

# Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor Ken Scheck II  
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music  
December 3, 2023

## First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023



*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, which means source of day.*

*Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.*

### Welcome/Worship Instructions

Handbell Choir (10:45)

*The Heavenly Host*

by John C. Dare

### Gathering Music

### The CELEBRATION OF LIGHT ON THE ADVENT WREATH - Prophecy Candle

- ☐ From the one who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty God: grace, light and peace be with you all.
- ☑ **And also with you.**
  
- ☐ In the darkness we light a flame of hope.
- ☑ **May it dance not only upon our Advent Wreath but within each of our hearts.**
  
- ☐ Hope is the flower that blooms from the ground of faith.
- ☑ **With joy we celebrate the light on this Advent Candle in prayerful expectation.**
  
- ☐ This dancing flame sings out that the reign of God, that pure light is slowly dawning in our world.
- ☑ **Let this Advent season, now beginning, bring us a new birth of hope in the ancient promise of God.**

## I

Angels singing in the heavens of the Savior promised long.  
 Ev’ry heart shall op-en to God, ev’ry voice li-ft high in song.  
 Come and worship, Come and worship. Ev’ry voice lift high in song.

## II

Through the darkness of these da-ys, Christ shall come and enter in.  
 With the message of salvation; we no more are slaves to sin.  
 Hallelujah! Hallelujah! We no more are slaves to sin.

## III

We have come to seek God’s presence. In this place to worship Christ.  
 We await Christ’s new returning. Seeking God’s redeeming grace.  
 Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Seeking God’s redeeming grace.

## IV

Glory, laud, all honor, blessing to the King whose reign shall come.  
 Praise and thanks and adoration, Father, Son and Spirit, One.  
 God is coming! God is coming! Father, Son and Spirit One.

## The RESPONSIVE LITANY of HOPE

**P** With open hearts we await you  
**C** Come, Lord Jesus.

**A** With open arms we beckon you  
**C** Come, Lord Jesus.

**P** With open mouths we greet you  
**C** Come, Lord Jesus.

## Prayer of the Day

**A** Let us Pray...Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.  
**C** By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.*

📖 A reading from **Isaiah**:

<sup>1</sup>O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—  
<sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
<sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
<sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
<sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.  
But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
<sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
<sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
<sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity forever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19




**Refrain**



<sup>1</sup>Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on the cherubim.

<sup>2</sup>**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and | come to help us.**


<sup>3</sup>Restore | us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

<sup>4</sup>**O LORD| God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume when your | people pray? **


<sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the | bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.

<sup>6</sup>**You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.**

<sup>7</sup>Restore us, O | God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

<sup>17</sup>**Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong | for yourself. **

<sup>18</sup>And so will we never turn a- | way from you;  
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.

<sup>19</sup>**Restore us, O LORD| God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved. **

## Second Reading

## 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

▣ A reading from **1 Corinthians**:

<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—<sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—<sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

▣ The word of the Lord.

▣ **Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Acclamation

## *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* Stanza 1 & 2

ELW 257

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first two staves contain the first two lines of the hymn. The third staff is labeled 'Refrain' and contains the third line. The fourth staff contains the final line of the hymn. The lyrics are: 1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive; 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things; Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here far and nigh; in strength and beau - ty come and stay; un - til the Son of God ap - pear. teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

## Gospel Reading

**Mark 13:24-37**

*Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.*

▫ The Holy Gospel, according to **Mark:**

☩ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] <sup>24</sup>“In those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,

and the moon will not give its light,

<sup>25</sup>and the stars will be falling from heaven,

and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

▫ The Gospel of the Lord.

☩ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Children’s Time

*All children [including infants] and youth who desire to come forward for the children’s sermon are welcomed and encouraged to do so. Parents/caregivers are welcome to accompany their child during the children’s message. There may be a time of dance and celebration that is offered.*

## Message

*Silence for reflection*

*Arise in body or in spirit to sing the hymn.*

**Song of the Day**

*All Earth is Hopeful*

**WOV 629**

*You may sit or kneel for prayer.*

**Prayers**

*We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, **We lift our hearts to you.** The assembly prays, **Come, Lord Jesus.***

- Ⓐ With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

*A brief silence.*

- Ⓐ Call your church into holy fellowship as we await the restoration of all things. Reenergize your faithful people to live with hope and compassion, especially those who serve as missionaries near and far. Center us on your promise to come among us and make all things new. *We lift up Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrissy and David; our synod companion churches Lutheran Church of the Savior, Kalamazoo; Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witness, Hastings; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* We lift our hearts to you.

☞ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

- Ⓐ All creation signals your presence, O God: the vastness of the cosmos, the turn of the seasons, and living things that both rest and flourish. Rekindle our commitment to care for the earth. We lift our hearts to you.

☞ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

- Ⓐ Let the nations tremble at your holy presence, that justice and liberation prevail in all corners of the earth. Restore peace to nations in conflict, teach righteousness to corrupt leaders and systems, and bring stability to areas facing uncertain futures. Be with those who safeguard the world, including *Parker Stancil (Freedlund), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), Cynthia Rudesill (Hansen), Joel Taggart (Varkula), Julia Ehredt (Schreiner, Halstead), and Seth Domke (Domke).* We lift our hearts to you.

☞ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

- Ⓐ Enrich the spirits of all who feel hopeless, fearful, or despairing. Stay close to those who await healing or relief *especially, Pastor Michael Anton, Veronica Baarson, Bob Bolton, Diana Brown, Doug Brown, the family of Audrey Burdick, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Andy and Kristen Cove, Jet Cover, Pat DePew, Lisa Golnek, Lorraine Handsbarger, Mary Hobart, Norma Ludlow, Martha Misak, Virginia Moomey, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Corrina Palmer, Rick Palmer, Annette Poholski, Kathy Politis, Patty Renne, Jennifer Rohr, Mike Shoemaker, Jeanette Ulrich, and Al Throop.* We lift our hearts to you.

☞ **Come, Lord Jesus.**



**A** Be with those who keep awake at night: nurses working overnight shifts, caregivers of newborns and aging adults, stargazers, those who are anxious, or those who are traveling. Reveal to all that the dark can be a place of calm and comfort filled with your presence.

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

**A** You have sent out your angels and gathered your faithful people from every time and place, calling them into one fellowship of saints. Bless the witness of those who dwell in your eternal presence. We lift our hearts to you.

**G** **Come, Lord Jesus.**

**P** Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**G** **Amen.**

*Arise in body or spirit.*

**Offertory Song**

*He Came Down*

**ELW 253**



1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;  
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;  
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;  
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.  
he came down that we may have peace;  
he came down that we may have joy;

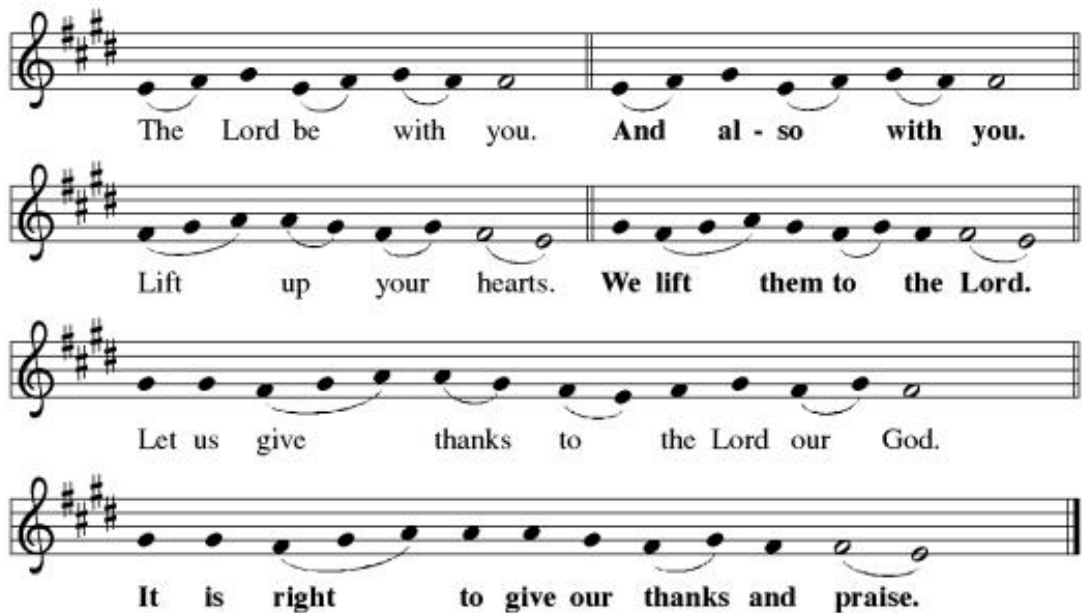
## Offering Prayer

- A** Let us pray . . . Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season.
- G** **Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.**

## Sharing the Peace of God

- P** The peace of Christ be with you.
- G** **And also with you.**  
*(We share the peace of Christ with one another.)*

## Great Thanksgiving



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

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, 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'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.

### Table 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

- ☐ Gathered by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:
- ☑ **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.**

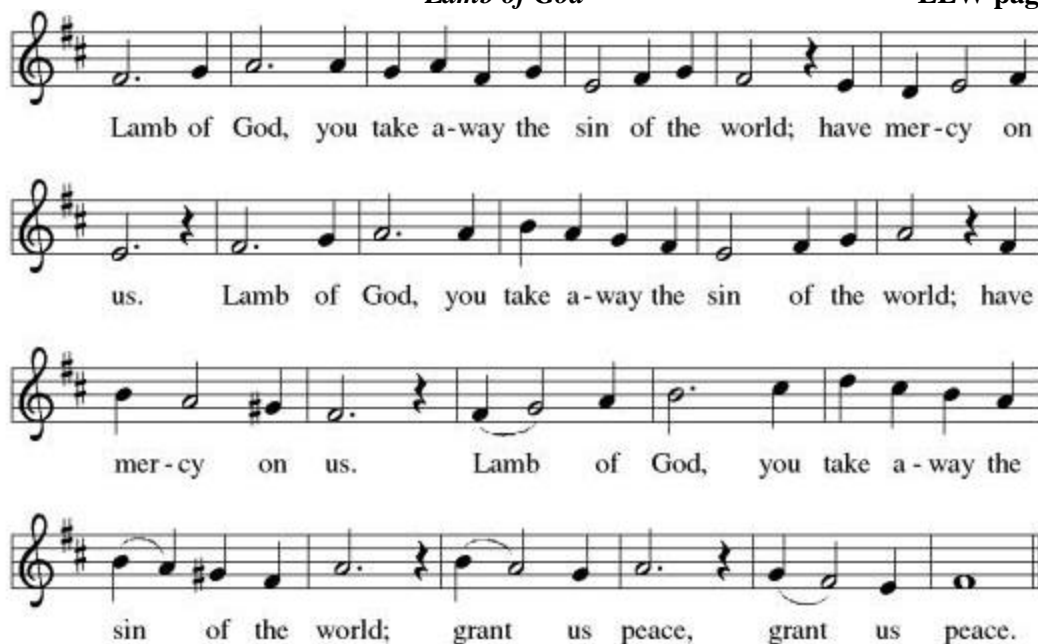
## Invitation to Communion

- ☐ Come to the table of grace.
- ☑ **Thanks be to God.**

*Sit.*

### *Lamb of God*

ELW page 154



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, grant us peace.

## Communion Songs

Bell Choir (10:45)

*The Christmas Star*

by John C. Dare

*What Feast of Love*  
*I Received the Living God*

WOV 701  
WOV 700

## 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.**

## Mission Minutes

*Arise in body or spirit*

## Blessing

- Ⓐ The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✚ now and forever.  
☞ **Amen.**

## Sending Song

*Soon and Very Soon*

**WOV 744**

## Sending

- Ⓐ Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.  
☞ **Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

## **Winds of Grace**

Have you ever experienced a powerful storm in which the sky grew increasingly dark and winds swirled the clouds or broke branches off trees? Our modern technology often allows us to prepare for storms like blizzards and hurricanes that develop slowly as they move toward us. Perhaps you've taken part in hastily boarding up windows, securing pets or farm animals, and gathering groceries and supplies in anticipation of being shut in or without power for a time.

The coming of the Son of Man will apparently not include advance warnings like those of meteorologists and weather apps, for Jesus says, "About that day or hour no one knows." It may be more like a tornado or thunderstorm, where we see that the conditions are right but can't be sure precisely when or where it will materialize. Our preparations for that type of storm are different, primarily focused on where and how we'll take shelter should lightning or a funnel cloud be spotted nearby. Many of us practiced tornado drills in school as kids; such practices, as well as storm watches and warnings, keep us aware of how to respond and alert about when to do so.

It is easy to hear Jesus' words and sound an alert for the end times. We might even spend time and energy worrying about the end and what it means for us. At the same time, the urgency of this proclamation is focused on the present, on what we can do here and now to be open to God's rule in our lives. This is a different kind of preparation, focused on loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

In the sacraments of baptism and communion we are invited into regular practices of anticipating the presence of God with us. In Advent we bring a particular focus to this expectation. We are invited to think about the ways the winds of grace gather us in, and then send us out for the sake of the world.

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

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### **8:00 am**

**Assisting Minister – Randy Teegardin**  
**Lector – Mark Anton**  
**Cantor – Cindy Olson**  
**Musician – Cindy Olson**  
**Pastor – Ken Scheck II**

### **10:45 am**

**Assisting Minister – Traci Wales**  
**Lector – Gwen Hansen**  
**Cantor – Vickey Argo**  
**Musician – Cindy Olson**  
**Pastor – Ken Scheck II**  
**Fellowship – Diane Neeb**

**God's Creation 2023 Calendars.** Available for \$5.00 each. There are only 7 calendars left. We thank the Outreach Committee for making these available. They make excellent gifts, as each calendar has the word of God and several pictures of God's beautiful world.

**The Advent devotional THE LIGHT OF GRACE** is available on the table in the Gathering Area. Compliments of the Outreach Committee.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE IS AT 7:00 PM this year with Prelude beginning at 6:30.** If you cannot make the Christmas Eve Service, the worship will be posted as quickly as humanly possible on Christmas Eve.

**Advent Worship.** Join us this Wednesday night at 7:15 pm in the sanctuary for **Holden Evening Prayer.** This Wednesday is the first mid-week service as we share in scripture and sing the message of salvation. There is a short time of reflection. If you are able to come earlier for a meal, please join us at 6:15. Proceeds go to Family Promise.

**Christmas Family Adoptions.** We are adopting 5 families again this year. Watch for the donation board to be posted in the Gathering Area. Take a reminder tag for one of the gifts you would like to donate for one of the children in a family. Instruction sheets will be available on the board for wrapping, identifying, and returning your gift. Plan to return your donation by **Sunday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>.** **THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY.**

**Caroling for the Homebound.** Meet at the church at 1:00pm, as we set out to spread some cheer on December 16, 2023. Carpooling is available.

**Brothers of Grace Christmas Dinner Night Out** will be on Thursday, December 14 at 6:00 p.m. This year we are celebrating at Yankee Bills on M179.

**Happy Birthday Jesus Party** will take place **NEXT SUNDAY on December 10.** We will have a meal after the 10:45 service. The main entree and salad will be provided by the Social Activities Committee. Please stop by the bulletin board today and sign up if you would like to provide a dessert. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the service and meal to follow!

**Secret Santa.** The reveal of your Secret Santa will take place on Sunday, December 10 at the Jesus Birthday party following the 10:45 Service. Please make it a point, if you cannot be there to tell your Secret Santa at another time.

**Giving Tree.** The Giving Tree in the Gathering Area is up. This year we will be gathering items of donation to the **Alpha Women's Center** and **Family Promise of Barry County.** Tags with suggested donations will be hanging on the tree for you take with you as a reminder. Please do not wrap these donations so the organizations can easily identify each donation. **Donations can be received through the end of December.**

*Christmas Eve Service 7:00 p.m.*

**Welcome to worship today! We hope you find what we have found - a loving Jesus who welcomes all. No matter your background or faith tradition, you will find that Grace Lutheran Church is a place that is full of love, care, and support. We are pleased that you are here among us to worship the ONE who finds us, even when we miss the coming of the Lord. Jesus guards us and helps us through our difficult days.**

### **Stewardship Information**

Please use this QR Code to access online giving.



Attendance: 48  
Weekly Giving: \$1050.00  
Helping Hands: \$5.00

Views: 192  
Budget Amount: \$4,366.17

**Prayer Chain** Grace has an activated prayer chain. If you want to be a part of the prayer chain, or have a request for prayer, please text or call Patti Comp at 248.408.5613.

**Book Study** entitled Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist. The next study session is December 17.

**Adult Forum** Join us this week, as we continue our study of Galatians. We meet in the Gathering Area Sundays at 9:30 am.

**The nursery is available weekly during the 10:45 worship service.** Aurora Collins is the Nursery Attendant. She would love to have some little ones visit her. Please spread the word that Grace provides childcare during this worship service.



Hand2Hand Program provides food over the weekend to students at Hastings schools. We are collecting donations of Yoo-Hoo Chocolate Milk, pudding cups, Slim Jims, granola bars, individual size instant oatmeal, ramen noodles, and ready-to-eat mac and cheese. In addition, December items are chicken noodle soup, saltine crackers, individual apple sauce cups, and individual snacks. **The deadline for this month is December 31st.**

**Women of Faith** meet Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. All ladies are welcome.

**Fourth Sunday of Advent will have a combined morning service at 10 am. on December 24<sup>th</sup>.**

**Christmas at Clearstream** On Thursday, December 14 you are invited to join the handbell choir as they bring cheer to the residents of Clearstream. Meet at Grace at 4:00 to walk across the street to ring and sing from 4:14-4:45. There will be pizza, cookies, and snacks back at Grace following the fun. Please let Kim Domke know by December 10 if you plan to join at 269.908.0024.