

March 16, 2025

2nd Sunday in Lent



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ 08244

Church Office: 609-927-3082 **Food Pantry:** 609-927-9982

Website: www.gracelutheranspnj.org

E-mail: office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net

Interim Pastor † Wendolyn Trozzo, Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant
Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.*

*Our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

GATHERING

Thank you for joining us as we worship our Lord together!

INTRODUCTION

Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek God's face again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

WELCOME

Rev. Jeffrey Eaton

PRELUDE

Irish Jig Medley
Andrew Ehrhardt: Clarinet

arr. By Andy Ralls

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

O Lord, our God, you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. *Pause for reflection.*

O Lord, our God, We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. *Pause for reflection.*

O Lord, our God, We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. *Pause for reflection.*

O Lord, our God, Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross. **Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In † Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN*Bless Now, O God, the Journey***ELW #326****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.**

KYRIE**ELW (front) #138****PRAYER OF THE DAY**

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Take a brief moment to share the peace by greeting someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate if you are not comfortable shaking hands or touching.

Please be seated.

FIRST READING: Genesis 15:1-12,17-18

God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a child, that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and that the land of Canaan will be their inheritance. Abram's trust in God is sealed with a covenant-making ceremony, a sign of God's promise.

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴ But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵ He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶ And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to

him as righteousness.

⁷ Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." ⁸ But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" ⁹ He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." ¹⁰ He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. ¹¹ And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

¹² As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 27

The Lord is My Light
Soprano: Ruth Bowden

by Frances Allisten

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

² **When evildoers close in against me to devour my flesh,
they, my foes and my enemies, will stumble and fall.**

³ Though an army encamp against me, my heart will not fear.

Though war rise up against me, my trust will not be shaken.

⁴ **One thing I ask of the LORD; one thing I seek;**

that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life; to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek God in the temple.

⁵ For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,

hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary, and raise me high upon a rock.

⁶ **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies who surround me.**

Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

⁷ Hear my voice, O LORD, when I call;

have mercy on me and answer me.

⁸ **My heart speaks your message “Seek my face.”
Your face, O LORD, I will seek.**

⁹ Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your servant in anger.
Cast me not away—you have been my helper; forsake me not, O God of
my salvation.

¹⁰ **Though my father and my mother forsake me,
the LORD will take me in.**

¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD;
lead me on a level path, because of my oppressors.

¹² **Subject me not to the will of my foes,
for they rise up against me, false witnesses breathing violence.**

¹³ This I believe—that I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living!

¹⁴ Wait for the LORD and be strong.
Take heart and wait for the LORD!

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Although Paul’s devotion to Christ has caused him to be persecuted, he does not regret the course he has taken. Writing from prison, he expresses confidence in a glorious future and encourages other Christians to follow in his footsteps.

¹⁷ Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. ^{4:1} Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and

mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in

stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 13th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Luke 13:31-35

Neither Herod's plotting nor Jerusalem's resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus,] “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you.” ³² He said to them, “Go and tell that fox for me, ‘Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³ Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.’ ³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵ See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

Rev. Jeffrey Eaton

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery* **ELW #334**
VERSES 1-3 & LENT 2

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Please be seated.***OFFERING**

OFFERTORY *Wondrous Love* *setting by Carson P. Cooman*

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Create in Me a Clean Heart* **WOV #732**

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need. *Brief silence.*

At the end of each prayer petition when the worship assistant or pastor says, "God, in your mercy," please respond with "receive our prayer."

P: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW (front) #144

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW (front) #144

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Together, we pray as our Lord taught us, saying:

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

COMMUNION HYMN

Lamb of God

ELW (front) #146

COMMUNION HYMNS

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly

ELW #461

Break Now the Bread of Life

ELW #515

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to receive Holy Communion. The ushers will invite worshippers forward to fill the altar railings. Once you have received the wafer and the red wine/white grape juice, place your empty cup in the

tray and return to your pew. As places open up, worshippers will fill them in so that communion is a continuous process. If you do not wish to receive communion, or are worshipping with children who have not had First Communion, we welcome you to come forward for a blessing; as you kneel at the railing, cross your arms over your chest to show your preference to the pastor.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

SENDING

BLESSING

God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit ✚ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

ELW #324

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music.
and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

POSTLUDE

Rigaudon

by Andre Campra

Played in honor of Charles Bowden's 80th birthday!

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.
Thanks be to God.

We are glad for your presence today.

We hope you come again soon!

**We thank all those serving in worship today:
Worship Assistants: Shirley Blankenship & Corinne Rhodes**



The music sponsor this week is: Ruth Bowden, in honor of Charlie's 80th birthday!

Special thank you to Pastor Jeffrey Eaton for leading us in worship!

Food Pantry item of the month for March is: Spaghetti Sauce. These may be placed in the designated basket in the narthex.

Bread and Broth Supper throughout Lent

Join us Thursdays at 6:00PM



This Thursday will be hosted here at Grace.

A short worship service will follow starting around 6:30. Coming a bit late? Eat as we worship. Come and be blessed!

March 20 and April 3 will be hosted here at Grace.

Please sign up to bring bread, soup, or a salad so we know what food we will have each week. Call the church office or sign up in the narthex on the sign up sheet on Sundays.

March 27, and April 10 will be hosted at St. John's in Ocean City and they will provide supper.

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS:

- Egg Hunt & Holy Story– Palm Sunday 4/13, 3:00 PM
Hosted by Ellie Hull & Pastor Wendolyn

- Can any woodworkers create an Easter Creche like this one? *If so, please contact Pastor Wendolyn.*



- Sunday School Re-Start “tester”- Sundays 4/27-6/1
Seeking teachers, aides, and people to invite families. Contact Miranda Bilello 609-470-1882

- Volunteers needed to host Coffee Hour on Sunday, March 23 and April 27.
- Volunteers needed for Tik Tok (Table cloths & Keurig/drinks) set-up and clean-up for Coffee Hours.

**The Atlantic County Roundtable of Historical Organizations Presents:
HOUSES OF WORSHIP IN OLDE ATLANTIC COUNTY**

Sunday, March 30 at 2:00 PM

at the Atlantic City Historical Society
907 Shore Road, Somers Point

And again on:

Sunday April 6 at 2:00 PM

Please see the flier in the narthex for details.

PRAYER LIST

Please keep the following people in your daily prayers:

Members of Grace: Debbie K., Renee P., Bettie C., Diana M., Bruce H., Bonnie C., Ruth K., Lois R., Barry L., Don B., John S., Brenda T., Family of Chris D., Bob K., Ruth B., Scott B, John N., Linda S., Family & friends of Bob Grant

Our family and friends: Alex, Jeff, Skip, Family & Friends of Tad, Donna, Tom (Ruth T.), Ric, Jeanne, Cody, Logan (Ruth B.), Marilyn (June J.), Catherine, Ana, Sal, Ronna, Nadine, Todd (Corinne R.), Carrie (Ray H.), Sue (Carol L.), Linda, Dana (Edna C. & Patty D.), Bruce (Brenda T.), Jody M. (Mary Ann G.), Karen H. (Mary G.), Tyler, Megan (Carol G.), Michael, Jim (Meg L.), Francis M. (Jane T.), Pastor Althea's father Cal S., Bridget K. & Patrick, George M.

Those serving our country: Matthew Bilello, ANG, Cainan Johnson, USAF, & Daniel Casner, 3rd USN, Liam Johnson, USN

The Shores at Wesley Manor: Eleanore Guire

Please notify the church office of any changes or additions to our prayer list.

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

March 16, 2025—March 23, 2025

2st Sunday in Lent 3/16/25

8:00AM Spoken Worship
8:45AM Adult Forum
10:15AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY 3/17/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 3/18/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 3/19/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
6:00PM AA Book Study
6:30PM Compassionate Friends
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 3/20/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
12:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
5:00PM Choir Rehearsal
6:00 AA 12-Step
6:00PM Bread & Broth at Grace
7:00PM Al-Anon
7:00PM Sisters of Hope
Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Church Council Meeting

FRIDAY 3/21/25

10:30AM Grace Stitchers
7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 3/22/25

7:30AM & 8:30AM Weight Watchers

3rd Sunday in Lent 3/23/25

8:00AM Spoken Worship
8:45AM Adult Forum
10:15AM Traditional Worship
Coffee Hour-Sponsor needed



Present this bulletin on a Sunday and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace Lutheran Church. Present this on any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
6710 Tilton Road
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
609-641-3669

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Tues 10:00AM-3:00PM

Thurs-Fri 10:00AM-3:00PM