

# GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Fridley, Minnesota

*(Church Of The Lutheran Confession)*

*Pastor John Hein; Serving Today: Pastor Emeritus David Schierenbeck*

*Organist: Sue Nelson*

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn 74 – “Once He Came In Blessing”

**INVOCATION** *We invoke (“call upon”) the name of our Triune God.*

Pastor (P): In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation (C):** ♪ Amen.

## **OUR ADVENT RESPONSIVE & CONFESSIONAL PRAYER**

P: Eternal Father, throughout the centuries You repeated and affirmed 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.

**C: We praise You, O Lord, for keeping Your promise and sending Your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**

P: As we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our King, use Your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual apathy. Lead us to confess our sins and unworthiness and to plead for Your mercy in Your Son, Jesus.

**C: Heavenly Father, we confess that we are not worthy to come to You. We have alienated You and pushed You away with our sins. Move us to take to heart the words of John: “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!” In this Advent season, we are reminded of how Your Son has come to us in mercy and love. Trusting in Him as our Redeemer and Savior, we come before You today in repentance and faith.**

P: Upon this your confession of sins and expression of faith in the One Who came to serve and to give His life a ransom for many, it is my blessed privilege to assure you of the full and free forgiveness of all Your sins, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May this Good News be your comfort, your joy and your strength. May the Gospel blessings cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

**C: O loving Lord, fill our lives with the message of Your peace and the music of Your grace.**

P: In this Advent season, direct our eyes not only to the manger but to the skies, where we will see Your Son coming again, not as a lowly Child, but as the Lord of lords.

**C: Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day. Come quickly Lord Jesus - in Your grace, in your power and in Your glory. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

### **Congregation Sings:**

- 1. When God in Eden prophesied Who'd stand in mankind's stead, A woman's seed would come to die, To crush the serpent's head.**
- 2. A shoot will sprout from Jesse's stem, A Branch from David's line, A Prince of peace in Bethlehem: The fruit of God's design.**
- 3. As banner of God's love unfurled, Christ came to suffer loss, That by His death a dying world Would rally to the cross.**
- 4. Come, Jesus come, Messiah Lord, Lost Paradise restore; Lead past the angel's flaming sword - Come, open heaven's door.**

### **1ST LESSON GENESIS 17:1-19**

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When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. **2** And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." **3** Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: **4** "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. **5** No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. **6** I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. **7** And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. **8** Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

### **2ND LESSON ROMANS 8:12-17**

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Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. **13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. **14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. **15** For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." **16** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, **17** and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

## Our Profession Of Faith: The Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And 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 sits on the right hand of God the Father, from thence 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

## Hymn 99 – *“Now Are The Days Fulfilled”*

The Sermon ..... Matthew 1: 1, 16-17

“The genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham..... And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Was born Jesus Who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the captivity in Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the captivity in Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations.”

## JESUS’ GENEQLOGY AND OURS– CONNECTED?

## Hymn 91 (V 1-4,7-8) – *“Let The Earth Now Praise The Lord”*

The Offering And Prayers

The Lord’s Prayer And Benediction (Sung “Amen”)

## The Closing Hymn: *“O Sing Of Christ”*

- 1.O sing of Christ,Whose birth made known The kindness of the Lord,  
Eternal Word made flesh and bone So we could be restored.  
Upon our frail humanity God’s finger chose to trace  
The fulness of His Deity, The icon of His grace.
2. Lord Jesus Christ, You deigned to dwell Among us here on earth,  
As God with us, Emmanuel, To bring this holy birth.  
Though rich, You willingly became One with our poverty,  
That we might share Your wealth and name For all eternity!

Silent Prayer And Announcements

**WELCOME** To our worshipers in the name of our Advent Savior and King. May you be blessed by the Advent Word and encouraged as you gather together to share your mutual faith and hope in Christ. On Thursday Pastor Hein was called back to Spokane to be with his father, whom the Lord appears near to taking home to himself. May the precious promises of our living and eternal Lord comfort hearts. *"Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; And whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether, therefore, we live or die, we are the Lord's"* (Romans 14:8).....All other announcements will be made orally following the service.

## 'TWO CHRISTMASES':

One of our pastors found the following quote somewhere, and shared thoughts on it in his church bulletin. We would do the same, for it truly makes one think. The quote is:



OH • HOLY • NIGHT

*"There are really two Christmases. The one is the Christmas which praises God for sending His Son into the world to save us from sin and to give us (eternal) life through faith in Him. The other Christmas is the nation-wide carnival that comes at the end of December, the Christmas of Santa Claus, which confesses no faith at all and in which any unbeliever or infidel can join without prejudice to his private beliefs or unbeliefs."*

True preparation for Christmas is not stressful. It costs nothing of a material nature. True preparation for Christmas is simply that we repent of our sins and rejoice in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This is the one Christmas.

Preparation for the other Christmas is generally laden with stress. Its preparation is determined by the hyping of sale of goods, the emotion of which is determined by the welfare of the economy when it is over. It is the time of parties and festivities which, when all is said and done, makes one yearn from exhaustion for the end of the season. Christians much to their dismay get caught up in the tidal wave of this carnival too. If you don't believe it, just ask yourself how you respond when someone asks, "Well, are you ready for Christmas?"