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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 21, 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: “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

LSB 341

**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 Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father 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.

### Adult & Children Choir Anthem: "Candlelight Carol"

*Joseph M. Martin*

### 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 first chapter.



**C** Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

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



**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

 **Hymn of the Day:** “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

LSB 356

**Sermon**

 **The Nicene Creed**

*Back Cover of Hymnal*

**Prayer of the Church**

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

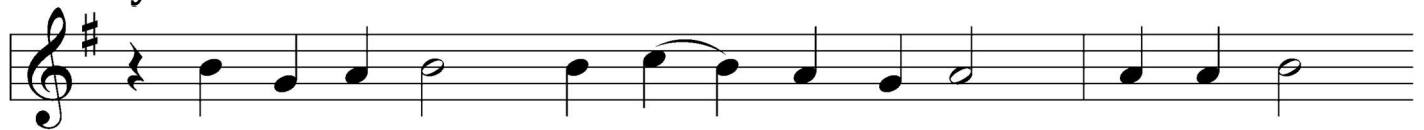
*Then please respond:*

**C** Hear our prayer.

**Offering**

**Offertory: 956 Create in Me**

LSB 956



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new



a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way



from Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va - tion;



and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

*Text: Psalm 51:10-12*

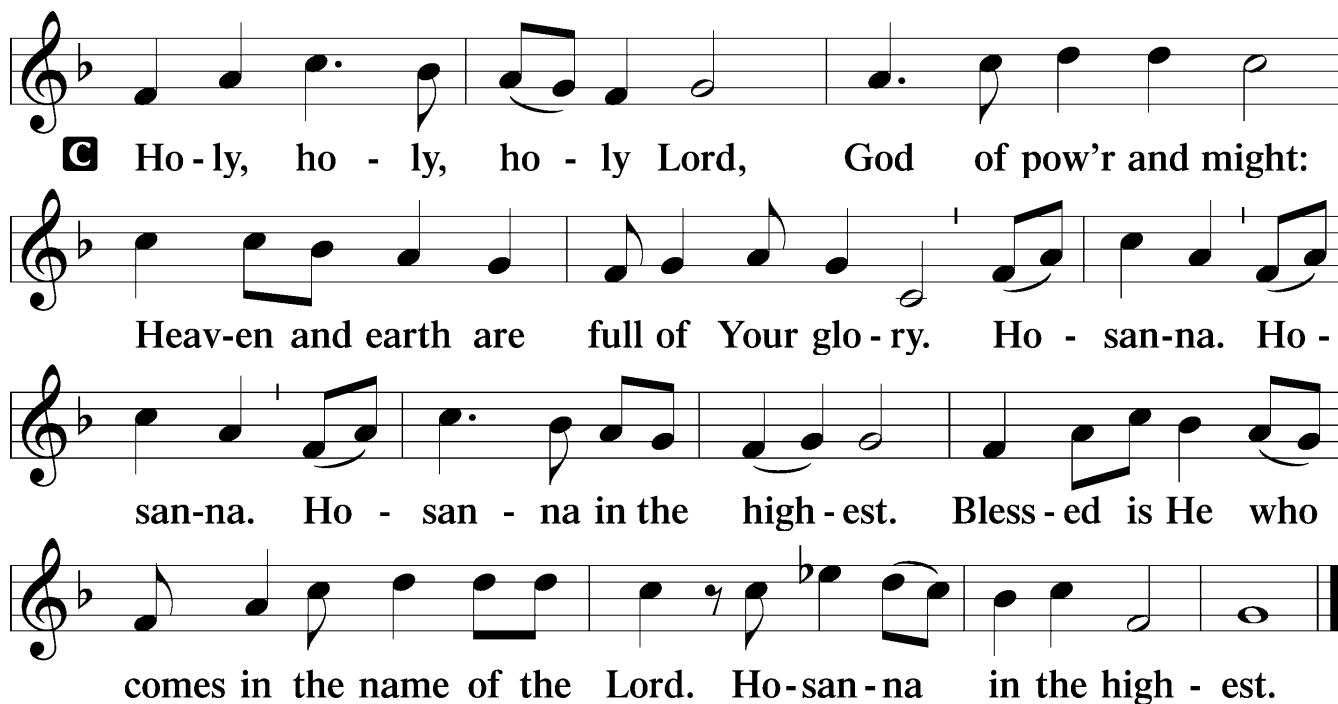
*Tune: Johann Georg Winer, 1583-1651, adapt.*

*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:



**C** Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:  
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

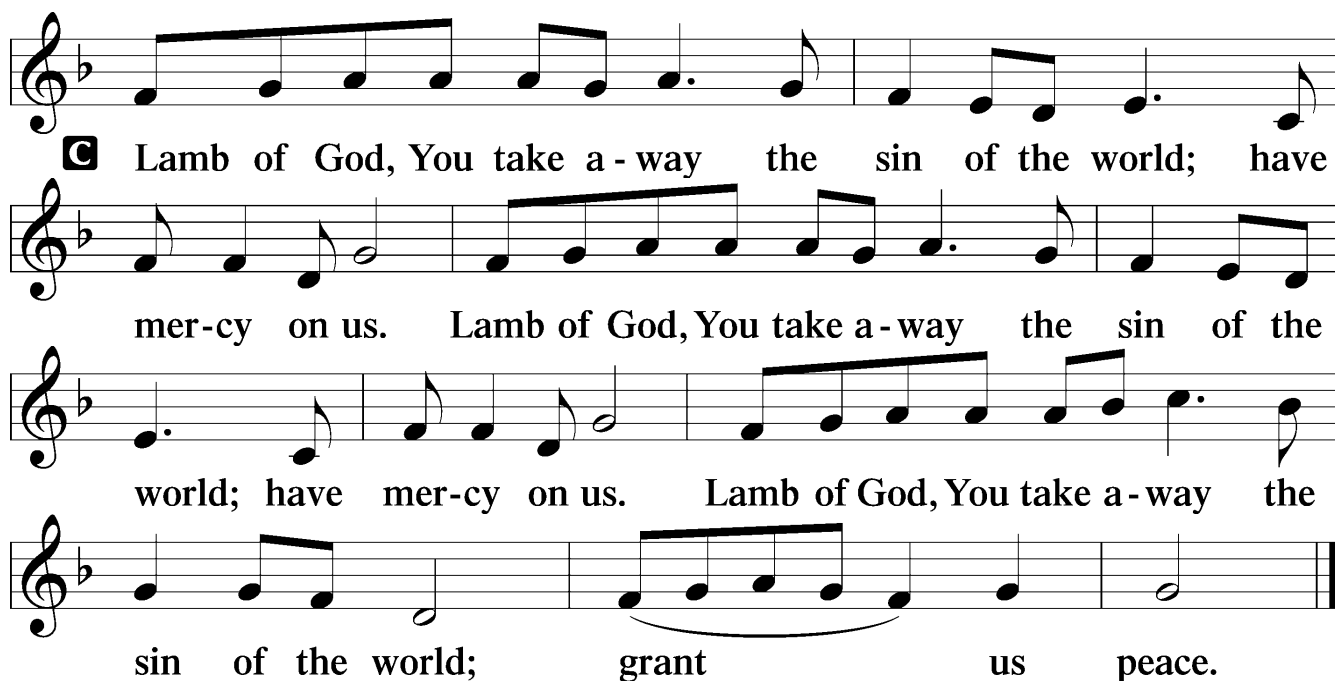
- P** Lord Jesus Christ, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- C** Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against 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  $\text{✠}$  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  $\text{✠}$  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:

"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"

*LSB 334*

"Once He Came in Blessing"

*LSB 333*

### Nunc Dimittis

*LSB 165*

**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:** “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

*LSB 388*

**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

Greeters:

Narthex - Zander Hoffman, Tyler Markel & Chasin Washburn

Chapel – Lily and Teddy Pilon & Oliver Fees

Acolytes: Dillon Deskovic & Stewert Smith

Head Ushers: Gary Krull & Mark Binkley

Youth Ushers: Audrey Markel, Elizabeth Washburn, Emma & Zak Fees

Offering: Connor & Quinn Rowland

Offertory: Daniel Bahr

Communion Assistants: Randy Broeker & Dick Crawford

Readers: Elias Markel & Michael Bahr

Tech Crew: Mark Binkley, John Goodnick & John Bahr

Altar Care: Ursula Zimmerman

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## THIS WEEK AT GRACE

### TODAY – 12/21/25

9:00 am Christian Education  
10:30 am Worship (HC)  
11:30 am Sunday School Reception

### MONDAY – 12/22/25

6:30 pm Survivors' Group

### WEDNESDAY – 12/24/25

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

### THURSDAY – 12/25/25

10:30 am Christmas Day Service

### NEXT SUNDAY – 12/28/25

10:30 am Worship

### Statistics for the week of December 14, 2025

Worship Service: 80 Attended, 15 Views  
Adult Education: 19  
Youth Education: 17  
Education Staff: 6

Offering: \$10,349.24  
Mission of the Month: \$300.00  
Sunday School: \$10.00

\* 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, M/W/Th 10-2  
**GIVING**: Options at [www.gracenf.org](http://www.gracenf.org)*



**CHURCH OFFICE** will be closed the week of December 21<sup>st</sup>. If there is an emergency outside that time please contact either Dick Crawford or Mark Andrews.

**NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS** are Isaiah 63:7-14, Galatians 4:4-7, and Matthew 2:13-23.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL & ADULT BIBLE STUDY** will not meet Sunday, December 28th. Classes will resume on January 4.



**ADVENT GIVING TREE:** There is still time to donate to our Giving Tree tables in the narthex and chapel. Donations 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 until January 4.

**PIZZA RECEPTION:** Today after worship, everyone is invited to stay for pizza and snacks in the chapel. We hope you will join us. Thank you to our Sunday School students who are participating in worship as singers, greeters, readers, acolytes, and ushers.

**THANK YOU** for your generous donations of turkeys and hams over the past couple of months. The remaining donations will be delivered today to local agencies offering free Christmas dinners to our neighbors in need.

**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".

**SAVE YOUR CARDS:** Grace Ladies would appreciate donations of Christmas cards you plan to discard. There is a donation box located in the coat room by the parking lot entrance.

**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!

**THANK YOU:** A very BIG thank you to all who participated and joined in our worship and reception this morning – Sunday School students, families & staff, adult choir, Thrivent Financial, Grace Ladies, Adult Bible Class, all who brought snacks/goodies, all who set and cleaned up, and all who came to worship and celebrate the upcoming birth of our Savior.

# Thank you to all our Sunday School students!

## Youth Class

Daniel Bahr  
Michael Bahr  
Emma Fees  
Zak Fees  
Mariah Majka  
Audrey Markel  
Elias Markel  
Tyler Markel  
Abram Smith  
Chasin Washburn  
Elizabeth Washburn

## Youth Leaders

Sherry Cassatt  
Virginia Markel

## Elementary Class

Oliver Fees  
Aurora Granto  
Deckard Granto  
Zander Hoffman  
Thomas Majka  
Maisy Pantano  
Lily Pilon  
Teddy Pilon  
Connor Rowland  
Quinn Rowland  
Odin Smith  
Oaklee Schiller

## Elementary Leader

Lacey Bahr

## Subs

Marla Crawford  
Kathy Majka  
Jane Schulz  
Adrienne Tilton

## Adult Bible Class Leader

Pastor Bahr

## Sub

Mark Binkley





### About the Cover

The loving gaze of a mother upon her child is a special thing. When Mary looked into the eyes of her newborn, she was looking into the eyes of God, and He was looking back at her. Jesus is Immanuel, which means "God with us." He looks upon us with His infinite and never-ending love. He poured out His love on the cross in order to forgive our sins and have us forever.

## FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

### Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 7:10–17

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz,  
<sup>11</sup>"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." <sup>13</sup>And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. <sup>15</sup>He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup>For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. <sup>17</sup>The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria."

### Epistle: Romans 1:1–7

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup>which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, <sup>3</sup>concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup>and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup>through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all

the nations, <sup>6</sup>including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup>To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Holy Gospel: Matthew 1:18–25

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup>but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.