**Grace Lutheran Church**

493 Forest Avenue, Glen Ellyn IL 630.469.1555

[www.graceglenellyn.org](http://www.graceglenellyn.org)

**Second Sunday of Advent December 6, 2020**

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***+ Proclaim Christ + Build Community +***

***+ Serve Our Neighbors +***

**Introduction**

*John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord’s coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, “See, your God is coming!” We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.*

**Gathering**

**The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.**

**Prelude**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism,*

*as the worship leader begins.*

Blessed be God, Father, **☩** Son, and Holy Spirit,

whose forgiveness is sure

and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess

that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God,

**we confess that we are held captive by sin.**

**In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.**

**We have not welcomed the stranger;**

**we have not loved our neighbor;**

**we have not been Christ to one another.**

**Restore us, O God.**

**Wake us up and turn us from our sin.**

**Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

People of God, hear this glad news:

by God’s endless grace

our sins are forgiven, and we are free—

free from all that holds us back

and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.

May we be strengthened in God’s love,

**☩** comforted by Christ’s peace,

and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Opening Hymn *(Please mute your mic)*** ELW#257 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

 sts. 3, 4

 

**Lighting the Advent Candle: Love**

God, as we await your breaking into our lives again, anew,

We remember that whoever knows you, knows love.

And whoever knows Love, knows you.

In the lighting of these candles, we remember. (*Light 2 candles here.)*

We remember your love that entered the small places,

The weak places, the lost places, leaving no one alone.

We remember Love—divine, excelling, all-encompassing.

In these days we are often overwhelmed with worry, besieged by fear, despairing over hatred. So we plead for your Holy Love to be our strength, our comfort and our calling.

We await the Love that re-shapes us. We give thanks for new things it already is doing.

We trust that Love is real (*you* are real!), and faithful (*you* are faithful!)

We trust that Love has come, and is coming. We wait. We are ready.

***(You may unmute your mic)***

**Amen**.

**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.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Word**

**God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.**

**First Lesson Isaiah 40:1-11**

*In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God’s people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.*

1Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 2Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.

3A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

6A voice says, “Cry out!” And I said, “What shall I cry?” All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. 7The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. 8The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. 9Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
 lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!” 10See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**The Psalm** *Read responsively by verse* **Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

*Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)*

1You have been gracious to your land, O Lord; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.
2**You have forgiven the iniquity of your people** **and blotted out all their sins.**
8I will listen to what the Lord God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.
9**Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you** **that your glory may dwell in our land.**
10Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
11**Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,** **and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**
12The Lord will indeed grant prosperity and our land will yield its increase.
13**Righteousness shall go before the Lord** **and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

**Second Lesson 2 Peter 3:8-15a**

*This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.*

8Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. 9The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. 10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.
  11Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.
  14Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; 15aand regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

 **Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord! All flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia.**

The holy Gospel according to Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

**Gospel Mark 1:1-8**

*The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus’ birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.*

1The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ ” 4John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

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

***(Please mute your mic)***

**Sermon**  The Rev. Melody Eastman

***(You may unmute your mic)***

**Prayers of Intercession**

God of power and might, comfort your people and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you set the stars in the sky and breathe life into the earth. Renew the face of creation where it is in need of your healing touch. Mend the wounds of environmental damage and restore balance to ecosystems so that all creation can declare your praise. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Steadfast God, you never tire of seeking justice. Where people suffer from discrimination, judgment, and injustice, speak words of truth and comfort. Lead us toward a world where faithfulness will sprout underfoot and righteousness rain down from above. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Leading God, you ask us to make uneven ground smooth. Make even the disparities between your people. Sustain and support people with physical and intellectual disabilities. Accompany disability advocates who work for a world accessible to all. Teach us to celebrate the great diversity in our midst. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families and congregation who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Eternal God, we give thanks for the saints who have prepared your way in the wilderness and taught us to continue their faithful work. Make their generous lives an example for all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

 *(If your House Church is celebrating Communion, refer to that liturgy here.)*

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**Sending**

**God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.**

**Blessing**

The Creator of the stars bless our Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill us with love,

the unexpected Spirit guide our journey, **☩** now and forever. **Amen.**

**Sending Hymn *(Please mute your mic)*** ELW #253 He Came Down

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***(You may unmute your mic)***

**Sent to the World**

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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**Current Prayer Requests**

**Name Relation to Grace Prayers For**

Helen Sladek Member Healing & Strength

Chris Danly Son of Mark & Pat Danly Healing & Strength

Sigrid Elliott Friend of Grace Healing & Strength

Dorothy Tracy Member Healing & Strength

**Prayers for our homebound Members**

Anita Blakemore, Evelyn Elson, Carol Petersen, Norma Petersen, Dorothy Stein

**Weekly Announcements**

**Pr. Melody’s shoulder surgery took place on Tuesday, December 1. In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Pr. Joe Yucha from Faith Lutheran Church at 804-334-7128. Pr. Joe is on call from Tuesday, December 1 through Saturday, December 12. Pr. Melody plans to return on Sunday, December 13.**

**Reverse Advent Food Drive:** The Reverse Advent Food Drive for the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry will begin a little earlier this year. **We are asking you to begin collecting items each day starting November 25th.** You may then bring your filled bags to the Food Pantry December 21st-23rd between 9 and 11am. **Items:** **Day 1**-Paper Towels; **2**-Diced Tomatoes; **3**-Ketchup; **4**-Mustard; **5**-Mayonnaise; **6**-Boxed Cake Mix; **7**-Dried Beans; **8**-Pancake Syrup; **9**-Sugar; **10**-Flour; **11**-Boxed Mashed Potatoes; **12**-Flavored Rice a Roni; **13**-Shampoo; **14**-Conditioner; **15**-Toothpaste; **16**-Lipton Tea; **17**-1lb Pre-ground Coffee; **18**-Canned Pineapple; **19**-Canned Mandarin Oranges; **20**-Olive Oil; **21**-Laundry Detergent; **22**-Canned Chicken; **23**-Pickles; **24**-Canned Chili. You can also find the list on Grace’s Website at graceglenellyn.org.

**Contributions to Grace:** You may continue to mail your contributions to the church office; have your bank mail your contribution to the church office; or contribute on-line through Grace’s website. Please know, pandemic or no, our mission continues! Thank you for your continued support of our ministries at Grace Lutheran.

**2020 Year-End Stock or Securities Gifting:** If you intend to gift stock or securities to Grace, for your year-end charitable donation, please do so **no later than December 15**. This allows for sales to close and monies flow into the books before the Holidays.  Also, the stock market is thinly traded the last week of the year, and causes price swings; good to avoid that.

**Financial Commitment Cards:** Please return your financial commitment/pledge to Grace for 2021 either by mail; through Grace’s website; or send an email to bsudds@graceglenellyn.org. Thank you. Only 28 cards have been returned to date.

**The church offices will be closed Christmas Day through January 1.**

Sign up for **AmazonSmile** and pick Grace Lutheran Church as your charity of choice:

Remember to shop at AmazonSmile when making purchases online. In order to browse or shop at AmazonSmile, customers must first select a charitable organization. Here is the link for Grace Lutheran: [**http://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-2496438**](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-2496438)

When you sign on, you will see “Supporting Grace Lutheran Church” in the upper left hand corner. Then just shop as you normally do. There is no cost to Grace or to you, the customer. The shopping experience is identical to Amazon.com with the added benefit that the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate a percentage of your purchase amount to Grace.

**House Church Worship via phone or internet every Sunday morning at 9:30am!** We currently have five “House Churches” of worshipping members (each House Church consisting of 6-8 members/families meeting via Zoom or calling in by phone.) If you are unsure how to sign on, go ahead and register and let us know you need some help; we’ll walk you through it! We would be so blessed to have you join us. Register online for a House Church at [graceglenellyn.org](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fgraceglenellyn.org%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Hfv_r7Lkk0l-PSfwxo5IuvGdumHQ3QCEP7v4ZvaR0WOJKVA5hbrjxKAE&h=AT1soNxFTUJFeYviMArEGKelFeVj5prKjMKXk0UJTSFn5xaDSLNHlHWl9jolaFvljgE6OlBV9vpq3vIE5HfsX4lEUbwYpfdYpMW57h6Tyc58-9jrGuramUJOJJ1Qd_RvJw&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT2EpYQU1esaMoWfP5JtqUBhBqXEjGx5atvDW6kLdBJviMugmDClI27DYHudyuPviP9Hv6sjAHveGxQGTojgtZKHh3Ar39pGN4cSEtsbiD_E96uHBoM53nY40A4mpgsxH7Ee_La5kZ5CLFMRaCbeBMrb7-BmRa8JDzOlS6vBJ2YxwbmuqBlPHi9nylzaWrSwmlhCSx9Ig0m3keY) (on the main page Announcements) or contact Becky Ficarella directly at 847-347-0928 or bficarella@graceglenellyn.org.

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**Every Member a Minister and Missionary!**

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