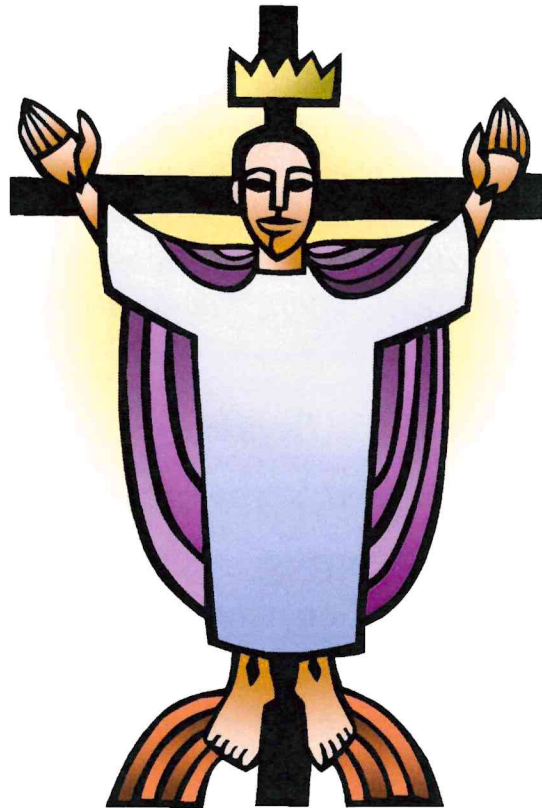


November 23, 2025

Christ the King Sunday



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.org

Interim Pastor ✝ Wendolyn Trozzo, Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

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

Jeremiah's promise of the execution of "justice and righteousness in the land" finds ironic fulfillment in the execution of Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. It appears utterly contradictory that a king should be crucified with a criminal. This victory appears for all the world as humiliating defeat. Yet through the gate of death Jesus opens the door to paradise.

WELCOME

Rev. Jeffrey Eaton

PRELUDE

Beautiful Savior

by Gregory Hamilton

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Faithful God, you have shown us the ways of your heart, yet we stray from You. We are stuck in sin that oppresses and we do not embrace the freedom given in your faithful promises. Forgive us, Lord. Repair our relationships, restore all that is broken, renew our hearts, and bring us to new life. Amen.

Hear the good news: God the Faithful One loves you, + in Christ Jesus your sins are forgiven, and by the power of the Holy Spirit you are set free. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN *Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending* **ELW #435**

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 S156

HYMN OF PRAISE

ELW S159

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, our true life, to serve you is freedom, and to know you is unending joy. We worship you, we glorify you, we give thanks to you for your great glory. Abide with us, reign in us, and make this world into a fit habitation for your divine majesty, through 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

Please be seated.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 23:1-6

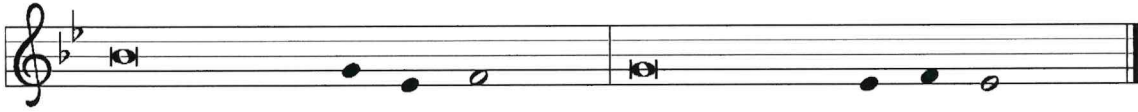
Today's reading builds on the common, ancient Near Eastern metaphor of the king as shepherd. Judah's unjust rulers have caused their people, their "flock," to be scattered. Nevertheless, God will raise up a new and righteous shepherd who will rule a restored Judah.

¹ Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. ³ Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

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

PSALM 46



- ¹ God is our ref-¹uge and strength,
a very present¹ help in trouble.
- ² **Therefore we will not fear, though the¹ earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths¹ of the sea;**
- ³ though its waters¹ rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble¹ with its tumult.
- ⁴ **There is a river whose streams make glad the cit-¹y of God,
the holy habitation of¹ the Most High.**
- ⁵ God is in the midst of the city; it shall¹ not be shaken;
God shall help it at the¹ break of day.
- ⁶ **The nations rage, and the¹ kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth¹ melts away.**
- ⁷ The LORD of¹ hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob¹ is our stronghold.
- ⁸ **Come now, regard the works¹ of the LORD,
what desolations God has brought up-¹on the earth;**
- ⁹ behold the one who makes war to cease in¹ all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the¹ shields with
fire.
- ¹⁰ **“Be still, then, and know that¹ I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted¹ in the earth.”**
- ¹¹ The LORD of¹ hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob¹ is our stronghold.

SECOND READING: Colossians 1:11-20

An early Christian hymn praises the mystery of the political, personal, and mystical Christ, the one who was present at creation and is eternally reigning with God.

¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, so that you may have all endurance and patience, joyfully ¹²

giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

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

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

C: Allelujah!

P: Lord, to whom shall we go?

C: You have the words of eternal life. Allelujah!

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 23rd chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Luke 23:33-43

Amid scoffing and slander from those who sarcastically call him Messiah and king, Jesus reveals that to be Messiah and king is to give one's life for others. Here he uses his power to welcome a despised sinner to paradise but puts his own death into God's hands.

³³ When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ [[Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. ³⁵ And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" ³⁶ The soldiers

also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" ⁴¹ And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." ⁴³ He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

"Love Wins"

Rev. Jeffrey Eaton

Please stand as you are able.

THE APOSTLE'S 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

King of Glory

by George Herbert & Grayston Ives

Soprano: Corinne Rhodes

*King of glory, king of peace, I will love thee;
And that love may never cease, I will move thee;
Thou hast granted my request, thou hast heard me;
Thou didst note my working breast, thou hast spared me.*

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

ELW #693 verse 3

OFFERING PRAYER

God of healing and hope, you bless those who are hungry, promising to fill them with good things. Fulfill that promise through us and these your gifts. Nourish us with the abundance of your feast and unite us into the blessed body of Jesus Christ our Savior, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: Gathered with one voice, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *Brief silence.*

At the end of each prayer petition when the worship assistant or pastor says, "Hear us, O God," please respond with "Your mercy is great."

P: We offer these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your grace and unyielding love; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION (*Setting Five*)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

ELW S161

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW S162

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

ELW S163

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

There is a place for you at the table of God. Come, receive the food that does not perish, a taste of life eternal.

COMMUNION HYMN*Lamb of God***ELW S164****COMMUNION HYMN***Beautiful Savior***ELW #838****DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

We will have continuous communion in front of the steps today. EVERYONE IS INVITED to come down the center aisle at the direction of the ushers and return to your seats via the side aisles. There is white grape juice in the center of the circular tray and red wine in the outer part of the tray. If you are unable to come up to the front, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children or those who have not received a first communion are welcome to come for a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.

COMMUNION BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING

The love of God the Sovereign strengthen you, God the Son save you, and God the Holy Spirit anoint you for the work ahead. The holy Trinity bless you + and grant you a faithful and courageous heart now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN*Soon and Very Soon***ELW #439**

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

POSTLUDE*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*

by Tim Fields

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Share the harvest.
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 Assistant: Meg Markkanen**



**The flowers are sponsored this week by one of our members, to
the glory of God!**

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

COOKIE WALK HELPERS NEEDED



We are in need of bakers for our 18th Annual Christmas Cookie Walk on December 13! If you are willing and able to bake for this, please sign up in the narthex before or after church so we know what we can expect. We need cookies galore, as it usually sells out within the first hour!

Last year the White Elephant table nearly sold out, so we are greatly in need of an inventory replenishment. If you have any gently used Christmas decorations or kitchenware you no longer need or want, we can definitely use them!

Helpers are needed the day before the Cookie Walk to receive and organize trays of cookies and baked goods. Helpers are also needed the day of the event. If you or anyone you know would be interested in a vendor table, please let us know. Only \$25 per table!

If you have any questions or wish to reserve a vendor table, please contact Heidi Toth 609-233-4156 or Sandy Piskun 609-226-5591.

WELCA is asking for donations of children's hats, gloves, and mittens, to be collected throughout the months of November and December. These items will then be donated in January to an elementary school for children who are in need or who lose them this winter.



CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING & CAROLS

Thursday, December 11 4:00-5:30 PM

4:00-5:00 PM: Meet in the downstairs Fellowship Hall to make ornaments and enjoy hot cocoa and cider.

5:00-5:30 PM: Christmas Tree Lighting and carol singing with choir, rain or shine!

Advent

A Taste of What's to Come

Although the historical record is sketchy, it appears that our Advent arose out of a season of fasting to prepare for baptisms at Epiphany in early January. By the sixth century, an eschatological ("end-times") emphasis was present. **Our Advent** comprises the four Sundays before Christmas. Each year, **the first Sunday** contains the theme of readiness for divine judgment, **the second Sunday** the ministry of John the Baptist, **the third Sunday** the Baptist's call to a repentant life, and only on **the fourth Sunday** a narrative concerning the birth of Jesus. Emmanuel ("God is present"), in the past in the history of Israel and the incarnation of Jesus, in the present in the word and sacrament of each Sunday, and in the future at the end of all things.

CAPE SHORE CHORALE

and Director of Music

Scott J. Breiner

present

CHRISTMASS

guest conductor Jason Koenig

Sunday, December 7, 2025 @ 3 P M

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

30th & Bay Avenue

Ocean City, N. J.

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, and the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners through the Division of Culture & Heritage



HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

November 23, 2025–November 30, 2025

Christ the King Sunday 11/23/25

8:00AM Spoken Worship
10:15AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY 11/24/25

9:00AM-11:30AM Food Pantry
6:30PM Heather Croft HOA
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 11/25/25

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

WEDNESDAY 11/26/25

Food Pantry is closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday.

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
6:00PM AA Book Study
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 11/27/25

Food Pantry is closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday.

Office is closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday.

12:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
6:00 AA 12-Step
7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 11/28/25

Office is closed in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday.

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

SATURDAY 11/29/25

7:30AM & 8:30AM Weight Watchers

1st Sunday in Advent 11/30/25

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



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

This week:

Mon-Wed 10:00-3:00