time deductions for offerings may also be accessed from the graceglendale.org site with the "Click Here to Donate Online" button. A phone app is also available for donations: install Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement and search Organizations for Grace Ev Lutheran Church. *Please use checking or savings account information rather than a credit or debit card to save the processing fees.*



WHO'S YOUR ONE...? During the past two months many of our members have participated in our Sunday morning Bible class, One by One, which offered encouragement to share the gospel one soul at a time. That is the way it works

of course. God puts people into our life, and we invite them to come hear about Jesus.

This Christmas we'd like everyone here at Grace to consider – Who's your ONE?

Who is one person in your life that needs to know Jesus, or just know him better? Pray for this person. Pray for God to give you opportunities to talk with this person. Pray for courage to invite them to Christmas Eve worship. And then invite them! Share the postcard invite in your bulletin today.

If you were not able to join our special Bible class on this topic, please take some time to go online to watch the video presentation that was a part of this class. It features former detective and current WELS pastor, Dave Rosenau, as he shares the importance of reaching one soul at a time with the saving message of Jesus Christ. You can find it by simply going online and searching for "One by One – Pastor David Rosenau" OR scan the QR code next to this article.



Dear Grace Members:

Please show your thanks to the fine organists and pianists who serve us throughout the year by making a financial gift to be divided among our musicians. We do not pay our organists, nor do we buy their music for them. At this time of the year, we all have the opportunity to show them what a blessing they are to us!

Our organists in 2024 were:

Rachel Kulhanek
Jeff Wegner
Michael Wilde

Our pianists in 2024 were:

Lara Johnson
Stacey Hill

Checks (payable to Grace Ev. Lutheran Church with "Organist Gift" on the memo line) or Cash (in an envelope with your name and/or envelope # and "Organist Gift" written on the outside) may be placed in the offering plates or turned into the office by December 31st.

Thank you! And special thanks to our Organists and Pianists! We are very BLESSED to have such a talented group of musicians!



Sincerely,
Jon Scheel, President