

HOLY INNOCENTS

DECEMBER 28, 2025



**CHRIST THE  
SAVIOR IS BORN**

**TO BE OUR SUBSTITUTE**



**GRACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**

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# WELCOME TO GRACE!

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We're glad you're here! May the Word of God bring you comfort in Christ alone. You can follow along with the service using this worship folder or using the screens above the chancel. If you're new here, below is some helpful information about our sanctuary and our worship...

- Please reserve the **BACK PEWS** for parents with **SMALL CHILDREN**.
- A **PARENT'S ROOM** with private changing area and restroom is available through the door at the back of the middle aisle. Windows from the room allow you to still watch the service and speakers allow you to hear as well. A volume control is available on the wall by the door.
- Ask an usher to receive an **AUDIO RECEIVER** and **HEADSET** if you need hearing assistance in the sanctuary or Fellowship Hall.
- **RESTROOMS** are available in the Narthex. Exit out of the north doors from the Sanctuary and go to the left. They are located in the alcove behind Luther's Seal.
- **LARGE PRINT** bulletins are available. See an usher to receive one.
- Visit our **WEBSITE** at <http://www.graceglendale.org> for additional information about our ministries and upcoming events.

## CONTACT US...

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Feel free to reach out directly to our office staff via email or telephone. Call 623-937-2010 and use the extension to the right.

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## AT TODAY'S SERVICE...

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**Presiding Minister:** Pastor Sellnow

**Senior ushers:** 8:00 AM –Bruce Rademacher  
10:30 AM – AJ McDunn

**Organist:** Jeff Wegner

**A/V Team:** 8:00 AM – Jon Scheel / Alex Groth  
10:30 AM – Paul Sullivan

## ABOUT THE THEME

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*The festival of the Holy Innocents, an event that was closely connected to the birth of Christ, was commemorated on December 28th by the late fifth century. The Holy Innocents were martyrs who experienced death for the sake of Christ, though they were not willing participants in that action. But God did not allow their death to be pointless. Through their death they offered defense to the Savior Jesus who fled to Egypt. In the fulness of time Christ would return to Israel to live and die for those boys of Bethlehem as well as for all the people of this world. And through his resurrection he would bring eternal life for all who die in him. Today's service reminds us that God works to bring eternal blessings to his people through his Son Jesus, even when he is at work in the tragedies of life.*

## ORDER OF SERVICE

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**Setting 2**

**HYMN: ALL MY HEART AGAIN REJOICES**

CW 329

*Please stand*

### INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

### CONFESSON

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.  
**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done, and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us, according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

### DECLARATION OF GRACE

CW 173

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

**Amen.**

**LORD, HAVE MERCY**

CW 174

In peace let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

**GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST**

CW 176



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his



peo - ple on earth. Lord God,



heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we



wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ,  
 with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the glo - ry of  
 God the Fa - ther. A - men. A - men.  
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to his  
 peo - ple on earth.

*Tune: Marty Haugen*

*Tune: © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 705990*

## The Word

### SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

We remember today, O Lord, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by order of King Herod. Receive into the arms of your mercy all who lay down their lives for your sake, and prepare us by your grace to be ready at all times to live and die for you; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## **FIRST READING**

*Jeremiah 31:15–17*

***The prophet Jeremiah foretold not only the death of the innocent babies of Bethlehem, but of their perfect hope that would come from the Lord.***

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD says:

“A voice is heard in Ramah,  
mourning and great weeping,  
Rachel weeping for her children  
and refusing to be comforted,  
because they are no more.”

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD says:

“Restrain your voice from weeping  
and your eyes from tears,  
for your work will be rewarded,”  
declares the LORD.

“They will return from the land of the enemy.

<sup>17</sup>So there is hope for your descendants,”  
declares the LORD.

“Your children will return to their own land.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **MEN'S OCTET**

*“Angels from the Realms”*

## **SECOND READING**

*1 Peter 4:12–19*

***Believers who suffer for Christ's sake can rejoice knowing that God's blessing rests on them now and they will live with him in glory forever.***

<sup>12</sup>Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. <sup>13</sup>But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. <sup>14</sup>If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. <sup>15</sup>If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. <sup>16</sup>However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. <sup>17</sup>For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? <sup>18</sup>And,

"If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

<sup>19</sup>So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Psalm 116:15*



*Refrain*



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Tone*



Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ser - vants.

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## GOSPEL

*Matthew 2:13–18*

**God saves his Son from an early death. God's plan was to save the world by having his Son die on the cross when the time had fully come.**

<sup>13</sup>When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

<sup>14</sup>So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, <sup>15</sup>where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

<sup>16</sup>When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. <sup>17</sup>Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

<sup>18</sup>"A voice is heard in Ramah,  
weeping and great mourning,

Rachel weeping for her children  
and refusing to be comforted,  
because they are no more."

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

*Please be seated*

### **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*At this time, children are invited to the front of the church to hear a special children's message from the Pastor.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY: BY ALL YOUR SAINTS STILL STRIVING** CW 892 sts. 1, 9, 3

**SERMON**

*Matthew 2:13–18*

### **SAVED BY A SUBSTITUTE**

*Please stand*

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

*Please be seated*

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

### **OFFERINGS OF LOVE TO OUR LORD**

Please complete the "Welcome to Grace" register in your pew at this time.

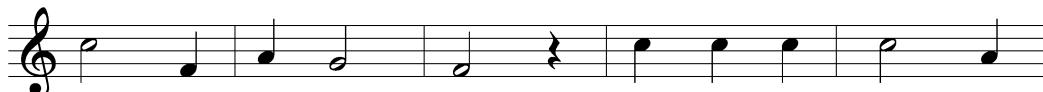
## HYMN: ALL HAIL! YOU INFANT MARTYR FLOWERS

CW 978

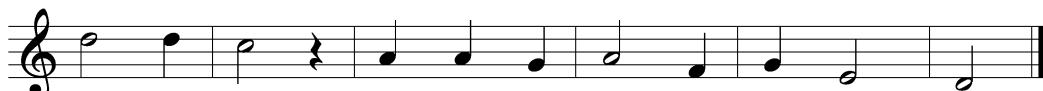
*Please Note: This hymn is **not** found in the pew edition of the hymnals.*



1 All hail! You in - fant mar - tyr flow'rs, cut off in  
2 With ter - ror does the ty - rant hear that God's own  
3 King Her - od ra - ges at the Word: "Go, sol - dier,  
4 Oh, what is gained from this of - fense? What prof - it



life's first dawn - ing hours; like rose - buds, snapped in  
Son to us draws near. On Da - vid's throne he  
with your ruth - less sword, to him, who stands where  
comes from vi - o - lence? The Sav - ior - King sur -



dread - ful strife, when Her - od sought our Sav - ior's life.  
comes to dwell and reign as King of Is - ra - el.  
we have stood, and stain the In - fant - crib with blood!"  
vived the day, as Christ was safe - ly whisked a - way!

A voice is heard in bitter pain  
as Rachel mourns the infants slain,  
refusing comfort—sacred lore—  
because her children are no more!

Of you, O little lambs, we sing,  
first victims slain for Christ our King:  
beneath the heav'nly altar's ray  
with martyr-palms and crowns you play!

To you, the virgin-born, we raise  
thanksgiving and eternal praise,  
whom with the Father we adore  
and Holy Spirit evermore.

*Text: Aurelius C. Prudentius, 348–after 405; tr. Peter M. Prange, b. 1972*

*Tune: Rheinfelssisch Deutsches Katholisches Gesangbuch, Augsburg, 1666*

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*Tune: Public domain*

*Please stand*

## PRAYER

Amen.

## LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

## BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

## HYMN: LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND

CW 910

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

**History Behind the Hymns Vol. 2**  
(Christmas Song Fest Bible Class)

TODAY, 9:30 AM

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**New Year's Eve**  
(Communion Service)

**December 31, 6:00 PM**



# Grace Groups

Gathering Together Around God's Word

**SAVED BY A SUBSTITUTE**

**Matthew 2:13-18**

Why do tragedies seem to hit harder for us when they fall around Christmas?

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In what way is the wickedness of Herod still seen by rulers throughout our world today?

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Read Isaiah 57:1-2. What comfort does that bring to believers who see loved ones die “before their time”? Read Psalm 31:15 and Psalm 139:16. How is God’s perspective on how long a person should live different (and better) than our own?

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If you have ever lost a loved one earlier in their life than you were prepared for, how did you deal with that loss? How can Christ’s death and resurrection bring comfort to you when loved ones die?

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How might God’s ability to bring triumph out of tragedy change the way you see hardship in your life and in the world around you in this coming year?

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