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# Grace Lutheran Church

736 Cayuga Drive  
Niagara Falls, New York 14304  
www.gracenf.org  
Divine Service: Sunday 10:30 AM

Office (716) 283-1843  
office@gracenf.org

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*Our Vision: Welcoming people to grow in hope, love, and certainty through God's Word of grace.*

## *For Our Guests*

Dear friend, welcome to Grace! Make yourself at home. Grace Lutheran Church is a family made up of regular, imperfect people growing in hope, love, and certainty through God's Word of grace, rejoicing together in God's restoration and forgiveness, and celebrating our new life in Christ Jesus. If you have any questions for us, please don't hesitate to speak with an usher or the pastor.

If you're in Niagara Falls **on vacation** right now, thanks for coming! We pray this worship service refreshes your spirit by showing you a wonder even more beautiful than the mighty Falls He made: the depth of His amazing love for you.

If you **live in the area**, we pray you find comfort, peace and joy through the worship service today. We would be delighted to worship with you again, and if you don't have a church home and you'd like to become part of the Grace family, please speak with an usher or the pastor.

RESTROOMS are located in the parent's room (back of the church) and next to the parking lot door.

*\* I have children, and they're not always quiet. Do you mind?*

We warmly welcome children to worship just like Jesus did, and we love the liveliness they bring to the service. If your little one's crying is making you uncomfortable, there's a cry room in back for your convenience. Don't worry about coming and going if that's what you need to do. We're parents and grandparents too. We've been there and we understand!

*\* The plate's coming. Do I have to give an offering?*

Members of Grace have the privilege and responsibility of stewarding the mission of our congregation through generous giving. God teaches that giving comes from a joyful heart, not under compulsion. If you are visiting today, you are not expected to participate in the offering; please direct your gift to your home congregation.

*\* What about Holy Communion?*

Communion is celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays and in other special services. We believe what Jesus says about Holy Communion: that it is His body and blood, not symbolically but actually present, given to us for the forgiveness of sins. The Bible cautions that anyone who receives Communion without this understanding will be receiving it to their great harm.

For this reason, out of sincere love, we ask that those who commune at this altar are baptized Christians who, having been instructed in the faith, regret their sins and desire to receive Christ's real Body and Blood for forgiveness, trusting in God's Word as He revealed it in Scripture. If you are not a member of a Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod congregation, please speak with the pastor before you commune.


If you are not communing today, you are welcome to come forward for a pastoral blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest at the rail. There is non-alcoholic white wine on each tray for those who require it. Finally, those who have difficulty walking may indicate such to an usher and Communion will be brought to you.

In the timeless tradition of the Christian church, the Common Cup is offered to all. If you desire to commune using the common cup, raise your hand as the individual cups approach, then assist the Elder by holding the chalice at its base and guiding it as you receive.

**Members and Guests: Please help us serve you by indicating your presence today, and any special needs, on the fellowship sheet in your bulletin & place in offering plate.**

# ORDER OF WORSHIP DECEMBER 7, 2025

– based on Divine Service 1: LSB 151 –

This symbol (  ) means that part of the service is found in the Lutheran Service Book hymnal.

## Welcome, Announcements

### Hymn of Invocation: “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

LSB 344

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**C** But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**C** Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## Kyrie

LSB 152

**P** In peace let us pray to the Lord.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

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



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

**P** 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.



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

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



**C** Lord, have mer - cy.

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



**C** A - men.

### *(Hymn of Praise Omitted during Advent)*

### Salutation and Collect of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of Your only-begotten Son, that by His coming we may be enabled to serve You with pure minds; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

### Old Testament Reading

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Gradual

*Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.*



**C** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zion.\*

Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | rusalem.

Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;\*

righteous and having sal- | vation.

Blessèd is he who comes in the name | of the Lord.\*

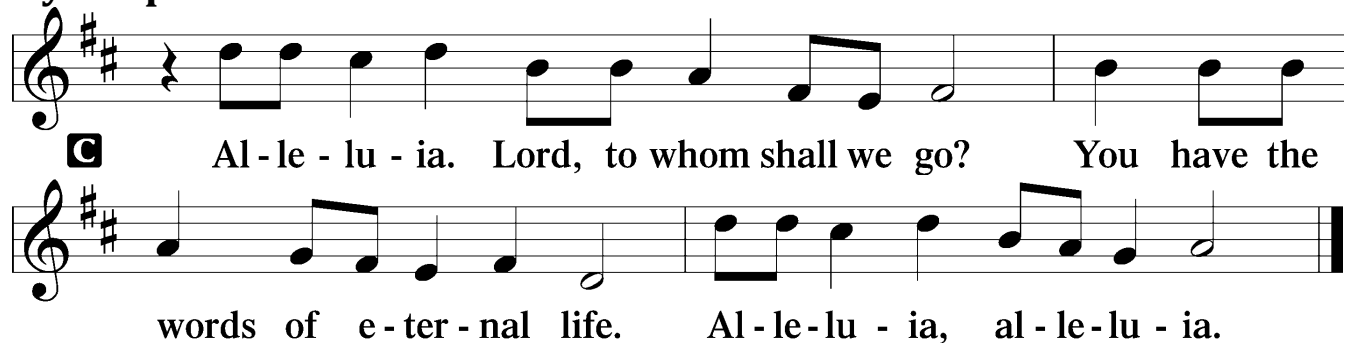
From the house of the Lord we | bless you.

### Epistle Reading

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Holy Gospel



**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the third chapter.



**P** ...This is the Gospel of the Lord.



## Hymn of the Day: "When All the World Was Cursed"

LSB 346

## Sermon

### The Nicene Creed

Back Cover of Hymnal

## Prayer of the Church

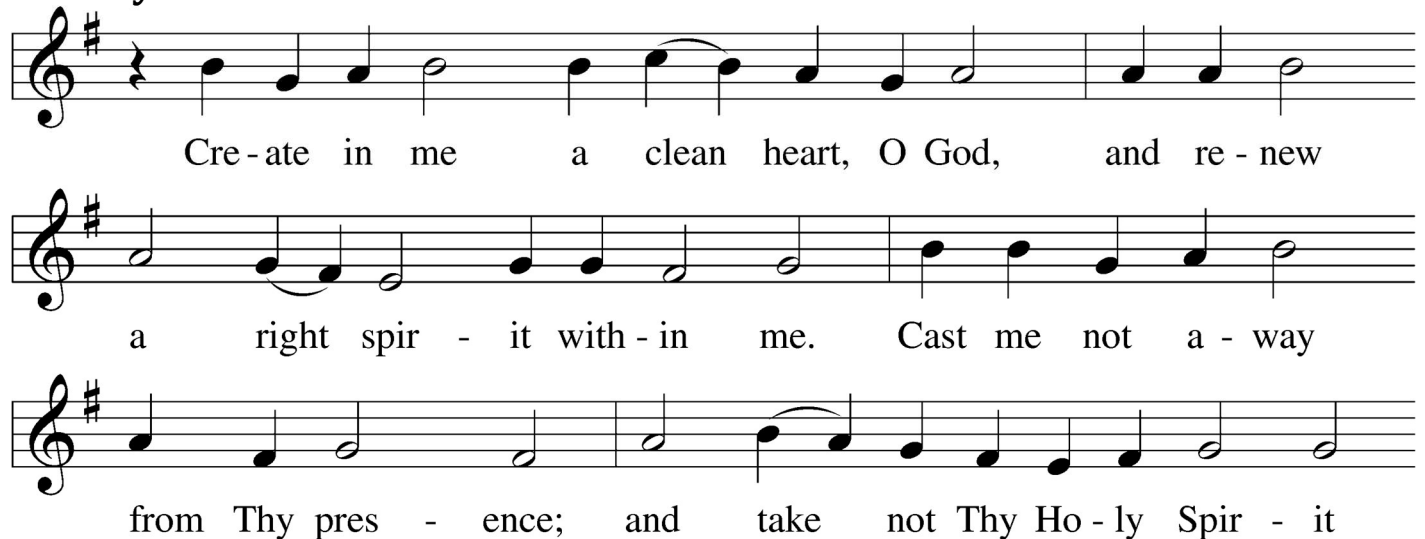
The Leader will close each section: **P** Lord, in Your mercy,

Then please respond: **C** Hear our prayer.

## Offering

### Offertory: 956 Create in Me

LSB 956





Text: Psalm 51:10-12

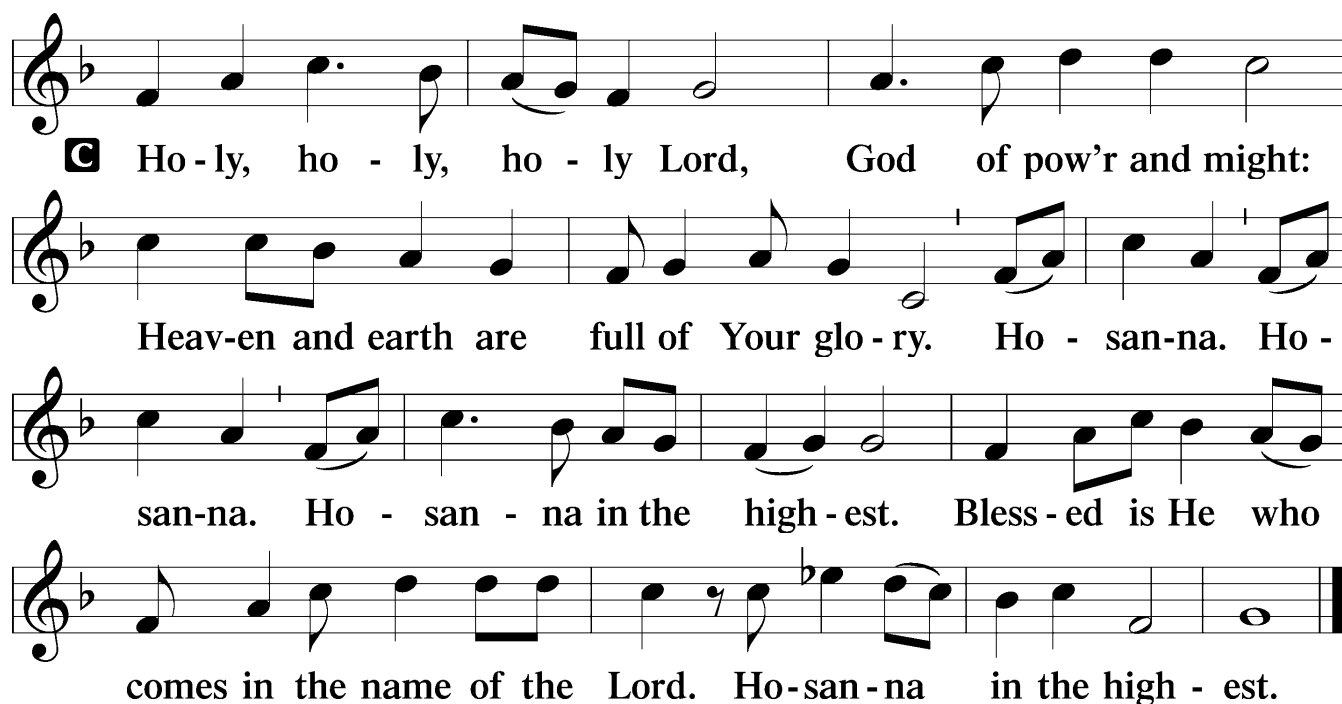
Tune: Johann Georg Winer, 1583-1651, adapt.

Text and tune: Public domain

## *The Sacrament of Holy Communion*

*If you have not communed with us before, please read "What about Holy Communion?" on page 2.*

- P** The Lord be with you. **C** And also with you.  
**P** Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.  
**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.  
**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



**P** Lord Jesus Christ, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C** 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.

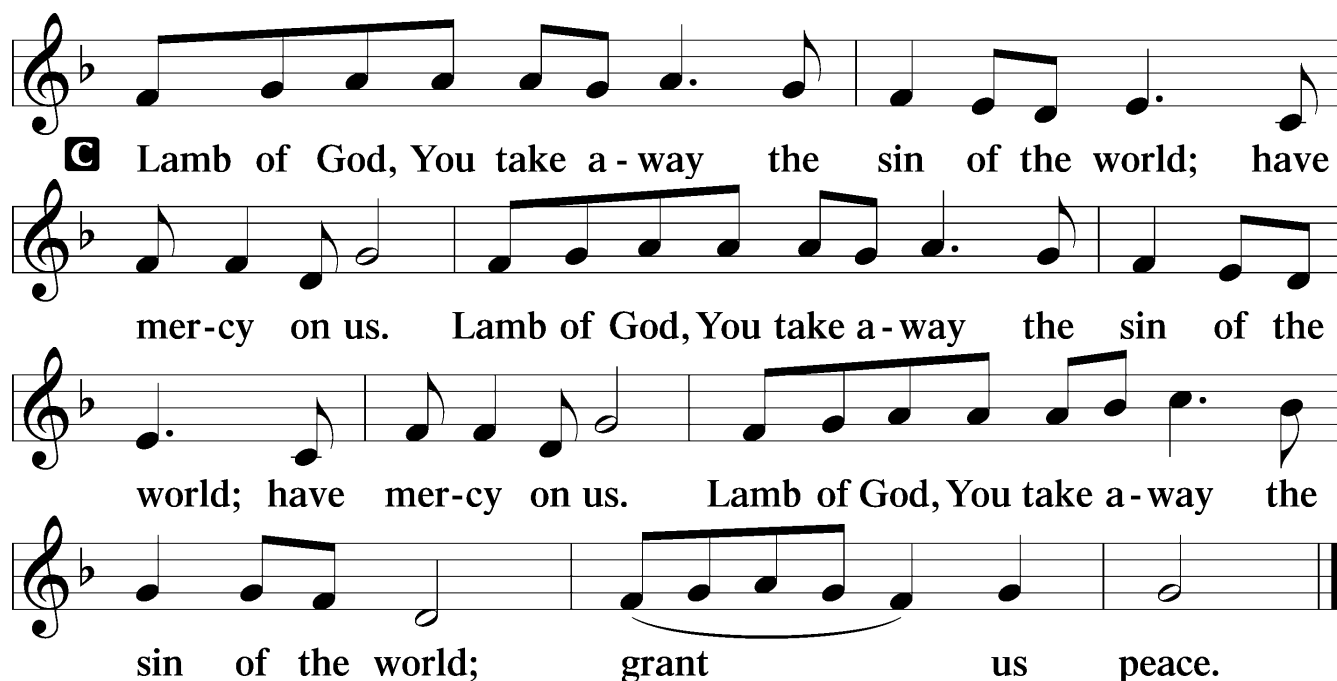
**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**P** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

**C** Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** Amen.



**C** Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

### Distribution Hymn:

"Jesus Comes Today with Healing"

*LSB 620*

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

*LSB 621*

**C** Lord, now You let Your servant go in peace; Your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the sight of ev'ry  
people:  
A light to reveal You to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

**P** Let us pray.  
O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent  
Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us  
pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but  
always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly  
to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and  
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## Benediction

**P** Let us bless the Lord. **C** Thanks be to God.  
**P** The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to  
you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **C** Amen.

 **Sending Hymn:** "Prepare the Royal Highway"

LSB 343

**P** Go in peace; serve the Lord. **C** Thanks be to God!





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## THOSE ASSISTING OUR WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Ben Bahr

Organist: Maye Smith

Acolytes: Sherry Cassatt & Elizabeth Washburn

Head Ushers: Gary Krull & Mark Binkley

Communion Assistants: Neil Stenzel & Mark Andrews

Readers: Sue & John Loss

Tech Crew: Mark Binkley, John Goodnick & John Bahr

Altar Care: Ursula Zimmerman

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## THIS WEEK AT GRACE

### TODAY – 12/07/25

9:00 am Christian Education  
10:30 am Worship (HC)  
11:30 am Christmas Decorating

### MONDAY – 12/08/25

6:30 pm Survivors' Group

### MONDAY – 12/09/25

5:30 pm Grace Ladies Christmas Party

### WEDNESDAY – 12/10/25

5:30 pm Simple Supper  
6:30 pm Advent Service

### NEXT SUNDAY – 12/14/25

9:00 am Christian Education  
10:30 am Worship (HC)  
11:30 am Choir Practice

### Statistics for the week of November 30, 2025

Worship Service: 73 Attended, 36 Views

Adult Education: 15

Youth Education: 9

Education Staff: 4

Offering: \$3,321.44

Mission of the Month: \$35.40

Sunday School: \$2.000

\* Weekly budget needs \$4,206

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Please submit new announcements  
by **Wednesday 12pm**: [office@gracenf.org](mailto:office@gracenf.org).  
Office Hours: 1<sup>st</sup> Sun 8:30-12:30, Th 10-2  
**GIVING**: Options at [www.gracenf.org](http://www.gracenf.org)*



**CHURCH OFFICE** will be open on Thursday's from 9am-4pm for the next two weeks. If there is an emergency outside that time please contact either Dick Crawford or Mark Andrews.

**NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS** are Isaiah 35:1-10, James 5:7-11, and Matthew 11:2-15.

**TODAY** we will be decorating the sanctuary after worship. Many hands make light work. Please plan to stay if you are able.

**TURKEYS & HAMS**: We will continue to accept donations of turkeys and hams until December 21, when we will make a second delivery to help provide Christmas dinners. Thank you for helping your neighbors.

**POTTER'S CHRISTMAS KIDS**: If you are purchasing gifts for a child from Potter's Field, please return your gift(s) WRAPPED to Virginia Markel by next Sunday (December 14).

**ADVENT SIMPLE SUPPERS**: There is a sign-up sheet on the glass case for volunteers to help provide food for our Simple Suppers that are held on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm, prior to the 6:30 pm Advent services. There are several spots still open if you can help.

**ADVENT GIVING TREE**: Donations to our Giving Tree tables in the narthex and chapel will support Heart, Love, & Soul, Potter's Field, Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, and Niagara Gospel Mission. If you would like to participate, take as many tags as you would like, purchase the item(s) requested, and bring it back to the table unwrapped. We will be accepting donations through December.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**: On Sunday, December 21, our Sunday School students will be participating in worship as greeters, readers, acolytes, and ushers. They will be singing special music, including a selection they will sing with our choir. All are invited to stay for a pizza reception in the chapel after worship. We hope you will join us as we prepare to celebrate the greatest birth in history.

**CHOIR** will practice after worship next Sunday. New members who would like to join in singing special Christmas music are welcome to attend practice.

**DECEMBER MISSION ENVELOPES** will benefit Help & Hope for the Homeless, Inc. This is a local charity founded by John Loss that supports unemployed or underemployed individuals as they pursue a trade or profession. Since their beginning, they have assisted five adults in obtaining training and education that they would not have been able to afford on their own. As a result of this support, four are now employed as LPN's and another was recently hired by Amazon as an electrician apprentice. If you would like to support this charity, place your mission envelope in the offering plate during December, or give online by choosing "monthly mission".

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS** have been posted at the narthex and parking lot entrances. Check out the list and offer birthday greetings to your friends at Grace.

**GRACE LADIES** Christmas Party will be on Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm. Food will be provided by ALPS Catering and cost is \$15. Please bring a \$5 wrapped gift to exchange.

**FREE BIBLES:** Our congregation provides free Bibles for guests and neighbors who come through our doors for voting, Survivors' Group meetings, VBS, Trunk or Treat, and many other events. Our supply is running low, and it's time to restock. Each case of 40 is about \$100. If you'd like to support this mission, please mark your gift "Bible Outreach" (for online: choose the Special Missions category first). Those who receive Bibles are very grateful!





### About the Cover

From his clothing to his diet, John certainly stood out as his voice echoed in the wilderness. However, John's voice did not stand out because of him. His call to repent was all about preparing the way for Christ, the stand-alone Savior of the world. For Christ alone is the one who has taken all of our sins upon Himself and atoned for them on the cross.

## SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

### Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 11:1–10

- <sup>1</sup> There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
- <sup>2</sup> And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and might,  
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- <sup>3</sup> And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,  
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- <sup>4</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.
- <sup>5</sup> The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,  
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,  
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;  
and a little child shall lead them.
- <sup>6</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze;  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- <sup>7</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,  
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.
- <sup>8</sup> They shall not hurt or destroy  
in all my holy mountain;  
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.
- <sup>10</sup> In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

### Epistle: Romans 15:4–13

<sup>4</sup>Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup>May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

<sup>8</sup>For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,

<sup>9</sup>and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,  
and sing to your name."

<sup>10</sup>And again it is said,

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."

<sup>11</sup>And again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,  
and let all the peoples extol him."

<sup>12</sup>And again Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse will come,  
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;  
in him will the Gentiles hope."

<sup>13</sup>May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

### Holy Gospel: Matthew 3:1–12

<sup>1</sup>In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup>"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." <sup>3</sup>For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
'Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.'"

<sup>4</sup>Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup>Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup>and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup>But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup>And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup>Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

<sup>11</sup>"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."