

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

February 12, 2023—February 19, 2023

6TH SUNDAY IN EPIPHANY 2/12/23

8:00AM Worship
8:45AM Adult Forum Group
10:15AM Traditional Worship
with Children's Sunday School
FELLOWSHIP HOUR
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY 2/13/23

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

TUESDAY 2/14/23

9:00-11:30AM Food Pantry
12:00PM WELCA
6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous
7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 2/15/23

9:00-11:30AM Food Pantry
11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge
7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous



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

THURSDAY 2/16/23

9:00-11:30AM Food Pantry
5:00PM Choir Rehearsal
6:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous
7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 2/17/23

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

SATURDAY 2/18/23

No events

TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY 2/19/23

8:00AM Worship
8:45AM Adult Forum Group
10:15AM Traditional Worship
with Children's Sunday School
4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

February Worship Assistants:

2/19 Meg Markkanen
2/26 Shirley Blankenship

March Worship Assistants:

3/5 Edna Cordery
3/12 Ruth Bowden

February 12, 2023 Sixth Sunday after Epiphany



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

Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor ✝ Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant
Betty's Cleaning Service, Facility Cleaning Company
Atlantic Media Productions, Audio and Livestreaming Video

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

Introduction to Worship Today

In today's reading from Deuteronomy we are called to choose life by loving and obeying God. Much of today's gospel reading echoes portions of the Ten Commandments. Jesus' instructions to the crowd reveal a pattern of behavior that honors both God and the neighbor, resulting in life and health for the whole community. We too are invited to embrace these commandments, not out of fear of retribution, but because God has promised that to do so means life for us.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE *Lobt Gott, Ihr Christen, Allzugleich* by Johann Gottfried Walter
Variations 1, 2 & 3

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of life, **you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.**

We thank all those serving in worship today:

Reader: Meg LaSpina

Altar Guild: Brenda, Clare, Marleigh, and Ruth

Our Altar Flowers Sponsor today:

The altar flowers are given by Kathy Nigsch:
In loving memory of my mom, Kay Wopatek. Love, Kathy

WELCOME VISITORS!



If you are a visitor please fill out a VISITOR CARD in the pews if you are new to our church. Pastor Althea would love to meet you and get in touch with you.

WEEKLY SPONSORSHIPS

Please note we continue to need altar flower sponsors and other various sponsorships. We have envelopes in the narthex and envelopes downstairs by the office at the bulletin board. Please call the church office or leave a flower envelope under the office door.



COMMUNION HYMN *Lamb of God* *ELW page 154*

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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 our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Althea Albright
Please stand as you are able.

SENDING BLESSING

May Almighty God watch over you each day. May our Great Teacher, Jesus, give you opportunities to deepen your faith, and may the Holy Spirit whisper courage and love when you need it most. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *O Christ, Our Hope* ELW #604
VERSES 1, 3 & 5 ALL, VERSE 2 MEN, VERSE 4 WOMEN

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

POSTLUDE *Lobt Gott, Ihr Christen, Allzugleich* by Johann Gottfried Walter
Variation 5

DISMISSAL Go in peace and follow the way of Jesus.
Thanks be to God!

People of God, hear the good news: God’s mercy makes us refreshed and new. In + Jesus, we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN *Come, All You People* ELW #819

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.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Take a brief moment to greet someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate, no need to feel pressured to touch or shake hands.

KYRIE *front of the red ELW hymnal on pages 147-148*

HYMN OF PRAISE *This is the Feast* *ELW hymnal on page 149*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

WORD

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

The Lord sets before the people of God a clear choice. Life and prosperity will come to the faithful; loss of the land will be the consequence of disobedience. Choosing life entails loving and holding fast to the Lord. Life in God’s presence presupposes the promise made to the ancestors.

[Moses said to the people:] See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the Lord

your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 119:1-8



Happy are they whose | way is blameless,
who follow the teaching | of the Lord!
Happy are they who observe | your decrees
and seek you with | all their hearts,
who never do | any wrong,
but always walk | in your ways.
You laid down | your commandments,
that we should | fully keep them.
Oh, that my ways were made | so direct
that I might | keep your statutes!
Then I should not be | put to shame,
when I regard all | your commandments.
I will thank you with | a true heart,
when I have learned your | righteous judgments.

P: We bring to you all of our needs and hopes, O God, trusting in your wisdom and your great power revealed in Christ crucified. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING *ELW hymnal page 152*

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, almighty and ever-living God.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *ELW hymnal page 153*

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes again. Amen.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered in unity, let us pray as our Lord taught us:

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, all are welcome at the table of the Lord. **Amen.**

Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Please be seated for the prayers.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need. *Brief silence for reflection.*

A: Inspire your church that it may be a sign of life throughout the world. From the exploration of faith with children and new believers to missionaries and bishops, shape lives of faithfulness, so that all find abundant life in your ways. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Nourish your creation. Accompany all who plant and water. Bless the work of farmers; provide for subsistence farmers facing drought and climate change. Guide the work of agricultural scientists toward sustainable ways to feed the world. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Give growth where there seems to be no hope for life. In nations and regions where reconciliation seems impossible (especially), empower peacemakers with your Spirit. Where death holds sway through violence, disease, and hunger, equip relief workers to bring hope. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: Sustain all who are responding to the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. Bring help to the places which need your healing touch. Send your presence to be with all who lost loved ones and friends. Nurture all in need especially all those whom we name now or in our hearts... *(Take a moment to name people on your heart aloud.)*. Bring healing to all who experience trauma caused by systems of injustice and destructive relationships. Give courage to those struggling to turn back to you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Encourage this congregation. Call us to a common purpose and keep us from quarrelling. Turn our hearts toward you and guide our leaders, so that our choices may be lifegiving for all. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

**I will | keep your statutes;
do not utter- | ly forsake me.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Human leaders in the church are not the ones who control ministry. Rather they are coworkers who belong to God, the one who truly controls and continuously empowers the ministry of the church.

Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not merely human?

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

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

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:21-37

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts his followers to embrace standards of righteousness that exceed legal requirements and traditional expectations.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister,

you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and

whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great

King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”

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



CHILDREN’S SERMON

The children are dismissed after the Pastor’s message for Sunday School and they will return for communion.

SERMON

Rev. Althea Albright

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Healer of Our Every Ill

ELW #612

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 ANTHEM

O For a Closer Walk

by C. V. Stanford

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

Create in Me a Clean Heart

ELW # 186

OFFERING PRAYER

God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered.