



DECEMBER GRACEGRAM

Did you know?

♦ **Poinsettias** are native to Mexico and named after America's first ambassador to Mexico, Joel Poinsett.

♦ Druids decorated with **mistletoe** to celebrate the coming of winter as early as 200 BC. Early Europeans believed it had healing powers and was a plant of peace and harmony.

♦ **The Christmas tree** tradition originated in Germany in the 1500's. People would decorate fir trees with roses, apples and paper. It is believed that Martin Luther was so struck by the beauty of starlight through the trees at night that he put candles on the tree to mimic it. The tree tradition did not find it's way to America until the 1820's by the Pennsylvania Germans.

*Deadline for inclusion
in the January 2019
GraceGram is
December 17, 2018.*

*Send your articles to
Wendy Kimble at:
parishadmin@grace-hastings.org*

ALL IN

by Christina Bush, President

This is a recap of the Temple Talk given Reformation Sunday. This was the 3rd of four talks given by church leadership regarding the need for Grace's giving to more closely align with our budgeted expenses.

In October, our Stewardship chair, Tim Schoessel, talked about the "big game on the schedule" and the need to prepare for that challenge. It's not simply a matter of having your "game face" on, but more about strategizing, and being flexible, to achieve the goal. We can't predict if some players will get sidelined, whether for the season or just for part of the game. Yet, the team needs to remain *cohesive* and *focused*, each player giving his or her all. Tim then likened the "big game" to our budget: we know what the budget is, that it's the "big game on the schedule," and, at the annual meeting, we approved the budget, essentially saying, "Put me in, coach, I'm ready to play."

We heard Pastor Ken talk about "sticker shock for the soul," when Jesus instructed a follower who asked what he needed to do to inherit eternal life to sell everything he had and give the money to the poor. Not just a tithe – *everything*. The follower thought he had been doing everything right: he was keeping the commandments and he was likely making a regular sacrifice to Yahweh. Yet Jesus challenged him, and challenges us, to let go of those possessions that we rely on for everyday needs and wants, and to be "all in" with Him.

Finally, I told you about visiting my mother in Maine this fall. One day, she and I joined a church group that was ministering to a nursing home. One of the songs that the group shared was a "remix" (if you will) of the "Hokey Pokey," called, for lack of a catchier name, the "Holy Yokey" and based on the Greatest Commandment: "you shall love the Lord God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." As the leader introduced the song, she talked about how we often think *we* are in charge of our lives and have it all together. But then God "shakes it all about" and "turns us all around." Yes, I'm afraid you will never think of that song the same!

You put your whole heart in (soul, mind)
You take your whole heart out (soul, mind)
You put your whole heart in (soul, mind)
And God shakes it all about!
You do the Holy Yokey and God turns us all around,
That's what it's all about!

Are you feeling "all shook up" with Pastor Ken, Tim, and me talking about the budget? These talks were meant to catch your attention. Let's renew our commitment to God's calling with our whole heart, soul, and mind. We've learned the Gospel. We love the Gospel. Let's live the Gospel. All. In.

Let Us Pray: If you are aware of others that should be put on the lists, please notify the office.

Homebound:

Dave Bolton	Carvath Village, Room 138 690 W Main St / Middleville
Dorothy Mayo	Carvath Village, Room 149 B
Vivian Allarding	Thornapple Manor, Sugarbush Rm 408 2700 Nashville Rd / Hastings
Vern Allarding	2122 N M-43 Hwy / Hastings
Opal Gillons	1020 E State Rd / Hastings
Ilene Hilson	770 River Rd / Hastings
Jamie Coplin	109 E Grant St / Hastings
Mary Rider	611 Woodlawn Ave/Hastings Mallard Pond, Apt 109

EMAIL PRAYER CHAIN

The Congregational Care Committee is starting an email prayer chain beginning in January. Participants would be notified by email and would commit to praying for those in need as requests are received. This new program is intended to compliment, not replace, the ministry our Shepherd's Ministry already provides to our members. If interested in being a part of this prayer chain, please contact Jane Secor at secorje@gmail.com.



**Steve and Peg Kaiser
have moved to Georgia.**

Their new address is:
648 Sunflower Drive
Canton GA 30114

Cards for Grace's homebound

by Chris Bush

As much as I appreciate it when I get a phone call, email, text message, or even a "tag" in a Facebook post, I get really excited when I get a letter from a friend or family member in the mail, especially when I don't expect it. Sometimes it's a "thinking of you" card, sometimes it's a good, long letter, catching up on the latest happenings. We can bless and brighten our homebound members' days by sending them notes and cards. Can you volunteer one or two weeks out of the year to write a note to our homebound members (currently numbering about 10)? There is a sign-up sheet on the side of the mailboxes in the hallway outside the church office, and the list of homebound is available in one of the cubbyholes near the sign-up sheet. Thank you for this outreach!

Military:

Nieces / nephews of Burdicks

Alexis Kelmer (New Mexico)
Dylan Kelmer (Germany)
Austin Endsley (New Mexico)
Aaron Endsley (California)

Grandson of Freedlunds

Parker Stancil (US Army)

Daughter and Son-in-Law of Rob & Lisa Pohl

Kayla & Lance Champaco

Daughter of Cherie Clements

Myrina Crawford

Son-in-Law of Sandy & Matt Mikolajczyk

Zach Green (US Army—Africa)

December Birthdays

Myrina Crawford	12/01
Traci Wales	12/01
Sandy Mosteller	12/06
Jana Bishop	12/09
Elnora Beckwith	12/11
Dave Neeb	12/11
Carolyn O'Connor	12/13
Cherie Clements	12/20
Bill Freedlund	12/20
Jeanette Kogge	12/20
Corrina Palmer	12/22
Ilene Hilson	12/26
Gary Golnek	12/28
Karen Halstead	12/28
Margaret Wood	12/29

December Anniversaries

Derrick & Jenn Rosenberger	12/04
George & Phyllis Lietz	12/16
Robert & Sharon Bolton	12/20

EVENTS AND REMINDERS

Join Us on
December 8th
FREE rides on the
Holly Trolley



Come to [the Court House Lawn](#)

Trolley runs from 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Enjoy Christmas cookies, hot chocolate, carols and fellowship!

Christmas Worship schedule

Christmas Eve service during the evening of December 24, worship service will begin at 7:00pm. Please come at 6:30 to enjoy special musical offerings.

There is no service on Christmas Day.

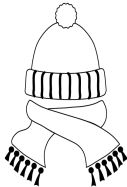
The First Sunday of Christmas will be on December 30, with one service at 10:00 am This is a special service of Lessons and Carols. **We are seeking singers and readers for this special service of celebration and joy of Christ's birth.**

Christmas Giving Tree

We have been blessed by the generosity of our congregation in the past. We thank you for considering giving mittens, gloves, socks, underwear, hats, paper towels, cleaning supplies and shoes to the needy. **God calls us to clothe the naked.** *Matthew 25:36* We are

also expanding our efforts this year beyond clothing the naked. We are

asking you to help us provide some paper towels and cleaning supplies. On the Giving Tree you will find tags for shoe sizes that are needed. Thank you for the gift of sharing in Jesus' command for us to take care of one another.



"...let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth." 1 John 3:18

Hear the Bells Ring!

Christmas Bells and Brass



Pleasant Valley United Brethren
Church
13120 Bell Rd (corner of M-50)
Lake Odessa
December 2nd at 3:00 pm

Bells Ring in our sanctuary on Sunday, December 2nd (both services) and on Wednesday evening, and December 5th for the **Advent service.**

Intergenerational Program

December 16 will be one service at 10:00 am

Musical offerings will begin at 9:45. THE SYMBOLS OF CHRISTMAS service will be filled with music, Bible verses, hymns, readings, and a drama. Pastor Ken will preside over the service and distribute communion. A Birthday Party for Jesus celebration will take place immediately following the service. Please sign up on the board to share your talents in the program and/or for the meal.

Wednesday Advent Services

ADVENT..... A Journey into LIGHT

"The dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness." **Luke 1:78-79**



This Advent you are invited to come on Wednesday nights to experience our journey into the light, as we explore what it means to be children of God. Let us prepare our hearts for the one who transforms our darkness into glorious light.

Our evening begins at 6:00pm with dinner (free will offering), special music beginning each Wednesday at 6:50 pm, and ends with a Holden Evening Prayer Service.

December 5 breakfast foods provided by Youth and Family ~ bell choir rings

December 12 soup and salads provided by Outreach Committee ~ piano and vocal offerings

December 19 lasagna and salad provided by Social Activities Committee ~ Barry County Flute Choir

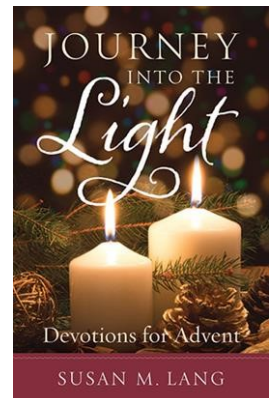
Verse of the Month:

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Isaiah 11:1-2

Advent Daily Devotionals and Calendars

The Community Outreach Committee has once again purchased Advent Daily Devotional books for our members to use during for their personal devotions throughout the season of Advent. They are already available on the table in the gathering area. Advent calendars for the children have also been purchased and will be given to Pr. Ken Scheck for distribution to the children on the first Sunday of Advent, Dec. 2nd.



Considering year-end charitable giving?

by Chris Bush, President

Tis the season. I'm not talking about all the Christmas catalogs filling up one's mailbox, nor about the preparations being made for Christmas gatherings, feasts, and celebrations. I'm talking about the end-of-the-year charitable donations that some people consider as the calendar winds down. We encourage our church family to consider a year-end gift to Grace, beyond your regular offering amount. Such a gift can enhance programs already occurring here at Grace – such as youth ministry, the music program, or the Helping Hands fund – or can be earmarked toward future efforts – such as facility upgrades (improved lighting, parking lot repaving) or the Mission Endowment Fund. This allows us to do even more of God's work, here in Hastings and beyond!





Once again, the Outreach Committee is planning and organizing the collection of groceries for food baskets and gifts for the children of five families this Christmas. A listing of grocery items needed was posted on the gathering area bulletin board on Nov. 19 and a posting for gift items needed for the children will be set up by Sunday, Nov. 25. Food and gift donations will need to be received by Sunday, Dec. 16. Thank you in advance for your support once again of this important community outreach project. Mike Kemper, Chairperson

Grace Choir

It was so good to hear the Grace Choir sing earlier this fall. We thank Cindy Olson for organizing the choir and adding to our worship experience. Cindy, once again, is trying to organize the choir to perform on December 9th and Christmas Eve. We hope that you can join us for rehearsals beginning December 6th at 7:15 pm. Additional rehearsals will be on December 13 and 20, 2018. We may change the time of the rehearsal, if it is convenient for those who are attending the practices.



God's Creation Calendars

We still have some calendars available to purchase for \$5. Please see Kim Domke for help or visit the office during open hours!

FAMILY PROMISE AUCTION

I just wanted to say thank you to everyone who participated and helped out in any way with Family Promise Fundraiser. It was a wonderful event.

We served over 130 people. Preliminary numbers show that over \$3,000 was raised. Again, thank you Grace!

BOG Attention all men. You are invited to join us at the Seasonal Grille on Tuesday December 11, 2018 at 6:00 p.m., for our annual Brothers of Grace Christmas Dinner Night Out. A good time of fellowship and food will be enjoyed. If you haven't done so yet please see sign up sheet in the gathering area.

Mutual Ministry Committee Members

Brenda Teegardin, *chair*
269.945.2651

Pastor Ken Scheck, *clergy*
269.370.4632

Cindy Olson, *Minister of Music*
517.242.3725

Julian Kratochvil
806.336.0661

Carl Schoessel
269.838.8407

Clyde Watson
269.953.4928

Kristi Winick
269.953.6638

If there are any concerns, please contact any member. If you have a complaint, we ask that you share it with us. If you are uncomfortable talking directly with a member of the committee, please know you can share your concern via text message. The Mutual Ministry Committee is having a listening post during the first quarter of 2019. Pastor Ken Scheck and Cindy Olson, our staff members, will not be present for this listening post. We want feedback and concerns given to the Mutual Ministry, so that our ministry can grow. If it is broken and we do not hear about it, we cannot address it. Thanks for your partnership in ministry.

From Bishop Satterlee

In Christ, we learn that God is in control but not as a ruthless tyrant ruling by force and intimidation. God loves us so much that God gave up all control and allowed us to nail Jesus to the cross. But God raised Jesus from the dead. And we learned that, though God's kingdom is resistible, God's kingdom is invincible. God raised Jesus from the dead. And we learned that, though we can do things to diminish ourselves, we cannot dethrone God. God raised Jesus from the dead. And we learned that, though God lets us do it our way—greed, status, ruthlessness, intimidation, power, violence, and hate—in the end it will be God's way. And what is God's way? God's way is to never give up on any of us, even when what we do breaks God's heart. God's way is to have a purpose for each and every one of us and for our life together. For the one thing God cannot bear is to give us up.

Our children need to know that God will never give them up. Whether they're four or five or forty-five, our kids need to know that God will never give them up. So, part of our mission is not to give up on our kids—no matter how old they are. In practical terms, not giving up on our kids means calling and inviting and bringing them to church. But more important, not giving up on our kids means taking a risk and sharing with them how and why our faith is important to our real life and asking nothing in return. Most important, not giving up on our kids means listening to them and being willing to change, even to change the church. Worship needs to be an experience of God's kingdom of justice, truth, goodness, love, and peace. And that means that the Christian community is different from the world.

In the Christian community, we admit our faults and failings, and the response is forgiveness and acceptance rather than ridicule and revenge. In the Christian community, we tell the stories of how God never gave up on Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Miriam, Mary Magdalene and Peter, you and me. In the Christian community, we pray for those whom the world would just assume give up, and our prayer leads us not to give up on them. In the Christian community, we offer ourselves, not to get something back, but in gratitude for all that we have. In the Christian community, we come to a table where everyone is equal, where all who have been baptized into God's family have a place; a table where we take the King into ourselves and know that he is ours and we are his.

Our children need this experience. They need to be the Church, not tomorrow but today. They need to give and to receive forgiveness, to hear and to tell the Story, to pray for others and to be prayed for, to have the gifts they offer received and used. Our children need to be welcome at the King's table, to receive Christ's presence into the very marrow of their bones, and to know that this is the one place in all the world where they are valued just as they are, where they are valued no matter what they do, where they are valued so much that neither Christ nor his Church will ever give up on them.

Sometime in the next few years or the next few minutes or the next few seconds, our children are going to be out in the world and come face to face with Pilate. And he is going to ask them, "Who is your king?" And if they know the Jesus who never gives up on them, our children will belong to the truth, and hear his voice, and have his strength to stare Pilate down and to recognize the greed, status, ruthlessness, intimidation, power, violence, and hate that he offers for the deceit, devastation, and death that they are. For our children will have something better: our children will have the best. Having Jesus, our children have life. No matter how old they are or how you defined them, talk to your children about Jesus and how much he loves them.

Blessed Christ the King!

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

No matter how it's said ~ Thank you!

Gracias, grazie, dziękuję, koszonom, damke, cnacnbo.

We had at least 40 people volunteer to make the pasties this year. We chopped onions, potatoes, cut meat, made dough out of flour, lard and water, then rolled the dough and filled it with our wonderful tasty recipe. A BIG thank you for the continued support of Thrivent who provided a \$250.00 gift card to help offset costs. Pasty sales raised over \$1700.00 for the carpet fund.

What a blessing to have such wonderful support by our congregational members and friends of Grace Church. A HUGE thank you to Joe Longcor for his leadership. As history was shared, people caught up with friends, stories were told, we were able to share in a great time of fellowship.

Whether you helped during the event, bought pasties, or kept us in your prayers...you are very appreciated. We are blessed with continued community support, as families outside of Grace once again bought pasties this year.



Thanks for Your Support

On behalf of the Grace Community Outreach committee we wish to thank our members for their support of the Sunday Brunch on September 30. \$401 was donated in support of **Family Promise of Barry County**.



Trunk-or-Treat - a huge success!

by Community Outreach

The annual **Halloween Trunk-or-Treat Event** on Halloween day saw approximately 460 children and adults walking through our facility to gather treats. We had members volunteering at 11 different "Treat Stations" and additional volunteer support for making and serving popcorn and cider, greeting and general help throughout the evening. Thanks to everyone who donated ample supplies of candy and treats for our event again this year. The extra candy that was left from the event was given to the Youth & Family Committee to use at the Christmas parade that will take place on December 1, 2018. A great time was had by all and again, thank you to everyone who helped.

Mission Endowment Fund

by Margaret Wood

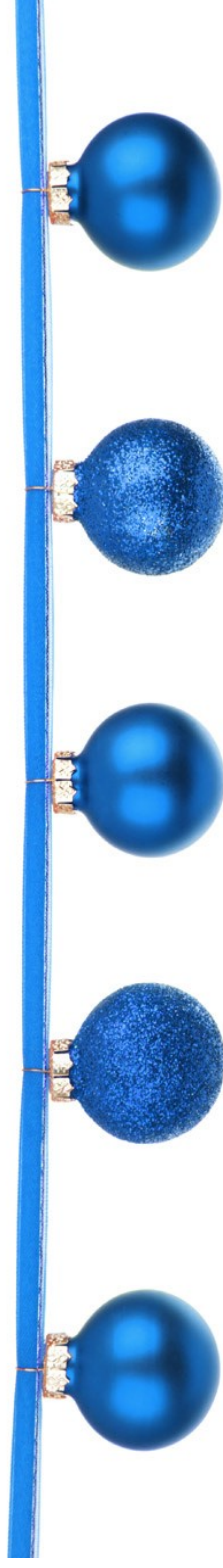
As you may be aware, Grace Lutheran Church has a Mission Endowment Fund (MEF) and a MEF Committee. The purpose of the MEF is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of our church. The Committee is tasked with discerning where to distribute up to 90% of the earnings of the MEF. Your suggestions are welcomed for directing where these funds may be best used. Please place your suggestion along with your name in Margaret








Wood's mailbox and it will be reviewed by the MEF Committee when it meets.

You may wonder how does the MEF grow. One way the MEF grows is that 10% of the annual earnings are reinvested and become part of the principal. The other way the MEF grows is through receiving bequests, trusts and gifts of cash or assets designated to it. If you have not done so already, please consider when preparing your will or estate plan to give to the MEF.

December 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Services: 8 am & 10:45 am Bells Ring Youth Choir Pageant Practice 9:15 – 10:25 	3 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Social Activities 6:30 pm	4 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Executive 6 pm	5 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Advent Service 6 pm Meal / 7 pm Service Bell Choir	6 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Clapper Kids 3:45 pm	7	8 Youth—Christmas Parade Holly Trolley –FREE 6–8 pm Downtown 
9 Services: 8 am & 10:45 am Noisy Offering Pageant Practice 9:15–10:25	10 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Outreach 4:30 pm	11 Pastor—G R Mtg. BOG Christmas Party 6 pm at Seasonal Grill	12 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Advent Service 6 pm Meal / 7 pm Service	13 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon	14	15 Pageant Practice 11:00–2:00 pm 
16 Services Pageant (speaking) 8:30 Pageant (others) 9:30 9:45 am Special Music 10:00 am Pageant 11:15 Birthday party for Jesus & Potluck	17 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon	18 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon	19 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon Advent Service 6 pm Meal / 7 pm Service	20 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon	21	22
23 Services: 8 am & 10:45 am	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Special Music 6:30 pm 7 pm Service of Lights OFFICE CLOSED	25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED 	26 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon	27 Pastor's Office Hrs 10 am–Noon	28	29
30 Service: 10:00 am	31 Office Open 9–4	1 NEW YEARS DAY OFFICE CLOSED			4	5

Executive Committee:

President: *Chris Bush*
Vice President: *Margaret Wood*
Secretary: *Kate Watson*
Treasurer: *Randy Teegardin*

Church Council Members/Liaisons

Derrick Rosenberger (Small Groups)
Sheryl Gorden (Worship)
Gary Golnek (Outreach)
Jan Schreiner (Congregational Care)
Shayna Gibbons (Children/Youth)
John Burdick (Property)
Carrie Duits (Stewardship)
Bill Freedlund (Social Activities)

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday @ 8:00 am and 10:45 am
Sunday, Dec 16 @ 10:00 am
Wednesday Dec 5, 12, 19 @ 7 pm
Christmas Eve, Mon, Dec. 24 @ 7 pm
Sunday, Dec. 30 @ 10:00 am



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

10:45 am
1st Sunday after Labor Day
through May
@ 10:45 a.m.

Our Staff:

Ken Scheck II
Minister of Word and Sacrament
pastorken@grace-hastings.org

Cindy Olson, *Minister of Music*

Wendy Kimble,
Parish Administrator
Mon – Thurs 9 AM - 4PM
parishadmin@grace-hastings.org

Kim Domke, *Bell Choir Director*
kdomke08@gmail.com

Nathan Freedlund, *Custodian*

OUR MINISTERS:
THE PEOPLE OF GOD

- Martin Luther

Grace Lutheran Church

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Hastings, MI 49058

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Facebook:

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ECLA Hastings, MI

Phone:

269-945-9414
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Worship Committee:
*gracelutheranworship-
committee@gmail.com*

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

