

# Grace Lutheran Church

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Hastings MI 49058



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Pastor Ken Scheck II  
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music

## Wayfinding

When discouragement is so thick that we can't see a way forward, what helps us to move once again? What can rekindle our hope? God led the Israelites out of Egypt the long way around. When we can't see ahead, we may need a voice that creatively pulls us outward, or backward.

The earliest generations of Christians, like their enslaved and exiled ancestors, were surrounded by self-congratulatory nonsense. The Roman world was awash in announcements of the “good news” of imperial victories, favors, and festivals. One widely copied text celebrated the birthday of “our God” Caesar as “the beginning of good news for the world because of him.” Gospel writers reached outward to take up the Roman empire’s language and bend it. The title of Mark’s gospel, “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” took something familiar and made it startlingly new.

God led the Israelites out of Egypt through the sea. Centuries later, the prophet Isaiah reached back to that story to proclaim a new exodus, out of Babylon through the desert. And centuries later, John the Baptist reached back to Isaiah’s fulfilled promises to say a new thing. “All” the people of Jerusalem and people from the “whole” countryside responded. That’s a lot of people! Whatever their numbers, they could act knowing that they were not alone. Community provided comfort and strength. Those who broke routine to trek out to the desert, confess their sins, and be plunged into the River Jordan were retracing the routes of their ancestors by going back to the waters and symbolically crossing again—together.

In Advent, our countercultural season, we also reach out and reach back. Together we begin our church year by returning to the beginning of our life in faith: holy baptism. In Isaiah and Mark we hear voices speaking comfort, crying out, heralding good tidings. And then, even in wilderness, we begin to find and make a way.

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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.



## Prayer of the Day

▲ Let us pray . . . Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son.

☑ **By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Sit

## Special Music

**Ding Dong Merrily on High** arr. K Roth

## Grace Notes

## First Reading:

**Isaiah 40:1-11**

*In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. The Lord will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for his sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of the Lord.*

☐ A reading from **Isaiah:**

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. <sup>3</sup>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. <sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. <sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. <sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

▲ The word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

Righ - teous - ness shall pre -


pare a path - way for God.



<sup>1</sup>You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;  
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>**You have forgiven the iniquity | of your people  
and blotted out | all their sins.**


<sup>8</sup>I will listen to what the LORD | God is saying;  
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their | hearts to you.

<sup>9</sup>**Truly, your salvation is very near to | those who fear you,  
that your glory may dwell | in our land. **

<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness have | met together;  
righteousness and peace have | kissed each other.

<sup>11</sup>**Faithfulness shall spring up | from the earth,  
and righteousness shall look | down from heaven.**

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will indeed | grant prosperity,  
and our land will | yield its increase.

<sup>13</sup>**Righteousness shall go be- | fore the LORD  
and shall prepare for | God a pathway. **

## **Second Reading:**

## **2 Peter 3:8-15a**


*This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.*

### A reading from **2 Peter:**

<sup>8</sup>Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15a</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

 The word of the Lord.

 **Thanks be to God.**

Stand as you are able.

## Gospel Acclamation



- 1 O - pen your ears, O faith-ful peo - ple, o - pen your ears and hear God's word.
- 2 They who have ears to hear the mes - s-age, they who have ears, now let them hear;



O - pen your hearts, O roy - al priest-hood, God has come to you.  
they who would learn the way of wis - dom, let them hear God's word.

### Refrain



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!  
God has spo - ken to the peo - ple, hal - le - lu - jah!



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!  
God has spo - ken words of wis - dom, hal - le - lu - jah!



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!  
God has spo - ken to the peo - ple, hal - le - lu - jah!



To - rah o - ra, To - rah o - ra, hal - le - lu - jah!  
God has spo - ken words of wis - dom, hal - le - lu - jah!

## Gospel Reading:

Mark 1:1-8

*The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.*

☐ The Gospel according to **Mark**.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; <sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" <sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*

## Children's Message/Children's Church

### Message

*Stand as you are able.*

**Song of the Day**

*All Earth is Hopeful*

**ELW 266** (red book)

*Kneel or sit as you are able*

### The Prayers

☐ Guided by the light of Christ, let us pray for the coming dawn of joy, healing, and comfort for all God's people.

*A brief silence.*

☐ We long to see your glory. Prepare our hearts for your arrival by healing divisions in your church and blessing those who work for reconciliation within it. Empower and guide the faith of our bishops and congregations and all the servants of your church, including Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants David and Sarah; our synod companion churches, *Emanuel Lutheran Church in Ludington, Seventh Day Adventist Church in Delton*; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken. Lord, in your mercy,

☑ **hear our prayer.**

☐ We pray for your creation. Bring renewal to open spaces, parks, forests, mountains, and grasslands. Restore the creatures and lands that are damaged or destroyed. Lord, in your mercy,

☑ **hear our prayer.**

☐ We long for your peace. Make places of welcome for people fleeing violence. For nations facing conflict or crisis, deliver relief. Protect those who serve in the military, including *Myrina*

*Clements, Lance and Kayla Champaco, Joshua Wright, Parker Stancil, Tim Krewson and Tyler Van Houten.* Lord, in your mercy,

**☞ hear our prayer.**

**A** We seek healing for all people who long for justice, freedom, and comfort. Sustain them in their time of need. Be with all who wait for you, who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. Comfort all in need in body, mind, or spirit, including *Steve Kaiser, Laura Miller, Magnus Zethelius, Mary Golnek, Barbara Macaully, Kris Gilbert, Gladys Bishop, Katie & Jeremy Newburn and Cale.*

Lord, in your mercy,

**☞ hear our prayer.**

**A** We give thanks for those who are ready to help in times of crisis. Give courage to disaster and emergency response teams, police officers, nurses, doctors, surgeons, chaplains, and all who work for the sake of others. Lord, in your mercy,

**☞ Have mercy, O God.**

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

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

**A** Lord, in your mercy,

**☞ hear our prayer.**

**A** We are your beloved flock and you are our shepherd, O God. Along with the saints already at rest in you, bring us together as your people under your holy rule. Lord, in your mercy,

**☞ hear our prayer.**

**P** We raise our prayers to you, O God, in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**☞ Amen.**

### Offering of Gifts & Music

**8:00** *An English Christmas* arr. M Helman

**Grace Notes**

**10:45** *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella* arr. M Thompson

**Clapper Kids**

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

*After the usher passes your pew, you are invited to drop your coins in the metal bowl at the front of the nave. These gifts are sent to Barry County Cares.*

*Stand as you are able*

**Offertory Hymn**

*Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*

**ELW 674** (red book)

**Offertory Prayer**

**A** Let us pray . . . Savior of the nations, come. Make your home here in us.

**☞ Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light.**

**Amen.**

**Sharing the Peace**

**P** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**☞ And also with you.**

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



## Great Thanksgiving

☞ The Lord be with you.

☞ **And also with you.**

☞ Lift up your hearts.

☞ **We lift them to the Lord.**

☞ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

☞ **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

☞ It is indeed right and salutary that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, through Jesus Christ, whose coming the prophets and John the Baptist announced with great joy. 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, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. 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, 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; He 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.

**☞ For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

☞ Remembering, therefore, his life, death and resurrection, we await his 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 him all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

### **Lord's Prayer**

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

**☞ Our Father in heaven, hallowed 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.**

*Sit*

### **Invitation to Communion:**

☞ Share in the inheritance of all the saints. Come to the table prepared for you.

#### ***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.

*Stand as you are able.*

## Lamb of God

Je - sus, Lamb of God: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er of the world: give us your peace.

*Wait for the Lord*

ELW 262 (red book)

*Lord Our God, with Praise We Come*

ELW 730

*Hark, the Glad Sound!*

ELW 239

*Stand as you are able.*

### Prayer after Communion

**A** Let us pray . . . God for whom we wait, you come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share.

**C** Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts, and send us forth to be your people in the world, announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Sit*

### Announcements

*Stand as you are able*

### Blessing

**P** May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**C** 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.*

**Sending Hymn**

*On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand*

ELW 437 (red book)

### Sending

**A** Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*All interested children and adults are invited to come up close to the bell tables and even try ringing bells and chimes*

<b>THIS WEEK AT GRACE</b>	
<b>Today, December 10</b>	Worship at 8:00 & 10:45 am Children's Church 10:45 am Bells ring during worship *Noisy Offering
<b>Monday, December 11</b>	Community Outreach 5:00 pm
<b>Tuesday, December 12</b>	Women's Bible Study 12:30 pm Brothers of Grace Christmas dinner
<b>Wednesday, Dec 13</b>	Advent dinner 6:00 pm Bell choir rings 6:45 pm Advent services 7:00 pm
<b>Thursday, Dec 14</b>	Bell choir party

**Today's Worship Leaders**

	8:00 am	10:45 am
<b>Assisting Ministers</b>	Chris Bush	Mark Anton
<b>Cantor</b>	Mark Anton	Vickey Argo
<b>Lector</b>	Jack Vos	Carla Neil
<b>Communion Server</b>	Brenda Teegardin	Phyllis Lietz
<b>Acolyte/Crucifer</b>	Mark Anton	Emmalee Peck
<b>Usher</b>	Mark/Jana Bishop	Joe Longcor, Gwen Hansen Sandy Mosteller,
<b>Greeter/Coffee Hr.</b>	Jack/Carol Vos	John/Mary Kleinbrink
<b>Children's Church</b>		Kate Watson
<b>Chancel Team</b>	<b>Lisa Golnek</b>	

**Next Sunday's Worship Leaders, December 17, 2017 – 10:00 am**

<b>Assisting Ministers</b>	Phil Poholski
<b>Cantor</b>	Kate Watson
<b>Lector</b>	Victoria Steadman
<b>Communion Server</b>	Mark Anton
<b>Acolyte/Crucifer</b>	Clyde Watson
<b>Usher</b>	Mark Anton, Ed Domke
<b>Greeter/Coffee Hr.</b>	Kristi Winick, Ingrid Morgan
<b>Children's Church</b>	
<b>Chancel Team</b>	<b>Lisa Golnek</b>

## Stewardship Information

The local **Food Pantry** located at the Methodist Church on Green Street is currently in need of saltine crackers, boxed instant mashed potatoes and cake frosting.

Worshippers last week: not counted      Weekly Giving: \$4,940.00      Budget Amount:  
\$4,181.22

**Noisy Offering** benefiting Barry County Cares will be received during worship this morning. Thank you for your gifts of \$105.13 received last month.

**Holly Trolley** – Saturday, **December 9<sup>th</sup>**, from 6:00 – 9:00 pm. See the sign-up sheets posted in the gathering space for donations of cookies and other opportunities to be involved.

**Pastor Scheck** will not have office hours on Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. His office hours on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> will be from 3:00 – 5:00 pm.

**Brothers of Grace** - Calling all men 18 years of age and older to come and join us for the annual Brothers of Grace Christmas Dinner Outing at Kloosterman's Sports Bar Tuesday **December 12**, at 6:00 p.m. We are looking for a good turnout, so be sure and sign up on the sign up sheet located in the Gathering Area and try to invite others for a night of good food and fellowship.

**Grace Choir** – choir practice will be at 6:30 on Thursday, **December 14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>**.

**Youth Program - December 17** will be one service at 10:00am. The youth will lead the service with music, Bible verses, hymns, readings, and a drama. Pastor Paul Nuechterlein will preside over the service and distribute communion. A Birthday Party for Jesus celebration will take place immediately following the service.

**December 31** – Sunday worship service is at 10:00 am, and pre-service will be a hymn sing starting at 9:40 am.

**Christmas Family Adoptions** – information for children's gifts and Christmas dinner donations are posted in the gathering area. If you would like specific gift giving ideas, please speak with Mike Kemper or phone him at 269-664-3599. If you would like to make a monetary donation for the perishable items we will purchase, checks may be written to Grace Lutheran Church, with the memo line of "Christmas Food Baskets". Cash donations should be in an envelope marked "Christmas Food Baskets".

**Worship Committee** would love to get your input about our worship here at Grace. Their email address is [gracelutheranworshipcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheranworshipcommittee@gmail.com)

**Wednesday Advent Services - ADVENTure..... A Journey of Hope** "As we walk in times that are not certain, we know that God is with us guiding and directing our days. This Advent you are invited to come on Wednesday nights to experience an adventure, as we explore some of the ways

God has given our ancestors hope, as God gives us hope on our faith journey.

*The ADVENTure* begins at 6:00pm with dinner (free will offering), special music beginning each Wednesday at 6:50pm. Holden Evening Prayer Service and children's activities begin at 7:00pm