

# A SERVICE OF THE WORD

## "Second Sunday of Advent"

December 6, 2020

9:00 a.m.

"When we reach the limits of our own strength, and courage, something unexpected happens.  
We find reinforcement coming from a source outside of ourselves.  
And in the knowledge that we are not alone, that God is on our side, we manage to go on."  
Rabbi Harold Kushner

### PRE-SERVICE

#### OUR COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Gift Cards for Ascend  
What If? Foundation  
Christmas Caroling

Doug Charles  
Connie Steffen  
Shay Hampton Gregory

#### PRELUDE

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Handbell Choir

#### SYMBOLIC ENTRY OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT

Lance Anderson, Andrew Wagner

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Greetings to you in the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

We turn to you, O Gracious God.

We see the challenges of the world around us:

Fear, Anxiety, Anger, War, Hunger, Loneliness; Home Insecurity.

You, O God, are gracious. You are merciful.

You are slow to anger. You abound in steadfast love.

You relent from punishing.

We turn to you, O Gracious God.

We know the challenges of life within us:

We know what is right but we don't always do what is right;

We know what is wrong but we don't always resist what is wrong.

You, O God, are gracious. You are merciful.

You are slow to anger. You abound in steadfast love.

You relent from punishing.

In this hour of worship, we turn our hearts to you, O Gracious God. Amen.

#### HISTORIC STATEMENT OF FAITH

I invite you to join your voice with mine as we speak what the church believes:

My only comfort in life and in death is that I am not my own,

But belong---Body and soul, In life and in death—

To my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,  
And has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.  
He also watches over me in such a way  
That not a hair can fall from my head  
Without the will of my Father in heaven.  
In fact, all things must work together for my salvation.  
Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit,  
Assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready  
From now on to live for him.

## HYMN

### "Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

(If you are worshiping in the sanctuary, please do not sing.)

Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald it's dawning.  
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! The Child of our longing.  
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,  
he opens wide the heavenly door and lives now inside us forever.

In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,  
as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.  
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder,  
The weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.

Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless,  
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.  
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;  
may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.

## CALL TO PRAYER

We cannot come before God unless we are first honest with ourselves about who we are, about the mistakes we make, and about how well or how poorly we care for others. In this spirit, let us offer our prayer to God.

## LITANY OF CONFESSION

We remember, O God, the first of the ten words you spoke to Moses and the people of Israel: "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, you shall have no other gods before me." Forgive us, O God, for we have sinned against you in thought, in word, and in deed.

We confess to you the waywardness of our lives. We forget, sometimes, that you are God Most Holy and that we are mortal, your handiwork. Forgive us when we have not honored you with our humility. Forgive us when we have enlarged ourselves out of proportion, when we have idolized our successes, and when we have welcomed the praises of others.

During this season of preparation, save us, God, from our pride. And protect us from the illusion of our self-sufficiency. We offer this pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who did not resist the cross. Amen.

#### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

This, beloved, is the Good News that the Gospel brings to us: God came among us in Jesus Christ not to condemn but to save. We celebrate the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ from now `till death. Amen.

#### HYMN

#### "Return, My People"

(Words by the Rev. James Martin, former pastor of Saron United Church of Christ)

Return, my people, Israel, with penitential tear;  
just as the prophet did foretell the advent of Emmanuel,  
God's reign on earth is near!

Fear; not, beloved, hearken now; our God has done great things!  
Your vindication shall pour down like rain upon the barren ground,  
glad tidings to you bring.

Then to the faithful of the earth the call of God rings clear;  
"Return, my people, claim your worth, preparing for your Savior's birth;  
my reign on earth is near.

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE Jim and Martha Rasmus, daughter Jill DeRosier  
granddaughters Aubry DeRosier and Katelyn Klein

#### RESPONSE

#### "Light Shines in the Darkness" *Olson & Peterson*

(refrain) Oh the light shines in the darkness  
and the light will not be overcome  
In this world broken and scattered  
the light will not be overcome

As our lives are turning  
and our hearts are yearning  
through the days of hurting  
deep in the night  
still the flame burns bright. (refrain)

Tears throughout creation  
torn apart relations  
wounds across the nations  
hope may seem gone  
but the flame burns on. (refrain)

## PSALM 130

Max Loomis

Life does not always unfold according to our human plans. In fact, throughout life we experience many events that are not of our own choosing. In the Psalm we're about to pray, the psalmist is in a difficult situation. Out of his maturity, he finds solace and strength by returning to the Lord. We will be using the New Century translation of this psalm. Please pray with me.

Lord, I am in great trouble,  
so I call out to you.

**Lord, hear my voice;  
listen to my prayer for help.**

Lord, if you punished people for all their sins,  
no one would be left, Lord.

**But you forgive us,  
so you are respected.**

I wait for the Lord to help me,  
and I trust his word.

**I wait for the Lord to help me  
more than night watchmen wait for the dawn,  
more than night watchmen wait for the dawn.**

People of Israel, put your hope in the Lord  
because he is loving  
and able to save.

**He will save Israel  
from all their sins.**

## A READING FROM THE GOSPEL

Matthew 7:7-11

(We are about to listen to a text from the Sermon on the Mount. In this scripture, Jesus affirms the value of prayer. When we express our needs to God, God will heed our requests. Listen for God's Word.....)

"Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

## SERMON ON THE STEPS

### SPECIAL MUSIC

Anton Pietenpol

*"While I'm Waiting"*

## THE PROPHETIC WORD

Joel 1:1-4

The word of the Lord that came to Joel son of Pethuel:  
Hear this, O elders,  
    give ear, all inhabitants of the land!  
Has such a thing happened in your days,  
    or in the days of your ancestors?  
Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children,  
    and their children another generation.  
What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten.  
What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten,  
and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten.

## THE PROPHETIC WORD

Joel 2:12-16, 28-29

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.  
Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

## SERMON

THE PROPHET JOEL: TURN TO GOD

## PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

## THE OFFERING

Our worship of God would not be complete if we were not given an opportunity to return something of ourselves to God, to the Church, and to the greater welfare of humanity. When we give an offering, we give a tangible part of our lives in hope that these gifts will show forth our adoration of God.

## DOXOLOGY

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.

**OFFERTORY PRAYER**

I invite you to pray with me a prayer penned years ago by Augustine,

Breathe in me O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.  
Act in me O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.  
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy.  
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy.  
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

**"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"**

(If you are worshiping in the sanctuary, please do not sing.)

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

**\*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION**

**\*POSTLUDE**

*"God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman"*

Andrea Allington

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**GRACE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**"We are a Christian Community Committed to Love, Service and Growth."**

**2801 Garfield Street, Two Rivers, Wisconsin 54241 (920) 553-1222**

**Website <http://www.graceucc.org>**

**Missionaries:** Mark Knowles and Danielle Murry-Knowles, Serving in Lesotho, Africa

**Ministers:** *All the People of the Congregation*

**Pastor:** *Kim M. Henning*

**Associate Pastor:** *Colie Bettivia*

**Moderator:** *Betty Becker*

**Administrative Assistants:** *Debbie Augustine and Jean Schwalbe*

**Organist/Choir Director:** *Andrea Allington*

**Organist:** *Beverly Barnes Mark*

**Maintenance:** *Michael Timm*

**Sound Board:** *Bruce Suettinger*

**Worship Technology:** *Bill Heinsohn, Bob Randerson, Cal MacAuley*

*Song Leader: Anton Pietenpol*  
*Liturgist: Rebekah Mueller*

### **HOSPITALIZED**

Buddy Davidson was released from Aurora Medical Center on Tuesday of this week. Laura Jasper was released from Aurora Bay Care on Sunday. Florence Luecker has been released from Aurora Medical Center and is now residing at Magnolia Meadows, 1480 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Manitowoc.

### **A GRIEF TO SHARE**

Mike Walsh, the brother-in-law of Kaye Katke, died on Monday, November 30. We offer our sympathy and love to Kaye and her family.

### **A BIRTH TO ANNOUNCE**

On Monday, November 30, Bryce and Peter Lewellen became parents of a newborn daughter, Beatrice Nia Lewellen. Beatrice has been welcomed home by her brother, Felix. We further offer our blessings to Beatrice's Grandparents, Don and Ellen Lewellen.

### **DRIVE-IN CHRISTMAS CAROL SING ALONG**

Like so many things this year, our Christmas caroling will be a little different. **Sunday, December 13 at 4:00pm** we will gather in the church parking lot. Remaining in your vehicles, you will tune your radio to listen to the music and sing along to Christmas carol favorites. There will be goodie bags and special treats for children. Please join us.

### **WOMEN OF GRACE**

The Women of Grace have adopted a family leaving Hope House for the upcoming year. We will be purchasing gifts for the family so each has something to open on Christmas. We invite the congregation to assist us. Ideas would be food gift cards for mom and dad, 2 or 3 plastic sleds, kid's books, gift cards to fun places like roller skating or ice cream, or maybe just Chamber Bucks that would cover almost everything. Thank you so much for being caring people you are. Mickey

### **ASCEND REQUESTS OUR HELP**

Our congregation has supported Ascend over the past six years. They need your continued support this Christmas. In past years, we put out request cards or bulbs in church with names and ages of those in need. Because of Covid, Ascend is unable to predict how many they will be serving at Christmas time, but ask for twenty gift cards. I'm requesting from you a check for \$25. Mission and Outreach will purchase gift cards and deliver them to Ascend.

Here is one of Mr. Rogers' (PBS) quotes: *When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."*

Let's be helpers. Make your checks payable to Grace Congregational Church and place "Ascend" in the memo section. Nancy & I will be supporting this effort along with you. (Doug Charles)

### **ADVENT DEVOTIONAL SERIES - "EXPECTATION"**

Pastor Colie is making another video devotional series for advent! Sign up to receive a daily email with a video devotional of about 3 minutes. The theme this year is "Expectation", and will begin on Nov 29. To sign up, go to <http://eepurl.com/hgTTjr> or email Pastor Colie ([pastorcolie@gmail.com](mailto:pastorcolie@gmail.com))

### **"INSPIRED" BY RACHEL HELD EVANS**

Our Monday Adult Study Class will not meet this week. On Monday, December 14, we will host our next class using the book, "Inspired." We are studying chapter two of her book (pp.29-57) and pages 12-15 from her study guide. Contact [khenning1956@gmail.com](mailto:khenning1956@gmail.com) if you would need a study book or if you would like to receive a Zoom link.

### **CALLING ALL CHRISTMAS HYMN LOVERS**

You are invited to be part of our Christmas Eve virtual choir hymns. We are looking for people to record themselves (or family groups) singing Joy to the World, O Come All Ye Faithful, Silent Night, and/or O Little Town of Bethlehem at home. Andrea will collect the videos to compile a video to be used on Christmas Eve. If you're interested please contact Andrea [romsosa96@gmail.com](mailto:romsosa96@gmail.com). If you're interested but hesitant about the process/technology please let Andrea know. Our choir members have become experts and are willing to help!

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL KIDS' "MINI LESSON"**

Pastor Colie (with the help of Lincoln!) are recording a video each week reading the week's Bible story from the children's Bible. These videos can be played for children as an introduction to the worship service, or as a stand-alone story. Look for the videos included in the worship service emails every weekend.

### **QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS – IS IT RIGHT FOR YOU?**

A qualified charitable distribution allows you to make a tax free donation from an IRA owned by an individual who is age 70 ½ or over. The distribution would need to be paid directly from the IRA to a qualified charity such as the church. SO.....

- If you are 70 ½ year or older
- If you have an IRA which you typically withdraw from to pay your pledge or personal expenses
- Talk with your financial advisor and they will provide you the form to withdraw from your IRA to pay your pledge or church donation directly to the church.
- It is Tax Free for both Federal and State Income Taxes.

### **LAKELAND UNIVERSITY OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS**

Are you looking for ways to get involved in a religious studies community during your time at college? Do you have a passion to speak out for justice? Lakeland University offers a full-tuition scholarship competition opportunity to students with these interests; it's called our **Ulrich Scholars Scholarship Program**.

Each year nine Ulrich Scholars earn a **\$20,000** per year scholarship to attend Lakeland University. Students who receive these awards major or minor in Religion, participate in Ulrich Scholars events throughout the year (including lectures, retreats, community service, and visits to various religious

communities), and lead a social justice initiative on or off campus in their junior or senior years. If this sounds interesting, we would love to have you learn more about the Ulrich Scholars Program. You may apply for the opportunity at [lakeland.edu/portal](http://lakeland.edu/portal). Applicants must submit their materials by **January 22, 2021**. If you have any questions contact Dr. Karl Kuhn at [kuhnka@lakeland.edu](mailto:kuhnka@lakeland.edu) or [admissions@lakeland.edu](mailto:admissions@lakeland.edu).

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

Christmas Eve will be different this year. But we will strive to do our very best to offer a worship experience that will honor our Lord Jesus Christ and our practice of faith.,

**4:00 pm** Christmas Eve Worship Service: Live-Stream

**5:15-6:30 pm** Drive-through Distribution of Holy Communion and Gifts of Brown Bags for Children

**9:30 pm** Christmas Eve Worship Service: Live Stream

### PEOPLE WE WANT TO HOLD IN PRAYER...

Gene Krueger and Bob Stephens are residents at Hamilton Home/Northland Lodge. Ruth Hauboldt is a resident at River House Apartments. Lesley Huffer is at Rivers Bend, & Bruce Huffer is at his home. Marian Duescher is a resident at Harbor View. Florence Luecker is a resident at Magnolia Meadows. Jean Sutter is with her daughter, Heidi Bender: 880 S. Madison Ave. Pasadena, CA 91106. Nicole Kellner is at 265 S. National Ave., Fond du Lac, 54935. Bill Monka is a resident at Tender Reflections. Bonnie Burmeister is living at 2790 Elm Tree Hill, Room 301, Howard, WI; Ginny Posny is a resident at Felician Village.

### OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

Bracken Tadych (PFC4 107-1 Lilac Lane, Minot AFB, ND 58704); Jacob Hearley (5350 Berger Street, Stop 1330, Moody AFB GA 31699); MSgt Kevin Allie (PSC37, 19 Naomi Street Magnolie, DE 19962); Gavin and Emily LeGreve (1344 N Lafayette Avenue; Bremerton WA 98312); Hunter Hayes (Bagram AFB, Afghanistan); Kaity Pietenpol (Pietenpol-Prueter, Kaitlynn, 4540 Carswell Ave Unit C-9 Nellis AFB NV 89191); Alec Dewane (PVT Dewane, Alec J. B Btry 2-6 ADA BN 2750 Miner Rd. Fort Sill OK 73503); Jimmi & Alex Anderson, 164B Lower Brick Rd., Fort Riley, KS 66442

Please notify the office of additions, changes or corrections to the above lists.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY today to Brad Seefeldt and this week to Andrea Allington, Nicole Drew, Rachel Guex, Karl Krizek, Clare Schuette, Betty Amuzu, Ashton Peterson, Sarah Coenen, Austin Krueger, Tim Klein and Lydia Snyder.

	<b>This Week at Grace</b>	
<b>Monday</b>	Handbell Choir practice	11:00am
	Diaconate meeting	6:00pm
<b>Tuesday</b>	Mission & Outreach	5:00pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	Confirmation class	6:00pm
	Adult choir	7:00pm
	Generation G	7:00pm
<b>Friday</b>	Wedding Rehearsal	5:00pm
<b>Saturday</b>	David Meissner/ Laurean Weber Wedding	3:00pm