

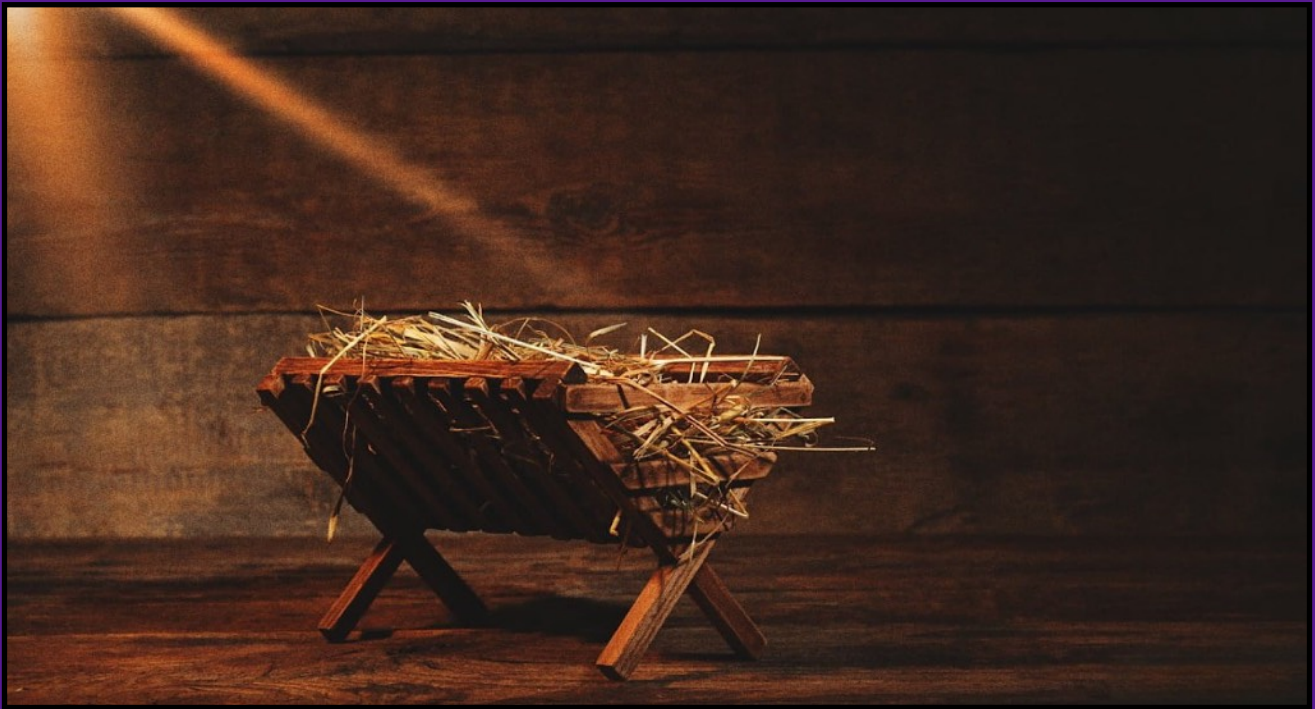
Grace Episcopal Church

Grace is a Christ-centered Community devoted to Servant Ministry and Spiritual Growth.

The First Sunday of ADVENT

Holy Eucharist

November 30, 2025—9:30 AM



What is Advent?

Advent is the beginning of the church year. The word "Advent" means "arrival" or "coming." Therefore, during this season, we reflect on the "three comings" of Jesus: his coming as a baby in Bethlehem, his coming into the heart of each person, and his coming in glory in the new creation. In the early church, Advent was a time during which people prepared for baptism, which took place on Epiphany. For that reason, we still treat Advent a little bit like Lent: we use the color purple, we don't say too many "Alleluias," and we try our best to live quiet and simple lives as we anticipate the joy of Christmas.

THE WORD OF GOD

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;
People *His mercy endures forever.*

The Celebrant and People pray together.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly
love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song of Praise

My soul gives glory to my God

My soul gives glory to my God; my heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is God's name.
All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.

Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,
remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

The Celebrant continues.

 The Lord be with you.
People *And also with you.*
Celebrant Let us pray.

The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light,
now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great
humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both
the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The First Lesson

Isaiah 2:1-5

These verses from Isaiah are the words that welcome us to Advent this year. They present us with an ancient vision of hope that still inspires God's people today: that all nations ("ethnoi," or a multitude of people) will live in peace with one another and with God. And, that weapons once used for war will be turned into tools for planting and harvesting food.

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In days to come

the mountain of the Lord's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

Many peoples shall come and say,
'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.'

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning-hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the Lord!

The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 122 *Laetatus sum*

This is one of the "psalms of ascent" (Ps. 120-134), which would have been sung by Jewish pilgrims making their way up (elevation-wise) to Jerusalem for religious festivals. In the middle ages, "Jerusalem" in this psalm meant four things at the same time: 1) a city in the Holy Land 2) allegorically, the church 3) the soul of an individual 4) the future city of God – in other words, the combined new heaven/new earth that we learned about last week.

- 1 I was glad when they said to me, * "Let us go to the house of the Lord."
- 2 Now our feet are standing * within your gates, O Jerusalem.
- 3 Jerusalem is built as a city * that is at unity with itself;
- 4 To which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, * the assembly of Israel, to praise the
Name of the Lord.
- 5 For there are the thrones of judgment, * the thrones of the house of David.
- 6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: * "May they prosper who love you.
- 7 Peace be within your walls * and quietness within your towers.
- 8 For my brethren and companions' sake, * I pray for your prosperity.
- 9 Because of the house of the Lord our God, * I will seek to do you good."

The Second Lesson

Romans 13:11-14

Paul teaches the church in Rome – and us! – that we have to “put on Christ” every day like a new set of clothes. What he talks about salvation, he is not referring to our post-mortem destination. Paul believes we will all be with Jesus when we die. Salvation, for Paul, is the process by which we heal from the effects of sin and conform more and more to the image of Christ in this life. In other words, it’s how those Christ clothes we put on every day become our second skin.

You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Gospel Hymn 56

O come, O come Emmanuel
Please sing vs 1 before the Gospel.

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 24:36-44

Why can't Matthew be more like Isaiah—at least the part of Isaiah that we're reading today?! Actually, they're not so different. Just like Isaiah uses poetic language to help us imagine a future we have no human way of understanding, Jesus is using apocalyptic language to help us imagine how that future might arrive. Apocalyptic language uses symbols, metaphors, and dualism (stark contrasts, such as one person being taken and one being left) to communicate in a way that transcends words.

Jesus said to the disciples, “But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Gospel Hymn 56

O come, O come Emmanuel
Please sing vs 2 after the Gospel.

O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who ordered all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Sermon

David Kelly, Senior Warden

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Deacon or other Leader

As we await the Advent of Christ, let us pray to God our Father saying, “Come Lord Jesus, come.”

O Wisdom from on High, you order all things in heaven and on earth: come and teach us how to live.

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

O Key of David, you open doors that none can shut: come and help our parish share your love and grace.

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

O Morning Star, O Sun of Righteousness: come and shine upon all who long to feel your light.

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

O King of the Nations, you make opposing peoples one: come and save the men and women you fashioned out of dust.

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

O Emmanuel, God among us, come and hear our prayers for ourselves and for others.

Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Silence

For all clergy and people, including Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Glenda, our bishop; and Danielle, our Priest.

For all in positions of authority, including Donald, our President; Kay our Governor; and local leaders throughout the Shoals.

For all whose work puts them in harm's way and for those on active duty in the military, saying together:

Nathan, Joshua, Drake, Carter, Ethan, Jacobi, Kahleel, Henry, Jacob, Kadin, Dustin, & Rebekah.

For those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries:

Linda Joly, Wil Heflin, Anne Abrams Youngblood, & Harrison Williams.

For those who have asked for our prayers, saying together:

Elijah, Reagan, Penney, The Booth Family, Suzy, Robin, David, Wendell, Cindy, Bruce, Frances, Harold, Logan, August, Sean, Tim, Carolyn, Karen, Jim, Wayne, Rebecca, Ron, Tommy B, LaVera, Peter, & Rosie.

For those we love, but see no longer.

Silence.

O Sacred Lord, we pray to you.
Come, Lord Jesus, come.

The Celebrant adds a concluding collect.

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" *Amen.*

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Minister and People

Most merciful God, we confess that 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 are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Celebrant concludes with an absolution or a suitable Collect.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People *And also with you.*

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offertory

Offertory Anthem

Walk in Light

Grace Choir
Lisa Silver, violin

And we shall study war no more
Come, O people, O come and walk in the light of the Lord

And we shall walk the paths of peace
Come, O people, O come and walk in the light of the Lord

The night is far spent; the day is at hand
So let us cast off the works of night

So we may wear a Shield of Day
Come, O people, O come and walk in the light of the Lord

Evermore and evermore

Doxology Hymn 76 vs. 5

All praise, eternal Son, to thee, whose advent doth thy people free;
Whom with the Father we adore and Holy Spirit evermore

The Presentation of the Gifts

Celebrant and People together

All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee. Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer B

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus S 129

Celebrant and People

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Then the Celebrant continues.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

Celebrant and People

We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;

The Celebrant continues.

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *AMEN.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant and People say together

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Facing the People, the Celebrant says the following Invitation:
The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The Communion

Please come to the altar rail to receive Communion. You may kneel or stand. Receive a wafer from the Priest by holding out your hands. To receive the wine, please dip the wafer in the chalice or drink from the chalice. If you do not wish to receive Communion, cross your arms over your chest and the Priest will offer you a Blessing.

Communion Hymn 324

Let all mortal flesh

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth
Our full homage to demand

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood
Lord of lords in human vesture, in the Body and the Blood
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food

Rank on rank the host of heaven spread its vanguard on the way
As the Light of Light descendeth from the realms of endless day
That the powers of hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away

At his feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim with sleepless eye
Veil their faces to the Presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry
“Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!”

Postcommunion Prayer

The Celebrant and People continue.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

Recessional Hymn 57

Lo! He comes with clouds descending

Dismissal

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERVANTS TODAY- NOVEMBER 30

VOD

MARY HOLLAND BLACK

SAFETY

ROB MARTIN

GREETER

MARY ANN & BOB ALLAN

USHER

NATALIE RICHARDSON

READER

LISA GARDNER

ACOLYTES

DAVID SPRINGER
& LINDA JOLY

CHALICE

LISA GARDNER
& LINDA JOLY

SERVER

FRED JOLY

CRUCIFER

FRED JOLY

ALTAR GUILD

MARY HOLLAND BLACK, JAN BENNETT, ANNIE LAURIE GRAY, RITA KELLY, & JESSIE WILSON

FELLOWSHIP

GRACE VESTRY



REV. DANIELLE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!
PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT HER.

931-636-4898

THOMDL80@gmail.com

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH VESTRY 2025

MARY HOLLAND BLACK
DAVID KELLY - SENIOR WARDEN
HEIDI VACIK - JUNIOR WARDEN

LISA GARDNER
ANNIE LAURIE GRAY
JERRY SHEA

DENNIS COLE
DAVID MCKINLEY
JANET PORT - TREASURER
DARRELL TODD - CLERK

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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PARISH MUSICIAN: CHRISTA BELUE BYRD

ORGANIST: NANCY HUGHES BOLTE

BOOKKEEPER: GAYLE OZBIRN

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: LANE HARDISON ENNIS





Announcements

TODAY: ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – On this day, we will return pledge cards, hear a sermon from Senior Warden David Kelly, and vote for a slate of three new Vestry members: *Chris Earl, Kris Walls, Troy Youngblood*. During Fellowship, you may remain in the Parish Hall to celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season or you may join the Rector, Treasurer, and Senior Warden in the Conference Room for Q&A on the written Annual Meeting report and “state of the church.”

SHOALS SHELTER – Home Free Haven is now Shoals Shelter! Grace’s first date to host is Thurs, Dec 4. Check out our sign up: bit.ly/4oGxEtY
Our next night to host is Thursday, January 1.

NEXT WEEK: LESSONS & CAROLS – Next week's worship service is one of our favorites of the year. The choir and our readers will lead us in a service of six lessons from Scripture, congregational singing, and choral music. There will be no sermon, and we will celebrate Holy Communion. Lessons and Carols is the perfect way to prepare your heart for Jesus' Christmas arrival.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS WORSHIP – Lessons and Carols will take place on Sunday, Dec 7, at 9:30 AM – the service will include Holy Communion. On Christmas Eve, we will once more have a quiet service of Morning Prayer at St. John’s at 10 AM. Our main service will be Holy Eucharist with candlelight at Grace at 5 PM.

SHOALS CHAMBER SINGERS – On December 9, Grace hosts Shoals Chamber Singers’ winter concert, “The Blessed Arrival.” Free, open to the public, and always worth it!



THIS WEEK AT GRACE

MON, DEC 1

10a-3p: Regular Office Hours

TUES, DEC 2

10a-3p: Regular Office Hours
10a-1p: Learn-to-Play-Bridge Circle

WEDS, DEC 3

10a-5p: Regular Office Hours
4:30p: Weds Bible Study
6p: Choir Practice

THU, DEC 4



10a-1p: Regular Office Hours
12p: Zoom Bible Study
Grace hosts Shoals Shelter overnight!



SUN, DEC 7



9:30a: Lessons & Carols with Holy Communion
10:30a: Advent Fellowship