

## Grace United Methodist Church



**December 4, 2022 - 10:00 A.M.**

**Order of Worship for the 2nd Sunday of Advent/Communion Sunday**

**Grace United Methodist Church is a Family of Faith striving to share God's love with all.**

**\* Please Stand If You Are Able**

**Opening Voluntary – “The Name of Jesus” by E. S. Lorenz; arr. J. M. Rasley**

**Choral Introit**

**Greeting**

**Advent Lighting of the Candle – Kimberly Neri and Timothy Neri**

**\* Opening Hymn #203 – “Hail to the Lord's Anointed”** *ELLACOMBE*

**\* Call to Worship**

**L:** In this season of bumper to bumper stress, with life more crowded than the stores,

**P:** **God welcomes us to a feast of faithfulness, where we may sit in peace and gentleness.**

**L:** In these times of rancorous rants and snide remarks, with people too busy to offer words of compassion,

**P:** **Jesus whispers of hope for broken hearts, sings carols of justice for all the outsiders.**

**L:** In these days of more and more time spent with devices, and fewer moments with those who could touch us with joy,

**P:** **the Spirit embraces us with peace that comforts, loves us with a passion beyond 140 characters. AMEN.**

## **\* Opening Prayer**

**Patient and loving God, we so easily launch ourselves in preparation for the secular festival of giving and parties and the swirl of social events; but we forget that the true preparation is the readiness of our hearts to receive you. Help us look again at our lives and turn them around so that they may be in tune with your will. We ask this in Jesus' Name, AMEN.**

## **Scriptures**

### **Old Testament - Isaiah 11:1-10**

1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. 3 His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; 4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. 6 The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. 9 They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. 10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

**L:** The Word of God, For the People of God. **P:** **Thanks be to God.**

## **\* Gospel – Matthew 3:1-12 (Please stand if you are able)**

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" 4 Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw

many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 'I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

L: The Word of God, For the People of God. **P: Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn before Message #175** – "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee" *ST. AGNES*

**Message** – "Playing Pretend"

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey L. Hooker, Pastor

**Pastoral Prayer**

**(Children come over to the Church from Sunday School and join their parents.)**

### ***INVITATION***

John the baptizer called us to repent as the kin-dom of heaven comes near. Yet, we often decide that we would rather not change our lives to see that realm. Let us come to God and ask for a spirit of repentance as we confess our sins to God and to one another.

### ***CONFESSION AND PARDON***

**Hear our hearts, God of peace and justice. We hear your call for repentance, and we often ignore it. We find it is easier not to change than to reorient our lives to you. We find it is more convenient to continue our lives than re-examine them. We would rather glorify being busy than take time to explore the wonders of your Word and your world through play. Turn our hearts. Open us to the wonder of your peace and cultivate a desire in us to seek it. Let us know the freedom of your grace. Amen.**

*All pray in silence.*

### ***WORDS OF ASSURANCE***

L: "Blessed is God alone who does wondrous things."

**P: Through Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, redeemed, and loved. Amen.**

**All: Glory to God. Amen.**

### **Passing of the Peace of Christ**

“Welcome one another”, writes the apostle Paul, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” In this spirit, let us greet each other with a sign of joy and peace.

### **Invitation to Tithes and Offering**

Let us share the love we receive from God with others, through the gifts we give this morning.

**Choral Selection** – “Our Hope Is in Emmanuel” by Victor C. Johnson

### **\*Presentation of the Offering and Doxology No. 95**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **\*Offering Prayer**

Almighty and All-loving One, we lift up today our thanks to you. Can we ever catalogue all the ways you have blessed our lives? We dedicate those to you today. Take our very best; may it help bring about peace on your holy mountain. With gratitude and anticipation, we pray. Amen

### **THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty (almighty God), creator of heaven and earth. By your appointment the seasons come and go. You bring forth bread from the earth and create the fruit of the vine. You formed us in your image and made us stewards of your world. Earth has yielded its treasure, and from your hand we have received blessing on blessing.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor. When hungry and tempted, he refused to make bread for himself that he might be the bread of life for others. When the multitudes were hungry, he fed them. He broke bread with the outcast but drove the greedy from the temple. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to the disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

### ***THE LORD'S PRAYER AND CHORAL RESPONSE***

#### ***BREAKING THE BREAD***

#### ***GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP***

#### ***PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING COMMUNION***

**We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

**Closing Hymn #560 - “Help Us Accept Each Other”      *ACCEPTANCE***

**\* Dismissal with Blessing**

**Closing Voluntary – “A Trumpeting” by E. Broughton**

*(Please remain seated for the Closing Voluntary)*

<b>Pastor:</b> Rev. Dr. Jeffrey L. Hooker	<b>Sunday School Teachers:</b> Lenore Kurz and Stephanie Neri
<b>Director of Music:</b> Kenneth Richardson	<b>Audio-Tech:</b> Brandon Gauntlett
<b>Liturgist and Reader:</b> Earl Boyd	<b>Counting Team:</b> Marisa Pershad
<b>Ushers:</b> Everett Fitch, Carol Provenzano, Michael Provenzano	

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