

Grace Lutheran Church

8:00 am: Spoken Service & 10:15 am: Liturgical Service

Shore Road @ Dawes & Meyran Aves.

11 East Dawes Ave., Somers Point, New Jersey 08244

Phone: 609-927-3082—Fax: 609-927-6672—Food Pantry: 609-927-9982

Email: office@gracelutheranspnj.comcastbiz.net

Website: www.gracelutheranspnj.org

Pastor: Rev. Althea Albright
Music Director: Mr. Scott J. Breiner

Church Secretary: Diana McArdle

Sexton: Andrew McCarrick

² Welcome

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church! We are glad you are here whether you are here to worship with us as a first time visitor, friend, neighbor, or lifelong member. If you have any questions, concerns, or need pastoral care, Pastor Althea would love to talk with you. Feel free to speak with her after worship or contact her by email at: pastoralthea3@gmail.com or by phone 484-345-0399.

Mission Statement

Through God's Word and Holy Spirit, Grace Lutheran Church will be...

- Inviting all people to **belong** to the church of Jesus Christ,
- Equipping those who believe as faithful disciples of Jesus, and
- Sending members to *become* caring servants of God in the world.

Serving in Worship Today

Worship Assistant: Corrine Rhodes

Altar Guild: Brenda Traa

Sgt. Joshua McArdle, USM; Cainan Johnson, USAF

Sound/Video Technician: Jim Foreman, Michael Piskun, Shawn Welfield

In Our Hearts and Prayers

Greetings members, friends, and family of Grace! We are trying a new way of listing our prayer concerns in the coming weeks. If you notice someone who is missing or if anyone has someone new to add, please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Althea via phone, Facebook, or email or contact our secretary in the office to add people who are on our hearts each week and include our ongoing concerns.

Members of Grace: Betty N., John N., John S., Joyce B., Ruth T., Carol F., Mary G., & Carol F.

Family and friends: Family of Regina, (relative of Marlene Doer); Gage, Donna (friends of Pastor Althea); Jody (niece of Grings); Cecilia, and Richard (friends of Welfields); Shirley & Carl (Parents of Debbie Kleuser); Jim, Vicki, (friends of Meg LaSpina), Payton (friend of Joyce Bianco), Annmarie (friends of Marlene D.), Carol Waters (friend of Claire Brick), Dotte Currie, friend of Deborah Walker), Karen Gubilo (daughter of Sue Robinson); Lauree McArdle & Joann Wehrhan (family of Diana McArdle), Gwen (mother of Corinne Rhodes); Bernadette, Lou, Ron, Those Serving Our Country: Matt Bilello, ANG; Daniel Casner 3rd, USN;

<u>At Home</u> - Bonnie Condliff, Joan Glenz, Ruth Kruger, Dot Reichelt, Lois Rahme, Lois Reardon, & Skip Uhrmann

WITH ONE VOICE

Bread of Life - Setting 5 Congregation responses in bold print.

GATHERING

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

WELCOME Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE People, Look East by Wayne L. World

Please stand as you are able

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Almighty God, you know us inside and out. You are with us in our past, present, and future. We cannot escape your presence.

Pastor: You know us before we were born. You watch over us day and night, and always hear our prayers. We come before you now asking for forgiveness when we stray. Bring us closer to your Holy Spirit once again. Amen.

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

Pastor: God of Love,

We confess that we have turned away from you, God. We have not trusted your promises to hear us. We have doubts sometimes that you are by our side. We let worry and fear consume us. We do not always treat our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may know your deep love for us again and glorify your holy name in all that we say and do. Amen.

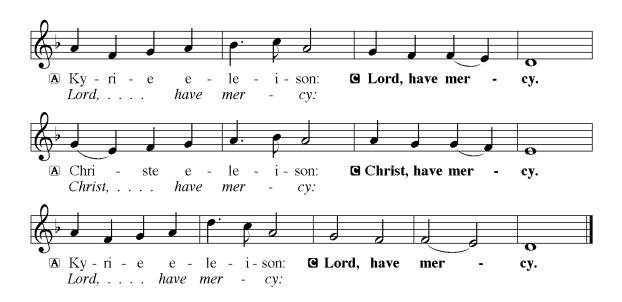
Pastor: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was crucified and died for us and for all our sins. As a minister of the church of Christ, I declare to you that God forgives all of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God has never left you. Return to the Lord your God, with joyful hearts, ready to accept God's gift of grace. 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.**

KYRIE





GLORY TO GOD





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together....Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: Advent 3

Third Week of Advent

Blessed are you, God of hope, for you promise to bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse who will bring justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal of hope for all people.

As we light these candles, turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.

O people of hope, come,

let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen.

HYMN

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah Verse Three **WOV # 630**



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise. shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly He home-ward. them your heads and lift high the gate-way for Lift the King glo - ry. of com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights He shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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WORD

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

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,

he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing

¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you,

so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.

And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,

and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;

for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.



PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not | be afraid,

for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation.

³With joy you | will draw water

from the wells of salvation. R

⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call | on God's name; make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name | is exalted.

⁵Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;

let this be known in | all the earth.

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O | royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy | One of Israel.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

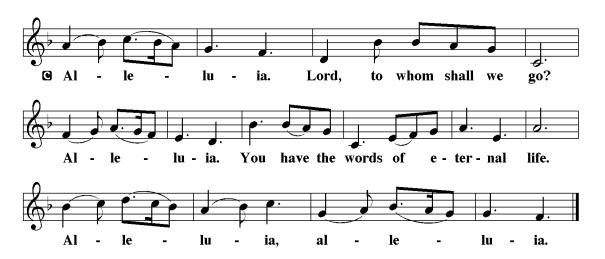
Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Holy Gospel according to Luke the third chapter. Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL READING: Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers!

Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

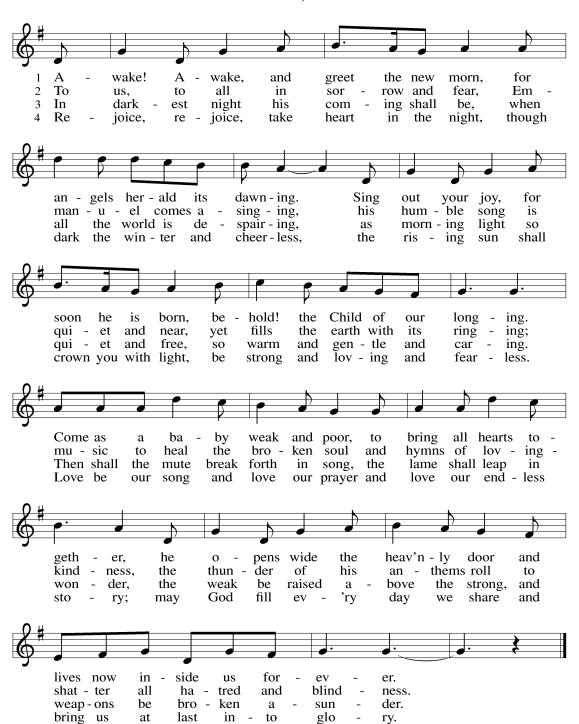
¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you. O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON Rev. Althea Albright





RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Today we welcome Carol Fry and June Jordan, as a new members of our community of faith. When baptized, Christians are received into membership, they may mark the beginning of their participation in a new community of faith by making public affirmation of their baptism. Welcoming new members to Grace is significant to the growth of our ministry and the diversity of our fellowship with one another.

Paul reminds us of the importance of each of our gifts as the Body of Christ. In First Corinthians, chapter 12, Paul writes:

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many... ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

We welcome you, Carol and June, into the family of Grace Lutheran Church. We are thankful for your presence. We look forward to serving our Lord together and we welcome your family and friends to join us in worship and service anytime.

Let us pray. Almighty God, by the love of Jesus Christ you draw people to yourself and welcome them into the household of faith. May we show your joy by embracing new brothers and sisters as we bear your creative and redeeming word to all the world. Keep us close together in your Spirit, in the breaking of bread and the prayers, and in service to others, following the example of Jesus Christ, our servant and Lord. **Amen.**

Our service continues as we confess our faith together with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

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APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

WEEKLY OFFERING

We are thankful for however you are able to continue supporting our ministry at Grace. Offering may be received through the mail, church office, or Simply Giving online. Please call the church office if you need assistance with Simply Giving, or have any questions or concerns.

OFFERTORY

Rejoice in the Lord Alway

Solo Trio: Ruth Bowden, Charles Bowden, Scott Breiner

Please stand as you are able



PRESENTATION OF GIFTS Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful, Lord



OFFERING PRAYER

We pray together for however we have made offerings to God in our lives.

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God,

You are Creator of all that is in heaven and on earth. We rejoice that we have many blessings to be thankful for in our lives. You have changed our lives forever with your Word made flesh. Grant us courage to change the lives of others with your Good News. Bless our congregation, this community, and all the offerings we give back to you for your holy work, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Pastor: In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

Leader: Holy God, renew your church and raise up leaders who announce your good news. Grant peace to congregations and seminarians in the midst of transition. Guide the work of candidacy and call committees. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Leader: Creating God, your Spirit brought forth the earth and all that is in it.

Breathe life into us, that we are inspired to live in harmony with one another and the planet. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pastor: Nurturing God, you come near in times of worry and need. Cradle us in your arms, that we may trust you and that we may not be afraid. Attend to any who are hungry, imprisoned, or ill this day especially all those we name now or in our hearts...

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Leader: Rejoicing God, you exult over us in singing. Enliven the song of this assembly and bless the ministry of all of our church musicians *especially* Scott and our choir. With instruments and dance, join our voices to the song of all creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pastor: God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

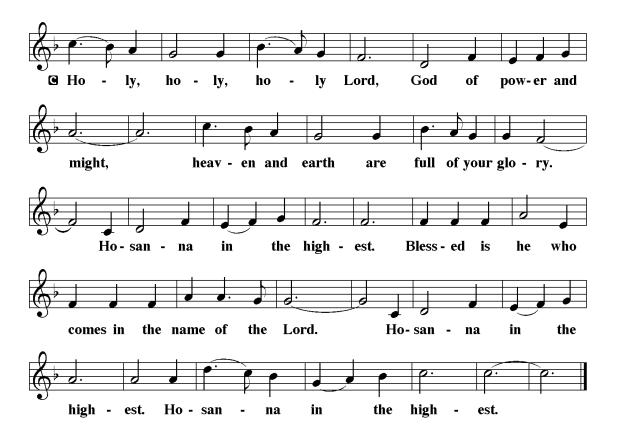
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness.

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



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

On 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.

Together we celebrate this holy meal. May all praise and thanks be to you, Holy God, through Christ Jesus, and by your Life-giving Spirit. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by Christ, let us pray.

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

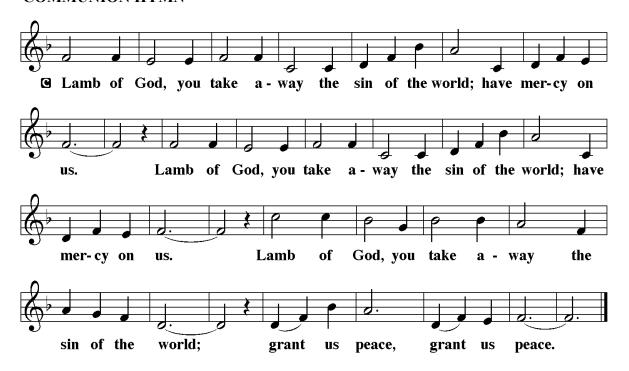
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

Communion will be offered in two ways, continuous at the chancel step, and at the direction of Pastor after everyone has come forward (for those at home online and those who choose to remain seated).

Follow the direction of the ushers to come to the front or remain seated and after all have come forward, direction for the prefilled host and grape juice will be given.

COMMUNION HYMN



DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

IF YOU CHOOSE TO COME FORWARD:

Follow the directions of Pastor and the Ushers.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO REMAIN AT YOUR SEAT OR YOU ARE ONLINE:

Prepare your elements after all have come forward and wait for direction from Pastor.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

As we have experienced Christ, our Savior, in this meal, may Almighty God continue to nourish you and encourage you as you continue your journey in faith. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray together... Most High God, you have come among us at this table.

By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

Amen.

SENDING

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

We are blessed and encouraged as we depart from our gathering.

Pastor: May God bless you and hold you close.

May Christ's presence guide you in all you do. May the Holy Spirit shine in you and bring others closer to God's love and + give you everlasting hope. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

People, Look East

ELW # 248

Please be seated for the postlude.

Take this time to listen to the music and contemplate the message presented today.

POSTLUDE

Rejoice, Rejoice

by Mark Sedio

DISMISSAL

Leader: Go and spread God's love as we prepare for the Messiah!

Thanks be to God!

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God's Good Creation and the Brokenness of Humanity:

1. Creation:

Genesis 1-2, John 1:1-14

2. Fall:

Genesis 3

3. The Flood:

Genesis 6, 8:13-9:17

4. Tower of Babel:

Genesis 11

God's Promise to Bless All Nations Through His People:

5. Abraham:

Genesis 12:1-9; 15; 17:1-13

6. Isaac:

Genesis 17:15-21; 21:1-7

7. Sacrifice of Isaac:

Genesis 22, Galatians 3:6-14, 29

8. Jacob:

Genesis 28, 35:1-15

9. Joseph:

Genesis 37, 50

God's Covenant with Israel:

10. Passover:

Exodus 12

11. 10 Commandments:

Deuteronomy 5-6, Matthew 22:34-40

12. Joshua: Joshua 3-4

Israel's Broken Kingdom: Kings and Prophets:

- 13. **David Anointed:** Judges 2:16-23, 1 Samuel 8:4-22; 16:1-13
- 14. King David: 2 Samuel 5, 7
- 15. **Solomon:** 1 Kings 8-9
- 16. Elijah: 1 Kings 18
- 17. Micah: Micah 5, 7
- 18: **Isaiah:** Isaiah 9:1-7, Isaiah 11:1-11, Jeremiah 31:27-40
- 19: Suffering Servant: Isaiah 52-53
- 20. **Exile:** 2 Chronicles 36:15-21; Zechariah 9:9-17
- 21. Daniel: Daniel 6-7

Promised One Fulfilled in Jesus:

- 22. **Jesus' birth foretold:**Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 1
- 23. **Jesus' birth:**Luke 2:1-38, Matthew 2:1-12
- 24. **King Jesus:** Hebrews 1, Colossians 1:15-20
- 25. Follow King Jesus: Hebrews 11-12:3



Christmas Eve Worship
December 24, 2021
@ 5:00 & 7:00 pm
Candle Light and Holy Communion
at both services.





Pecond Qunday of Ghristmas January 2, 2022

8:00 am 6 10:15 am

In person & Livestreaming

Sunday 12/12 ADVENT 3

8:00 am - Spoken Service - Lounge 8:45 am - Adult Sunday School 10:15 am - Liturgical Worship Service Holy Communion Grace Friends Sunday School 4:00 pm - AA Meeting - Lounge

Monday 12/13

9:00—11:30 am - Food Pantry 7:00 pm - AA Meeting—Social Hall

Tuesday 12/14

9:00—11:30 am - Food Pantry 10:00 am - South Shore Pastors Bible Study 6:30 pm - NA

Wednesday 12/15

9:00—11:30 am - Food Pantry 11:30 - 3:30 - Bayside Duplicate Bridge 6:30 pm - Cape Atlantic Inter Group 7:00 pm—NA Meeting - Social Hall

Thursday 12/16

9:00—11:30 am - Food Pantry 7:00 pm - Al-Anon Meeting - Lounge

Friday 12/17

10:30 am - Grace Stitchers 7:30 pm - AA Meeting—Lounge

Saturday 12/18

Sunday 12/19 ADVENT 4

8:00 am - Spoken Service - Lounge 8:45 am - Adult Sunday School 10:15 am - Worship Service No Communion Today Grace Friends Sunday School 4:00 pm - AA Meeting - Lounge

Dedications

Sanctuary Flowers



Praise, Honor, and Glory To God for His Many Blessings. Let His Light Shine on Us and in Us.

