



Stewardship Information

Worshippers last week: 94 Weekly Giving: \$4,914.00 Budget Amount: \$4,576.53

Adult Forum will continue next week. Next week we meet at 9:30 and will study the Sign of the Times.

Advent Services *Journey into the LIGHT* continue Wednesday evenings. There is one night left on December 19. We gather for a meal and worship. The meal begins at 6:00 pm followed by worship at 7:00 pm. If you cannot make the meal, please join us for worship.

Vocal Choir will sing Christmas Eve. If you want to sing and Thursday evening rehearsals at 6:30 pm do not work for you, please talk to Cindy Olson.

The Social Activities Committee would like to invite you to **Jesus' Birthday Party**; a pot luck luncheon after today's service. Help us celebrate **the reason for the season!**

Giving Tree is ready to accept articles such as mittens, scarves, hats, socks, shoes and cleaning supplies, such as paper towels, ammonia, bathroom spray cleaners, etc. Just bring in what cleaning supply you like to use, and it will be appreciated.

Mutual Ministry is here for you. If there is a ministry concern, please contact Carl Schoessel. Carl is our member of the Mutual Ministry Committee that is highlighted this week and can be reached by a phone call or a text message 269.838.8407. Each week there will be a featured different member to contact.

Pre-Service Hymn Sing December 30th!

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. If interested in being a part of this prayer chain, please contact Jane Secor at secorje@gmail.com.

HVAC is being replaced at a cost of \$8,600.00. If you can find it in your heart to make an end of the year contribution toward this cost, it would be greatly appreciated.

Barry County Cares – We received a letter thanking the congregation for the recent donation of \$130.28 benefiting families and individuals in need.

Offering Envelopes - Don't forget to pick yours up from your mailboxes along with other information.

Start bringing your **candle votive** for Epiphany on January 6, 2019.

Third Sunday of Advent

December 16, 2018

The season of Advent is a time of preparation for the expected Messiah, who came in an unexpected way, as the baby Jesus. The color of the season is blue (like the night sky), representing the Christ who is called Dayspring (source of day).

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Pre- Service Music

Welcome/Worship Instructions

Arise in body or spirit.

Gathering Hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (stanzas 1-4) ELW 257 (red book)

The CELEBRATION OF LIGHT ON THE ADVENT WREATH - Shepherds Candle

- P** From the one who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty God: grace, light and peace be with you all.
- C** **And also with you.**
- A** Leap with love, flames of light,
C **we begin another week of patient preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ.**
- P** As candle flames give blessed brilliance to this winter tide,
C **may our gift-giving be part of our preparation for God's greatest gift, Emmanuel.**
- A** Let each present we prepare to give be a sign of God's gift of Life, Joy and Peace to our world.
C **Let us wrap every Christmas gift with love, so that our gifts become Advent prayers, awakening our hearts to the true mystery of Christmas.**

I

As we make our Advent journey,
 let us walk as in the Lord.
 Pilgrims with a holy calling
 trav'ling, strengthened by God's word.
 Toward the stable, toward the manger,
 listening for the singing angels,
 toward the gift of God made flesh,
 soon to be born in righteousness,
 let us walk as in the Lord,
 toward the Son to be adored!

II

In the desert, blooms and blossoms
 mark the Way of Holiness.
 As we travel with rejoicing
 strengthen, ransomed, undistressed.
 Now restored by water springing,
 filled with joy our voices ringing.
 From the Lord, we new begin,
 gift of love we feel within,
 let us walk as in the Lord,
 toward the Son to be adored!

The RESPONSIVE LITANY of SEEKING

- A** With feeble hands and fearful hearts we come into your presence, O Lord, seeking forgiveness.
- C** Like a parched desert we need your streams of joy.
- P** Come, Lord Jesus, into our desert world. Bring the joy and gladness of your forgiveness. Bring the joy and gladness of your presence.
- C** Come to us, Jesus, and strengthen us to do your work.

Prayer of the Day

- A** Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John.
- C** Rejoicing in your salvation, may we bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Sit

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-15

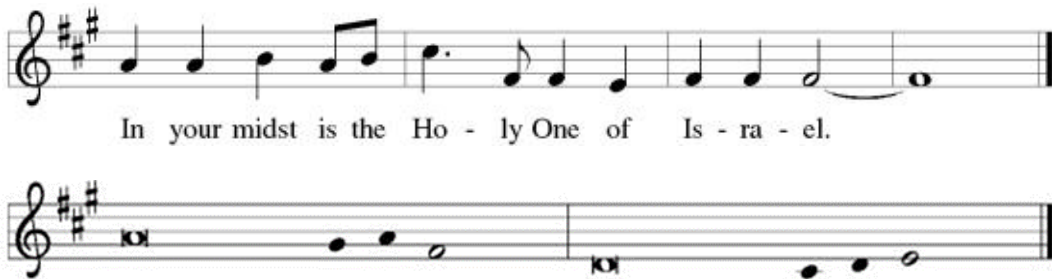
The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

☐ A reading from **Zephaniah:**

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

☐ Lord God, your Word is a lamp to our feet,

☑ **we give you thanks and praise.**



Psalm – Isaiah 12:2-6

²Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not | be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become | my salvation.

³**With joy you | will draw water
from the wells | of salvation.** ☐

⁴And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call | on God's name;
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name | is exalted.

⁵**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done | gloriously;
let this be known in | all the earth.**

⁶Shout aloud and sing for joy, O | royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy | One of Israel. ☐

Second Reading

Philippians 4:4-7

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns, with the hope they will experience God's joy and peace.

📖 A reading from **Philippians:**

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

📖 Lord God, your Word is a lamp to our feet,

🗣️ **we give you thanks and praise.**

Sit

Message

The 12 Symbols of Christmas

Who's That Coming to Town Tonight?

Who's That Coming to Town to Town Tonight Who's that coming to town x2

Who's That Bringing us HOPE Tonight Who's that bringing us HOPE x2

**chorus: JESUS CHRIST IS BORN TONIGHT FOR ME THERE IS NO OTHER
JESUS IS COMING TO TOWN TONIGHT, JESUS IS COMING TO TOWN**

Who's That Giving me JOY Tonight Who's that giving me JOY x2

Who's That Sharing His LOVE Tonight Who's that sharing His LOVE x2 **chorus**

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Who's That setting me FREE Tonight    Who's that setting me FREE x2    **chorus**

**Symbol 1: the tree**

**John 6:33 “The bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven. He gives life to the world.”**

**Symbol 2: ornaments**

**Deuteronomy 16:17 “All shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.”**

Congregation is asked to please fill out an ornament with one more or more gifts or talents they have been blessed with. These may be brought forward to a basket during communion.

**Symbol 3: lights and candles**

**Matthew 5:14-15 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.”**

**SONG: You Are the Light of the World**

**You are the Light of the World.**

**You are the Light of the World.**

**So shine, shine, shine where you are!**

**You are the Light of the World!**

**Symbol 4: bells and sheep**

**John 10:11 “If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leaven the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?” Matthew 18:12 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”**

**Symbol 5: candy canes (manger scene)**

**Matthew 1:21 “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”**

**SONG: Away in the Manger Verses 1 & 2**

**ELW 277**

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,  
2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes,  
the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head;  
but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky  
the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.

**Symbol 6: stars**

**Matthew 2:9b-10** “And behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.”

**SONG: There's a Star in the East (vocal ensemble)**

**Symbol 7: angels**

**Luke 2:9-11** “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone ‘round about them: and they were so afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”

**SONG: Angels We Have Heard on High Verses 1 & 2**



**Symbol 8: holly and berries**

**Matthew 27:29** “And twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on His head and put a reed in His right hand. And kneeling before Him, they mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!”

**Symbol 9: wreath**

**Hebrews 13:8** “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

**Symbol 10: presents**

**Matthew 2:11** “The Wise Men went to the house. There they saw the child with His mother Mary. They bowed down and worshipped Him. Then they opened their treasures. They gave Him gold, incense, and myrrh.”

**SONG: WE THREE KINGS**

**Instrumental offering**

**Symbol 11: ribbons & bows**

**Colossians 3:14** “And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

**SONG: BIND US TOGETHER LORD**

**Vocal ensemble**

Congregation is invited to tie a ribbon around the wrist of their neighbor, as they think about how God binds us into one family

***Refrain:***

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.  
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord;  
Bind us together in love.

**Symbol 12: cookies**

**Jeremiah 18:6** “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.”

## Now's the Time to Praise the Lord

Now's the time to praise the Lord  
We're gonna lift our voice and sing  
Jesus You are Lord of all  
Our Savior and our King  
Hallelujah Lord we praise You   echo  
Hallelujah Lord we love You   echo  
Hallelujah Lord we serve You   echo  
Hallelujah Lord we praise You   echo

*Kneel or sit as able.*

### Prayers

▲ As we await the coming of Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

▲ For choirs, hymn writers, musicians, and off-key singing, we give you thanks, Holy One. Fill us with your song of joy. Open us to proclaim your glory in our singing, speaking, and silence. Embolden your church to take up the cross against the powers of oppression and death, and guide the faith of our bishops and congregations and all the servants of your church, including *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrysanne, David and Roseanne; our synod companion churches, Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Wyoming, Parmalee United Methodist Church of Middleville; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* We lift our hearts to you,

☒ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

▲ For the hurting places in creation; for seas and lands ravaged by natural disasters; for communities and creatures displaced by floods and droughts. Grant peace through your presence and joy in your healing. We lift our hearts to you,

☒ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

▲ For peace to ring out in our hearts and in our homes; for mercy and forgiveness to reign in every community; for war to cease and hunger to end. Give us this joy now, Holy One. Protect the lives of those who serve in the military, including *Zack Green (Mikolajczyks), Parker Stancil (Freedlunds), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), Alexis and Dylan Kelmer, Austin and Aaron Endsley (Burdicks) and Kayla and Lance Champaco (Pohls).* We lift our hearts to you,

☒ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

▲ For those who are oppressed; for soldiers and veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder and their families; for neighbors who have no access to medical care; for those who are ill and those who mourn. We pray especially for *Dan Anderson, Dave Bolton, Ray Chadwick Sr., Ray Chadwick Jr, Ellie Clark, Vicky Dame, Angie Drozd, Wendy Eifler, Colleen Endsley, Opal Gillons, Wes Gillons, Karl*

Golnek, Belladonna Green, Nikki Haddix, Cameron Haddix, Charlene Hall, Delmer Hansen, Larry Hansen, Mary Jane Hayner, Tim Lowe, Steve Lydy, family of Chad Miller, Valeria Poholski (surgery 12/12), Kathy Rann, Kailie Triick, George Ulrich Jr., Sue Walker, Suen Zethelius and the homeless enduring the cold winter. We lift our hearts to you,

**☞ Come, Lord Jesus.**

**Ⓐ** For foster families opening their homes; for grandparents raising grandchildren; for single parents struggling to make ends meet; for expectant parents who now grieve. Give strength and comfort, Holy One. We lift our hearts to you,

**☞ Come, Lord Jesus.**

**Ⓐ** Be attentive, gracious God, to the individual petitions we lift to you in loud voice or in the silence of our hearts.

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

**Ⓐ** We lift our hearts to you,

**☞ Come, Lord Jesus.**

**Ⓐ** In thanksgiving for preachers and teachers who have guided us on the way. Bring us with them to rejoice eternally in you. We lift our hearts to you,

**☞ Come, Lord Jesus.**

**Ⓟ** Confident that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we bring to you these prayers and those unspoken, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**☞ Amen.**

### **Offering of Gifts and Music**

*Everyone at worship is encouraged to fill out a Participation card and place it in the offering plate every Sunday morning*

*Arise in body or spirit.*

***Let the Vineyards***

☑ Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, fill to the brim our  
 cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown,  
 that we may be fed, we may be fed with the bread of life.  
 Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the  
 prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,  
 and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

Offering Music

*He Made a Way in a Manger*

Kate Watson & Emma Peck

### Offering Prayer

Ⓐ Let us pray . . . God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives.

☑ Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

### Sharing the Peace of God

Ⓟ The peace of Christ be with you always.

☑ And also with you.

*(We share the peace of Christ with one another.)*

### Great Thanksgiving

**P** The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so 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 our thanks and praise.

**P** It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,  
 Lord God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are  
 full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
 Bless - ed, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the  
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

### Eucharistic Prayer

☐ Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.

☑ **When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.**

☐ In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await Christ's coming again in righteousness and peace.

☑ **Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share.**

☐ Strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

☞ **Through Christ all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen**

### **Lord's Prayer**

☞ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

☞ **Our Father in heaven, holy 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. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

### **Invitation to Communion**

☞ Come to the table of grace.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

*Sit*

*Please bring your blessing ornament forward.*

### ***Communion at Grace***

***All who are present are invited to receive Holy Communion. This sacrament is a gift to all who come with open hands and open hearts to the presence of Jesus.***

✠ **Bread** is served by the Pastor. **Wine** is served from a *common cup* by the Assisting Minister.

✠ If you need gluten free bread, please let the Pastor know when you come forward.

✠ If you prefer wine from the *pouring chalice* in an **individual cup**, take an empty cup from the tray and have it filled by the Worship Assistant. Return the individual chalice/cup to the basket provided.

✠ **Grape Juice** is provided in the pre-filled cups in the center of the serving tray.

✠ A **Verbal Blessing** may be given by the Pastor, if you do not wish to commune.

✠ If you wish **communion brought to you** in the pew, please notify the usher.

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

*What Feast of Love*

ELW 487

*All Earth is Hopeful*

ELW 266

*Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

ELW 242



## Prayer after Communion

- Ⓐ God of promise, you give food to those who hunger and justice to those who are oppressed.
- ☒ **As you have nourished us in this meal, send us to proclaim the coming of your righteous reign; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## Congregational announcements

*Arise in body or spirit*

## Blessing

- Ⓐ God grant you harmony as you live with one another in accordance with Jesus Christ, as we live in the blessing of almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, now and always.
- ☒ **Amen.**

*All children and youth, as well as the young at heart and playful spirits, are invited to come forward to make music and dance during the Sending Hymn. Please choose one instrument to play or one scarf to use for waving and dancing. **In the weeks to come this will end and be replaced during Children's Time.***

**Sending Song**

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (stanzas 5-8)**

**ELW 257**

## Dismissal

- Ⓐ The night is far gone, the day is near. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
- ☒ **Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

*Please join us after the service to celebrate the birthday of Jesus in the fellowship hall.*

## The Good News Ax

It's the third week of Advent. The kids are practicing their pageant, Christmas carols are playing nonstop everywhere we go, and we are waiting for that precious babe to be born in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. But just as we are settling into that saccharin scene of Christmas sweetness, John the Baptist shatters it with his talk of an ax lying at the base of the tree and an unquenchable fire.

John's job is to give us a wake-up call: "People! The one you are waiting for is a whole lot more than just a cute little baby!" This Jesus for whom we wait is coming with power as sharp as an ax and as hot as fire, to prune away everything that holds us back from the fruit-bearing life we were born to express.

It may seem a bit too harsh and violent for our mid-Advent mood, but this ax is where things get good! Think of the things that prevent fruit from growing: guilt, shame, the hoarding of possessions, our fear that there isn't enough, the disease of sin. All of this will be chopped away and burned, making space for life to grow.

Think of the ways God chops back that which keeps us from new growth. We may be steeped in all kinds of internal poisons, prone to believing ourselves unworthy. But at the communion table, God cuts through those lies and says, "No, this is my body given for you." Through baptism we are equipped with words that can cut like a knife and truth as consuming as unquenchable fire: "You are God's child." Cleansed, nourished, and pruned, we can recognize ourselves as God's worthy and beloved children and begin bearing fruit.

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

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### BEFORE WORSHIP

Please fill out our Participation Card and place it in the offering plate every Sunday. This card helps the ministry of both the Congregational Care and Community Outreach Committees. Sometimes there are additional questions on the back of the card, so don't forget to check both sides of the card.



# Grace Lutheran Church

239 E North St  
Hastings MI 49058



Website: [www.grace-hastings.org](http://www.grace-hastings.org)

Facebook: Grace Lutheran Church-ELCA Hastings, MI  
Worship Committee e-mail: [gracelutheranworshipcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheranworshipcommittee@gmail.com)

Phone: (269) 945-9414  
(269) 945-2645

Pastor Ken Scheck II  
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music  
December 16, 2018  
Third Sunday of Advent