

# HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

**February 4, 2024—February 11, 2024**

5th Sunday after Epiphany 2/4/24

8:00AM Spoken Worship

8:45AM Adult Forum Group

10:15AM Traditional Worship

**Annual Congregational Meeting  
immediately following worship**

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY 2/5/24

**7:00PM Grief Support Group**

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 2/6/24

**5:00PM Oktoberfest Planning  
Meeting**

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 2/7/24

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 2/8/24

**2:00PM Grief Support Group**

5:00 Choir Rehearsal

**7:00 PM Antique Club**

7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 2/9/24

10:30AM Grace Stitches

7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 2/10/24

*No events*

Transfiguration of our Lord 2/11/24

8:00AM Spoken Worship

8:45AM Adult Forum Group

10:15AM Traditional Worship

**Fellowship Hour sponsored by**

**Financial Support Team**

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-3:00PM

FRI 10:00AM-2:00PM

### PASTOR OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Althea is often in the  
office and she is always  
available by appointment.

February 4, 2024

5th Sunday After Epiphany



## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

11 East Dawes Avenue, Somers Point, NJ

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

**Website:** [www.gracelutheranspnj.org](http://www.gracelutheranspnj.org)

**E-mail:** [office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net](mailto:office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net)

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor ☩ 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 with us as we worship our Lord together!

**Introduction**

*In Isaiah the one God who sits above the earth and numbers the stars also strengthens the powerless. So in Jesus' healing work we see the hand of the creator God, lifting up the sick woman to health and service (diakonia). Like Simon's mother-in-law, we are lifted up and healed to serve. Following Jesus, we strengthen the powerless; like Jesus, we seek to renew our own strength in quiet times of prayer.*

**WELCOME**

Rev. Althea Albright

**PRELUDE**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**GREETING**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

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

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned away from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We come before you in a spirit of repentance. We are eager to be close with you again. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. By grace you have been saved. In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit all your sins are forgiven. May Almighty God strengthen you with power

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 10:15AM WORSHIP  
IN THE SANCTUARY**

**We thank all those serving in worship today!**

**Reader: Edna Cordery**

**Special thank you to guest organist Dennis Cook!**

**The flowers sponsor this week is: Kathy Wopatek-Nigsch, in loving memory of her mother, Catherine Wopatek.**



**The candles and wine sponsor is: Linda Rihl, in memory of her father, Joseph Rutherford.**

**WELCA ANNOUNCEMENT**

Thank you to all who contributed to our winter collection for school children. We received 27 hats, 43 pairs of gloves, 6 hat and glove sets, 6 pairs of hand crochet mittens, and 2 scarves. These will be distributed to Slaybaugh Elementary School in Egg Harbor Township.

**STRONGER TOGETHER Grief Support Group**

Pastor Althea has picked two different days with an afternoon and evening time. They will meet every other week. The first group will meet on **Monday, February 5 at 7:00 PM**, and the second group will meet on **Thursday, February 8, at 2:00 PM**. Anyone is welcome to attend the group that fits best fits your schedule.

**ASH WEDNESDAY : February 14, 2024**

**12:00 PM** Brief prayer service and imposition of ashes

**6:00 PM** Supper, followed by the movie "Chocolat" and ending with imposition of ashes.

Please sign up ASAP in the narthex if you want to bring something. The menu will include soup, salad, bread, drinks (soft and hard) and chocolate desserts to go with the movie.

**DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION** *Lamb of God* ELW (front) p.154

*EVERYONE IS INVITED to come forward at the direction of the ushers. If you are unable to come to the altar, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children may come forward to receive a blessing.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of abundance, **with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may be your hands and feet in the world and proclaim your redeeming love to all. Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Please stand as you are able.*

**SENDING BLESSING**

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN** *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* ELW #858

**DISMISSAL** Go in peace. Christ is with you.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*We are glad for your presence today.  
We hope you come again soon!*

through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.  
**Amen.**

**OPENING HYMN** *We Come to You for Healing, Lord* ELW #617  
VERSES 1, 3, 5 ALL, VERSE 2 MEN, VERSE 4 WOMEN**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 of hymnal) p. 147**HYMN OF PRAISE** ELW (front) p. 148**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Everlasting God, you give strength to the weak and power to the faint. Make us agents of your healing and wholeness, that your good news may be made known to the ends of your creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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.*

~ **WORD** ~

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:21-31**

*The Judeans in exile have a good reason to be hopeful: the one who will bring them to freedom is the God who created the world, the God who subdues the rulers of the earth and gives strength to those who are weary.*

<sup>21</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

<sup>22</sup>It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,  
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;  
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,  
and spreads them like a tent to live in;  
<sup>23</sup>who brings princes to naught,  
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

<sup>24</sup>Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,  
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,  
when he blows upon them, and they wither,  
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

<sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me,  
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

<sup>26</sup>Lift up your eyes on high and see:  
Who created these?

He who brings out their host and numbers them,  
calling them all by name;  
because he is great in strength,  
mighty in power,  
not one is missing.

<sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,

“My way is hidden from the LORD,  
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

<sup>28</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.

<sup>29</sup>He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.

<sup>30</sup>Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;

<sup>31</sup>but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,

## ~ HOLY COMMUNION ~

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW (front) p. 152

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

### HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW (front) p. 153

Holy God, mighty Lord, endless is your mercy and eternal is your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. **Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

### 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 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 are welcome at the table of Christ. Come, taste and see that the Lord is good. **Amen.**

*Please stand as you are able.*

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

### OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. **Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation. *Brief silence.*

A: Creator of the ends of the earth, you make the grass grow and send rain for the soil. Bring your creation into harmony and balance. Give animals their food and provide healthy shelter for your people. Inspire us to honor the miraculous beauty of all you have made. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

P: God who strengthens, you lift up with your hand any who are suffering. Heal those who are brokenhearted and strengthen the weak and all in need *especially all those we name aloud or in our hearts...* God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

A: God who gives power to the faint, challenge us to share the faith stories of what God has done in our lives. Open us to receive the unique ways God is at work in your people, especially those whose perspectives challenge our own. Be with us and empower us in our ministry in the year to come. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

P: Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us even when we do not have words to pray, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

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

### PSALM 147:1-11, 20c (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises <sup>1</sup>to our God!

How pleasant it is to honor <sup>1</sup>God with praise!

<sup>2</sup>**The LORD re- <sup>1</sup>builds Jerusalem,  
and gathers the ex- <sup>1</sup>iles of Israel.**

<sup>3</sup>The LORD heals the <sup>1</sup>brokenhearted  
and binds <sup>1</sup>up their wounds.

<sup>4</sup>**The LORD counts the number <sup>1</sup>of the stars  
and calls them all <sup>1</sup>by their names.**

<sup>5</sup>Great is our LORD and might- <sup>1</sup>y in power;  
there is no limit <sup>1</sup>to God's wisdom.

<sup>6</sup>**The LORD lifts <sup>1</sup>up the lowly,  
but casts the wicked <sup>1</sup>to the ground.**

<sup>7</sup>Sing to the LORD <sup>1</sup>with thanksgiving;  
make music upon the harp <sup>1</sup>to our God,

<sup>8</sup>**who covers the heav- <sup>1</sup>ens with clouds  
and prepares rain for the earth, making grass to grow up- <sup>1</sup>on the  
mountains.**

<sup>9</sup>God provides food <sup>1</sup>for the cattle  
and for the young ravens <sup>1</sup>when they cry.

<sup>10</sup>**God is not impressed by the might <sup>1</sup>of a horse,  
and has no pleasure in the speed <sup>1</sup>of a runner,**

<sup>11</sup>but finds pleasure in those who <sup>1</sup>fear the LORD,  
in those who await God's steadfast love. <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah!

### SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

*God entrusted Paul with the responsibility of bringing the gospel to diverse people. Hence the focus of Paul's ministry is not his own rights or privileges as an apostle but the privilege of serving God by freely sharing the good news of Christ with others.*

<sup>16</sup>If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!  
<sup>17</sup>For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. <sup>18</sup>What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.  
<sup>19</sup>For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. <sup>20</sup>To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. <sup>21</sup>To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. <sup>22</sup>To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. <sup>23</sup>I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

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

*Please stand as you are able.*

The Holy Gospel according to Mark the 1st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **GOSPEL: Mark 1: 29-39**

*Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.*

<sup>29</sup>As soon as [Jesus and the disciples] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup>Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out

many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

<sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." <sup>38</sup>He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

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

*Please be seated.*

### **SERMON**

Rev. Althea Albright

*Please stand as you are able.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness* **ELW #843**

### **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.**

### **OFFERING**

### **OFFERTORY**