

Fourth Sunday in Advent



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
December 20, 2015



Our mission at Grace is to teach the inspired and inerrant Word of God, to proclaim that Jesus Christ is the crucified and risen Savior of the world and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service.

We are very pleased that you have joined us for worship today at Grace-Tucson! We pray that this time will be a blessing for you as God comes to you with his Word and promises and as you offer him your thanks and praise.

Worship Notes

The **order of service** we follow is printed out in this worship folder. You'll notice that the service is a dialogue between God and us, his people. The pastor speaks to God along with the congregation and also speaks the Word of God to the people.

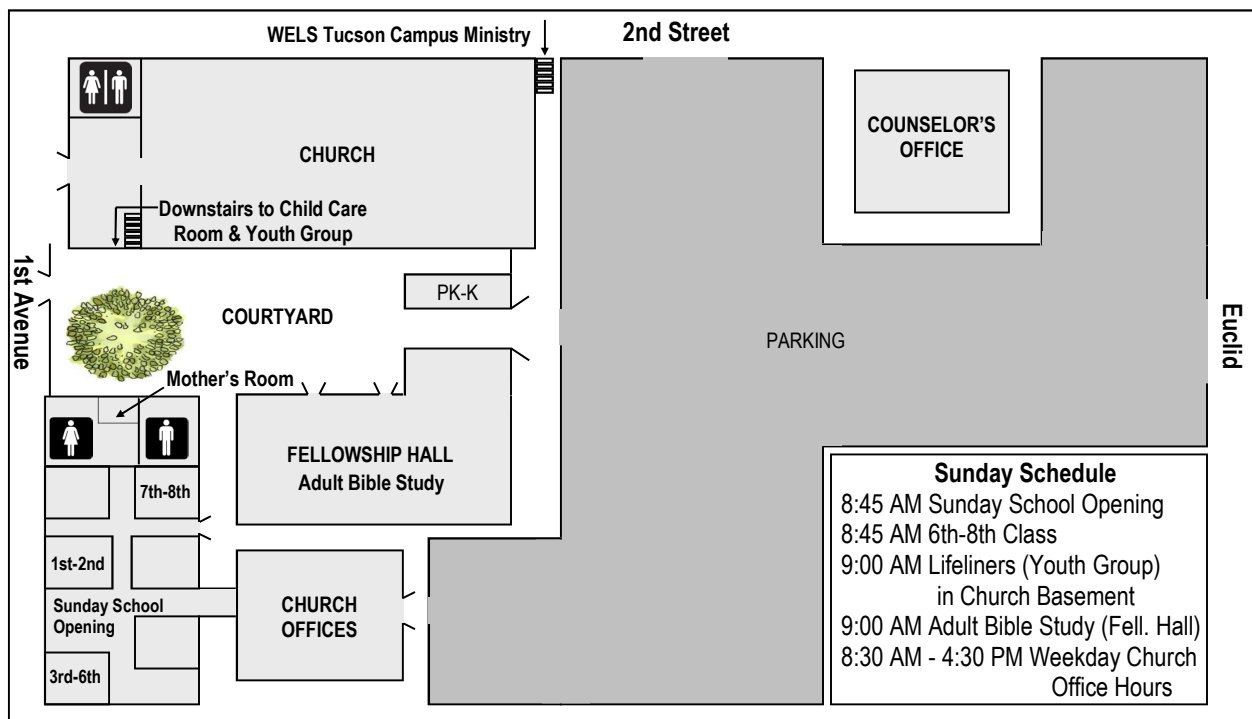
Hymns are found in our hymnal, *Christian Worship*, which is the red book in the pew rack in front of you.

Large print hymn sheets are available in the entryway. You may also ask an usher or greeter to get one for you.

We believe that many blessings come from having families worship together and we love to have **children in worship!** If you need to calm a restless child, you may:

- stand for a few moments in the entryway, sometimes that's all that's needed;
- go down the stairs to the left in the entryway—they will lead down to the Child Care Room where you will still be able to hear the service;
- visit the private Mother's Room across the courtyard in the women's restroom—you will be able to hear the service there also.

Printed copies of the sermon are available in the entryway. CDs of the entire worship service will be made upon request from the sound technician in the balcony. It only takes a few minutes to copy. You may also find sermons and services in print, audio and video on our website: www.GraceLutheranSAZ.org



The weeks before Christmas comprise the season of Advent. Advent comes from the Latin and means “coming.” In this season we look forward to the celebration of Christ’s coming in the flesh at Christmas, his coming to us regularly in his Word and Sacrament, and his coming at the end of time. Blue is the color of the season, representing hope and heaven.

Lighting of Advent Candles

The lighting of candles in anticipation of Christ’s coming (Latin, *advenio*) has a long tradition in the Christian Church. On each of the four Sundays of Advent, a new candle is lit, dispelling the darkness, as the church moves forward to welcoming him who is the true Light of the world. The evergreen wreath represents eternal life—evergreens do not drop their foliage—and the circle of the wreath is unending. The blue color of the candles symbolizes hope—the hope we have as we anticipate Christ’s coming. The white Christ Candle in the center will be lit on Christmas Day as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Each year the privilege of lighting the Advent candles is given to the youth confirmation students at Grace.

MORNING PRAISE FOR ADVENT

This order of service is based on the historic order for morning praise known as Matins. This contemporary setting is from *Christian Worship: New Service Settings*.

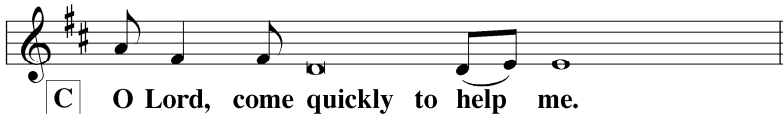
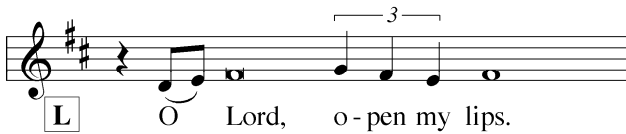
OPENING HYMN

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel
Christian Worship #23

Please stand

RESPONSIVE SENTENCES

L: Leader C: Congregation



PRESERVICE MUSIC:

7:45 AM—
Veni, Emmanuel
Arr. by J. Bert Carlson

10:00 AM—
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus & Once He Came in Blessing
Settings by Michael Burkhardt

The children who participated in yesterday’s Christmas for Kids activity will open our 10:00 service by singing “Go, Tell It on the Mountain,” hymn 57.

Thank you to Dylan Guenther and Taylor Parra for leading the children.

*This song of praise
paraphrases the
words of Psalm 95.
We come together
to worship God
because of the
wonderful things he
has done for us,
chiefly for making
us his own people.*

COME, OH, COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD

Congregation sings the refrain and verses.

Refrain

Come, oh, come, let us sing to the Lord,
let us shout with joy to our sav - ing Rock;
come, en - ter in with our songs of praise,
come, en - ter in with thanks - giv - ing.

Verses

1. You are a great and a won - drous God,
2. Come, let us wor - ship and, bow - ing low,
cup - ping in your hands all the depths of earth.
kneel be - fore the One who has made us all.
You made the hills and the moun - tains high,
You are the God whom we call our own,
to Refrain
you made the seas and the dry land.
we are the flock that you shep - herd.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

L: We light four Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Mary. He came to share our humanity.

C: We remember Jesus, whose name means Savior. He came to save his people from their sins.

L: We hear his call to give him a place in our hearts.

C: We light four Advent candles as a sign of our joy and hope.

L: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C: Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

Four Advent candles are lit.

FIRST LESSON

2 Samuel 7:8-16 (NIV)

“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD declares to

you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.’”

The First Lesson is frequently a reading from the Old Testament. It shares a common theme with the Second Lesson (often from one of the epistles) and the Gospel.

PSALM 63

Please join in singing the refrain. Repeat the refrain after the vocalist sings each verse.

Refrain



1. O God, you are my God; for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory. **Refrain**
2. For your love is better than life, my lips will speak your praise. So I will bless you all my life, in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul shall be filled as with a banquet, my mouth shall praise you with joy. **Refrain**
3. On my bed I remember you. On you I muse through the night, for you have been my help; in the shadow of your wings I rejoice. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast. **Refrain**

SECOND LESSON

Romans 16:25-27 (NIV)

Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic

writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him—to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Matthew 1:23

L: Alleluia. The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel. Alleluia.

VOICES OF GRACE (10:00 AM)

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set your people free;
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Come, O come, Emmanuel! Come, O come Emmanuel!*

*Born your people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now your gracious Kingdom bring.
Come, O come, Emmanuel! Come, O come, Emmanuel!*

Please stand

*The congregation
stands out of
respect for the
words of Christ our
King.*

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-38 (NIV)

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will

give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Please be seated

SERMON

2 Samuel 7:8-16
Find Hope in the House of David*Please stand*

SONG OF ZECHARIAH



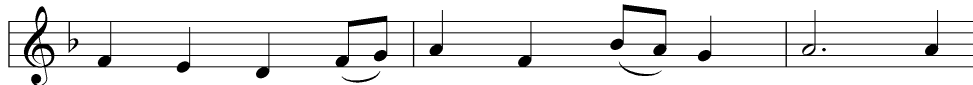
1. Now bless the God of Is - ra - el, Who comes in love and
 2. Re - mem-ber-ing the cov - e - nant, God res - cues us from
 3. In ten - der mer-cy God will send The Day-spring from on



pow'r, Who rais - es from the roy - al house De -
 fear, That we might serve in ho - li - ness And
 high, Our ris - ing sun, the light of life For



liv - 'rance in this hour. Through ho - ly proph - ets
 peace from year to year; And you, my child, shall
 those who sit and sigh. God comes to guide our



God has sworn To free us from a - larm, To
 go be - fore To preach, to proph - e - sy, That
 way to peace That death shall reign no more, Sing



1., 2.
 save us from the heav - y hand Of all who wish us harm.
 all may know the ten - der love, The grace of God most high.



3.
 prais-es to the Ho-ly One! O wor-ship and a-dore!

Luke 1:67-79 records how Zechariah burst forth in a Spirit-inspired song at the birth of his son, John (later known as John the Baptist). We use his words as we praise God for keeping his promises to send both John the forerunner and the Savior, Jesus!

Please be seated



If you prefer, use
your smart phone to
give online by
scanning this
QR code.

7:45 AM—
Gabriel's Message
Arr. by Anne Krentz
Organ

10:00 AM—
He Shall Feed His
Flock
By G. F. Handel

OFFERING

Members of Grace respond to their Savior's love with offerings that are given joyfully, generously, regularly, and in a way that is proportionate to how the Lord has blessed them. Their cheerful gifts support the mission and ministry of our congregation. If you are a guest today, please know that we do not expect you to contribute to our congregation's work. However, if you would like to give an offering to the Lord in response to his love to you, we are happy to receive it and put it to work in God's kingdom.

Please fill out the Friendship Register located in the red folder at the end of the row and pass it along. Thank You!

Please stand

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Kyrie

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: **L** In the morn - ing, O Lord, I call to you; The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics: be mer - ci - ful to me and hear my prayer. The third staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: **C** Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have The fourth staff continues the melody with the lyrics: mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

PRAYERS

L: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

L: Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and reaffirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy. Fill us instead with the joy and peace of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ your Son. Direct our eyes both to the manger and to the skies, where we will see Jesus coming again in glory.

C: Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

Special prayers may be included here.

- L: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.
- C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

- C: 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

- L: 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.

Please be seated

DISTRIBUTION

*The Bible teaches that the Lord's Supper is a unique communion of Christ and the individual believer as well as a coming together of people who hold to the same beliefs. Because of these Scriptural truths, we practice **Member Communion** at Grace. Those who are confirmed members of Wisconsin Synod congregations (WELS) are invited to receive the Lord's Supper with us.*

If you are not a WELS member but have an interest in receiving Holy Communion, please speak with one of our pastors after church today or at another time. We are aware that there are a number of other teachings about Holy Communion, and we want it to be a blessing for you, so we would look forward to sharing with you what God says about this Sacrament.

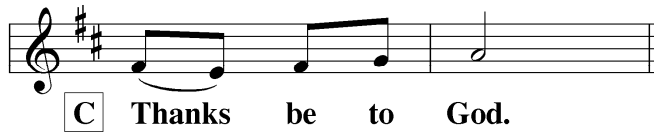
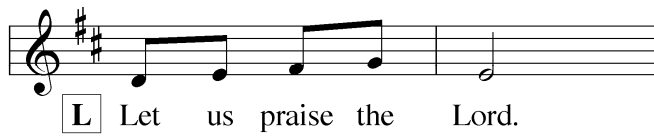
DISTRIBUTION HYMN (10:00 AM)

Hail to the Lord's Anointed
Christian Worship #93

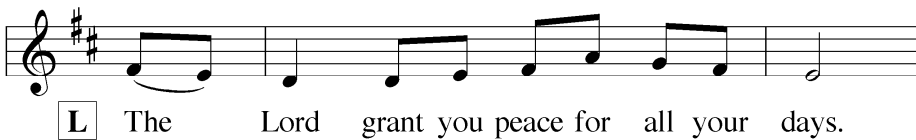
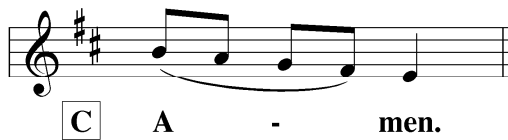
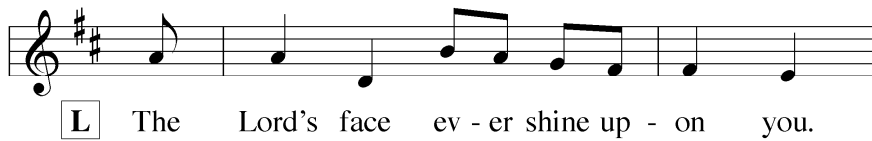
Please stand

*We provide **gluten-free communion wafers** for those with wheat allergy, gluten-sensitivity or celiac disease. These wafers are stored and handled separately to avoid cross-contamination. They are "bread" as Scripture requires and are consecrated along with the rest of the bread. For those requiring gluten-free wafers, please take one from the container on the stand located at the front rail as you approach for communion. Simply hold it so that the pastor can see it at the time of distribution.*

***Grape juice** is available for those who for health or medical reason require it instead of wine. Please speak with a pastor about providing grape juice for you on future Sundays.*



BLESSING



Please be seated

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Worship Leader Pastor Nathan Kassulke
Communion Assistants Pastor Sam Clemons, Pastor Ron Koehler (10:00 AM)
 Outreach Elder Jeff Weinstein (10:00 AM)
Accompanists Kathy Parra (7:45 AM), Tina Christianson (10:00 AM)
Acolytes..... Grace Hansen (7:45 AM), Ronda McNamara (10:00 AM)
Vocalists Nicole Peterson & Craig Lipke (7:45 AM), Voices of Grace (10:00 AM)
Clarinets Beth Kassulke & Missy Wiechmann (10:00 AM)
Voices of Grace Director Beth Kassulke (10:00 AM)
Voices of Grace Accompanist.....Melissa Newbrey (10:00 AM)
Handbells Tina Christianson & Cora Stuhr (10:00 AM)
Sound & Recording Tech Jeremy Snively (10:00 AM)
Greeters Ed & Judy Ethington (10:00 AM)
Altar Prep Team..... Cindi Breitreitz, Sally Littau

Bill Rauh was called home to heaven Wednesday, December 16. There will be a Memorial Service for him here at Grace-Tucson on Monday, December 28 at 11:00 AM with a luncheon to follow.

The Voters' Meeting for our congregation is scheduled for this afternoon at 2:00 PM in the Grace-Tucson Fellowship Hall. A booklet with Pastor and Council reports can be found in the church entryways and in the Fellowship Hall. This keeps members up to date on Grace's ministry activities and helps voters prepare for the meeting.

On Saturday, January 9 from 10:00 AM-2:30 PM, Grace-Tucson will host a seminar on *Building Gospel Bridges with Mormons*, sponsored by Truth in Love Ministries. Pastor Mark Cares will be the presenter. Lunch will be included, so please RSVP to the church office at 623-6633 if you plan to attend. Registration starts at 9:30 AM and the seminar begins at 10:00 AM.

Pastor David Parsons will be installed at Holy Cross Lutheran Church (241 N. Harrison Rd, Tucson) on Sunday, January 10 at 4:00 PM with a dinner to follow. **Please RSVP by email to hclctucaz@aol.com or phone at 520-296-5129 no later than January 3 if you plan to attend.**

The pastors and Church Council members are seeking feedback concerning staffing for ministry at Grace. A Member Feedback Meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, January 17 at 1:00 PM. The meeting will take place at Grace-Tucson, and the Lifeliners will be serving their Chupala Lunch that day. Page 30 of the packet of reports from December's Voters' Meeting lists some of the options that have been identified that could be under consideration. If you can't make the meeting on January 17, please share your thoughts with one of the pastors or Church Council members.

7:45 AM—
Nun Komm, Der
Heiden Heiland
Arr. by Mark Sedio

10:00 AM—
Tell Out My Soul
Setting by Paul
Manz

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Morning Praise: Texts revised from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941. Words and Music by Marty Haugen © 1996 GIA Publications, Inc. and Kermit Moldenhauer © 2002 Northwestern Publishing House. *Song of Zechariah* words by Ruth Duck. © 1996 GIA Publications, Inc.
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TODAY

Welcome Grace Guests!

If you are a guest at Grace today, we are very happy to have you worship with us! If you would like more information about Grace or have questions about becoming a member of our congregation, please visit the Welcome Table in the courtyard. If this is your first time at Grace, please stop there to pick up a gift just for being our guest this morning.

Altar Flowers

The flowers beautifying our worship this morning have been given by Jeanette O'Donald in loving memory of Bill, in celebration of her 80th birthday, and in thanks to God for blessing her with caring children and grandchildren!

You Are Invited

You are invited to a coffee fellowship this morning in the courtyard following both services. Fellowship after 10:00 AM worship is hosted by Debbie Sedler & Laurie Price in celebration of Jeanette O'Donald's birthday. We hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity to greet your brothers and sisters in Christ.

NEXT SUNDAY

Next week's Scripture Lessons for Devotional Reading this Week

Isaiah 45:20-25
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:25-40

Sermon Text & Theme

Luke 2:25-40
Continuous Christmas

Worship Choir Practice

Worship Choir practice is tomorrow, December 21 at 6:30 PM in the church basement. If you have any questions, please contact Director Teri Guenther (235-1177) or Music Coordinator Beth Kassulke (260-3649).

Wedding Invitation

The Grace congregation is invited to the wedding ceremony of Boz Lomasney and Kerrie Ann Galbraith tomorrow, December 21 at 2:30 PM in the Grace-Tucson sanctuary.



Divine Call Extended

At Grace's Call Meeting on Sunday, December 6, a Divine Call was extended to Pastor Timothy Bourman to serve as Grace's mission pastor to Sahuarita. Pastor Bourman currently serves at Sure Foundation Lutheran Church in Woodside, NY. Please keep Pastor Bourman, his wife Amanda and their 2 children in your prayers as he considers this Call. Also, please keep in your prayers the ongoing gospel ministry in Woodside and here at Grace!

Lutheran Military Support Group (LMSG)

The LMSG is a new support group in our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Grace member Reagan Lane is our congregational liaison and has some information to share if you are active duty, reserve, National Guard or retired/separated veterans in our congregation. Please email her at azreagan@yahoo.com so she can get in touch with you.



**Grace is one congregation
at FOUR places!**

**Enjoy worship, Bible study and activities
at Grace locations in
Benson, Sahuarita, Tucson and Vail.**

This Week at Grace • Dec 20-Dec 27

TUCSON

Today

Worship Services/Communion 7:45 & 10:00a
Coffee Fellowship following both services.....
Children's Sunday School 8:45a
Lifeliners (High School Group): *Bible Study* 9:00a
Adult Bible Study (Fellowship Hall):
• *The Life of Christ: Jesus' Last Days* 9:00a
Lomasney/Galbraith Wedding Rehearsal..... 11:30a
Voters' Meeting 2:00p

SAHUARITA

Today

Worship Service..... 9:45a
Coffee Fellowship following worship.....
Voters' Meeting at Grace-Tucson 2:00p

Thursday

Christmas Eve Worship 4:00p

Sunday

Worship Service..... 9:45a
Coffee Fellowship following worship.....

BENSON

Today

Worship Service..... 7:30a
Voters' Meeting at Grace-Tucson 2:00p

Friday

Christmas Day Worship 10:00a

Sunday

Worship Service/Communion 7:30a

Monday

Lomasney/Galbraith Wedding 2:30p
Handbell Practice..... 4:30p
Worship Choir..... 6:30p

Thursday

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00p

Friday

Christmas Day Worship 10:00a

Sunday

Worship Services..... 7:45 & 10:00a
Coffee Fellowship following both services.....
Children's Sunday School..... 8:45a
Lifeliners (High School Group): *Bible Study* 9:00a
Adult Bible Study (Fellowship Hall):
• *A Matter of Interpretation?* 9:00a

VAIL

Today

Adult Bible Study: *My Son, My Savior*..... 9:00a
Children's Sunday School 9:00a
Youth Confirmation Class..... 9:00a
Worship Service 10:00a
Coffee Fellowship following worship
Voters' Meeting at Grace-Tucson 2:00p

Thursday

Christmas Eve Carols Service 4:00p
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00p

Sunday

Adult Bible Study: *My Son, My Savior*..... 9:00a
Children's Sunday School 9:00a
Youth Confirmation Class..... 9:00a
Worship Service/Communion..... 10:00a
Coffee Fellowship following worship

**Grace Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

**830 N. First Avenue
Tucson, Arizona 85719**

**Phone 623-6633
Fax 623-1514**

**Administrative Assistant
Cora Stuhr
office@gracelutheransaz.org**

Pastors

At Grace-Tucson

Ronald G. Koehler, III revrgk3@gracelutheransaz.org
Nathan P. Kassulke revnkp@gracelutheransaz.org
Samuel M. Clemons revsmc@gracelutheransaz.org

At Grace-Vail & Grace-Benson

Colin M. Rieke revcmr@gracelutheransaz.org

At Grace-Sahuarita

Ronald G. Koehler, III revrgk3@gracelutheransaz.org

Bible-Based Counselor

**Cinda Drescher
cinda@gracelutheransaz.org
Phone 882-3773**

Music Coordinator

**Beth Kassulke
music@gracelutheransaz.org
Phone 293-2935**

Office Assistant

**Debbie Koehler
assistant@gracelutheransaz.org
Phone 623-6633**

HOLIDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24
4:00 PM at Grace-Sahuarita
4:00 PM & 7:00 PM at Grace-Vail
7:00 PM at Grace-Tucson

Christmas Day Services

Friday, December 25
10:00 AM at Grace-Benson
10:00 AM at Grace-Tucson

New Year's Eve Worship

Thursday, December 31
7:00 PM at Grace-Tucson

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

New this year, two of our Christmas Eve Worship services will be candlelight services. These services will be at 7:00 PM at Grace-Tucson and Grace-Vail. For a portion of the service, each congregation member who is comfortable with it will be holding a lit candle. This part of the service offers us the opportunity to quietly reflect on the fact that Jesus came as the Light of the World.

Arizona Lutheran Academy 5K

ALA will host their first 5K race Saturday, January 2 at 8:00 AM at Cesar Chavez Lake and Park (7858 S. 35th Ave, Laveen Village, AZ 85339). The cost is \$25 per person and all ages are welcome. Proceeds from the race will provide free Christian counseling for Arizona Lutheran Academy students and will benefit the ALA Track and Field Program. **Registration is open until December 31.** Contact Scott Loberger at Loberger@ALAcoyotes.org if you have any questions.

Ariana Grahn (Weinstein) Military Address

Grace member, Ariana Grahn, has just enlisted in the Air Force and is now in basic training. There have been requests for her address, which you will find below. No post cards please, but letters are great!

AB Grahn, Ariana E
322 TRS/FLT 098 (Dorm B-10)
1320 Truemper St Unit 369541
JBSA-Lackland, TX 78236-6407

Tuition Tax Credit

2015 is quickly drawing to a close! With that in mind, don't forget about the Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization (ACSTO). You can help support Lutheran education and receive a credit on your Arizona state income taxes (up to \$1067 per person and \$2134 per married couple filing jointly). Donations may be made online at www.acsto.org or by using the form in the ACSTO brochure. Please make use of this program if you are able to do so. If you have any questions, please speak to Jeff Weinstein (909-7649) or one of the pastors. **Pick up a flyer and a donation form brochure at any of the Grace locations.**



Grace Lutheran Church is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), a group of nearly 400,000 men, women, and children in nearly 1,300 congregations across the United States and Canada united by a common faith in Christ's saving love. We are committed to a common calling—encouraging each other in our faith and sharing God's gift of a Savior with the rest of the world.

"Chrismons"

Christ-Monograms

Chrismons are symbols that proclaim Jesus' name and his works of salvation for us. Here are explanations for the Chrismons you see on our Christmas trees.



THE ANCHOR CROSS represents our certain hope of salvation anchored in Christ.



THE BUDDED CROSS with its trefoil ends emphasizes the Trinity.



THE CELTIC CROSS has a circle in the middle symbolizing eternity. Because it has ancient ties to Christians in Ireland, Iona and Scotland, it is also called the Irish or Iona Cross.



THE CROSS WITH ORB symbolizes the world united under Christ, as the Lord cares for heaven and earth.



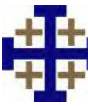
THE GREEK CROSS has four arms of equal length. Early Greek artists used this cross.



IHS is the acrostic of the first three letters of Jesus' name in Greek (**I**hsou~). Various meanings have been attached to each letter. The horizontal line that forms the cross is the sign for an abbreviation.



THE IOTA CROSS is the first letter of "Jesus" in Greek (**I**=IOTA) combined with the first letter of "Christ" in Greek (**C**=CHI).



THE JERUSALEM CROSS (also known as the CRUSADER'S CROSS) represents the city of peace. The 5 crosses represent the 5 wounds of our Lord. The 4 smaller crosses are also said to represent the spread of the gospel to the 4 corners of the earth.



THE MALTESE CROSS is comprised of 4 arms shaped like spear-heads. Each points to the center, with the broad end having 2 points. The 8 points in all represent the beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-10). This is the emblem of John the Baptist. The cross was the emblem of the Knights of St. John, who were driven from Rhodes to the island of Malta by the Turks. Malta is the island where St. Paul was shipwrecked.



THE ROMAN CROSS consists of the Latin Cross and the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, the alpha (**A**) and omega (**W**) symbolizing Jesus as the Eternal One: the 'First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.' Though he died on the cross, he reigns in glory forever.



THE STAR (NATAL) CROSS reminds us of the star that marked our Savior's birth.



THE TAU CROSS, shaped like the Greek letter **T** (tau), depicts the type of cross Moses is believed to have raised in the desert with the serpent on it. It is also the traditional sign that Israelites made with lamb's blood on their doorposts in Egypt on the night of Passover. Therefore this is the cross of penitence and prophecy.



CHALICE AND WAFER represent the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.



THREE INTERLACING CIRCLES represent the three distinct persons of the Holy Trinity, yet just one God.



THE DESCENDING DOVE symbolizes the Holy Spirit, remembering the baptism of Jesus when he descended in the form of a dove.



THE TABLET OF STONE is a symbol of the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai.



THE BUTTERFLY brings to mind our Lord's resurrection from the dead and reminds us that all believers in Christ will also rise to eternal life. The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, the alpha (**A**) and omega (**W**) are sometimes added to signify the eternal life enjoyed by those who die in the Lord.



THE CROSS CROWN is a symbol of the Kingship of our Lord, reminding us that he is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. It also reminds us of the crown of life given to believers for their lives of faith.



THE CHI-RHO is a monogram consisting of the first two Greek letters of 'Christ', **C** and **R**.



THE FISH is the most ancient symbol of Christ. Christians drew the image of the fish to identify each other in times of persecution. The Greek word for fish is **ICQUS** (ichthus). The acrostic represents this meaning: **I**=Jesus **C**=Christ **Q**=God's **U**=Son **S**=Savior.



THE 5-POINTED STAR/EPIPHANY STAR represents the star of Bethlehem and is shaped roughly like a human being representing Christ's incarnation.



THE 6-POINTED STAR/CREATOR'S STAR/STAR OF DAVID symbolizes creation. Each point refers to a day of God's creating work.



THE TREFOIL AND TRIANGLE is a symbol of the Holy Trinity showing both the unity of the Godhead as well as the diversity of the Persons.

May these Christian symbols enrich your worship and fill your Christmas celebration with even more meaning and joy!