

Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor Ken Scheck II
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music
January 28, 2024

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

January 28, 2024

The season of Epiphany has begun and marks the revelation of the baby Jesus as the Son of God, and continues to reveal Jesus to the world during these days. The season of Epiphany celebrates the spread of the Good News from its source in the Jewish community to all nations on earth. The color is green, for growth, as Scripture texts explore the mission of the church in the world. Today's color is white reminding us of God's cleansing power for each and every one of us.

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Gathering Music

Welcome/Worship Instructions

Arise in body or spirit.

Gathering Song

Faith Begins by Letting Go

ACS 1004



- 1 Faith be - gins by let - ting go, giv - ing up what had seemed sure,
- 2 Faith en - dures by hold - ing on, keep - ing mem - 'ry's roots a - live
- 3 Faith ma - tures by reach - ing out, stretch - ing minds, en - larg - ing hearts,



tak - ing risks and press - ing on, though the way feels less se - cure:
so that hope may bear its fruit; prom - ise - fed, our souls will thrive,
shar - ing strug - gles, liv - ing prayer, bind - ing up the bro - ken parts;



pil - grim - age both right and odd, trust - ing all our life to God.
not through mer - it we pos - sess but by God's great faith - ful - ness.
till we find the com - mon - place ripe with wit - ness to God's grace.

Greeting

P The light of God given, experienced and shared be with you all.

C And also with you.

A The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

P Those who dwell in the land of deep darkness – on them light shined.

C We have seen Christ's light, the light from God is Jesus.

A Jesus said, "I am the light of the world..."

C Those who follow me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, creator of darkness and light, word of truth, and wind sweeping over the waters.

C Amen.

Hymn of Praise

When a Star is Shining

ACS 915



1 When a star is shin-ing o - ver east - ern hills,
2 Where the world is wait-ing for an un - known day,
3 Lead us on, O Day-star, in the qui - et night;



when the air is si - lent, and the clam - or stills,
where a voice for - got - ten cries, "Pre - pare the way!"
guide us through the shad-ow with your gen - tle light;



when the night is wait-ing, and the old hopes rise,
Where an earth - ly pow-er makes the heart turn cold,
show us in a man-ger our re - demp-tion's sign;



then the time has rip - ened and the heart grows wise.
there the gifts are of - fered— in - cense, myrrh, and gold.
bring us to a morn-ing where the prom - ise shines.

Refrain →



Prayer of the Day

- Ⓐ Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior.
- ☒ **Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

First Reading

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.

📖 A reading from **Deuteronomy**:

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

📖 The Word of the Lord.

☒ **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 111



Refrain



The fear of the LORD is the be - gin - ning of wis - dom.

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with ¹my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the ¹congregation.

²**Great are your ¹works, O LORD,
pondered by all who de- ¹light in them.**


³Majesty and splendor ¹mark your deeds,
and your righteousness en- ¹dures forever.

⁴**You cause your wonders to ¹be remembered;
you are gracious and full ¹of compassion.** 

⁵You give food to ¹those who fear you,
remembering forev- ¹er your covenant.

⁶**You have shown your people the power ¹of your works
in giving them the lands ¹of the nations.**

⁷The works of your hands are faithful- ¹ness and justice;
all of your pre- ¹cepts are sure.

⁸**They stand fast forev- ¹er and ever,
because they are done in ¹truth and equity.** 

⁹You sent redemption to your people and commanded your cove- ¹nant forever;
holy and awesome ¹is your name.

¹⁰**The fear of the LORD is the begin- ¹ning of wisdom;
all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise en- ¹dures forever.** 

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.

📖 A reading from 1 Corinthians:

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸“Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

📖 The Word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

What are you look - ing for? Come,

see, come and see. What are you

look - ing for? Come and see. Come and see.

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:21-28

Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.

☞ The Holy Gospel, according to **Mark**.

☞ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught.²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice,

came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

☐ 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

There is a Balm in Gilead

ELW 614

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, Reveal your love, O Lord.***

☐ As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God’s blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

☐ Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. We lift up *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and David; our synod companion churches Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lansing; Most Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Middleville; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* We lift our hearts to you.

☑ **Reveal your love, O Lord.**

☐ Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. We lift our hearts to you.

☑ **Reveal your love, O Lord.**

Ⓐ Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. 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.

☞ **Reveal your love, O Lord.**

Ⓐ Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer *especially, Pastor Michael Anton, Veronica Baarson, Bob Bolton, Diana Brown, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Pat DePew, Lisa Golnek, The Family of Charlene Hall, Lorraine Handsbarger, Jamie Heise (pregnancy), Virginia Henion, Andy Lamb, Bill Miller and family, Martha Misak, Virginia Moomey, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Corrina Palmer, Shirley Peterson, Annette Poholski, Jennifer Rohr, Mike Shoemaker, Jeanette Ulrich, Al Throop, and Brenda Watson*. We lift our hearts to you.

☞ **Reveal your love, O Lord.**

Ⓐ Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Ⓐ Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives. We trust that all who have died rest in your loving care. We lift our hearts to you.

☞ **Reveal your love, O Lord.**

☞ Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

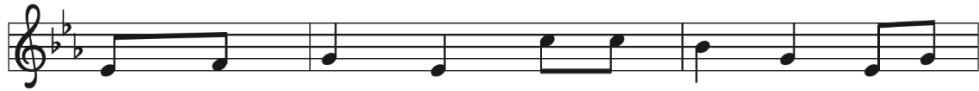
☞ **Amen.**

Arise in body or spirit.

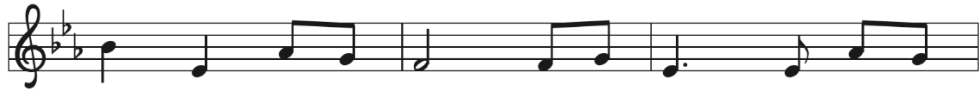
Offertory Song

Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken

ACS 966



1 Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken by the
2 Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken in a
3 Loaves are bro - ken, words are spo - ken, as in
4 By the loaves you break and give us, send us



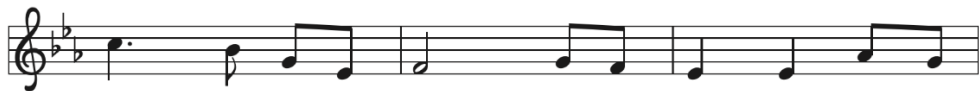
Gal - i - le - an shore. Je - sus, Bread of life from
qui - et room one night. In the bread and wine you
faith we gath - er here. Je - sus speaks a - cross the
in your name to share bread for which the mil - lions



heav - en, was their food for - ev - er - more.
gave them, Christ, you came as Light from Light.
a - ges: "I am with you; do not fear!"
hun - ger, words that tell your love and care.



By your bod - y bro - ken for us, by your



wine of life out - poured, Je - sus, feed a - gain your



peo - ple. Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.

Offering Prayer

- Ⓐ Let us pray . . . Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you.
- Ⓑ In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

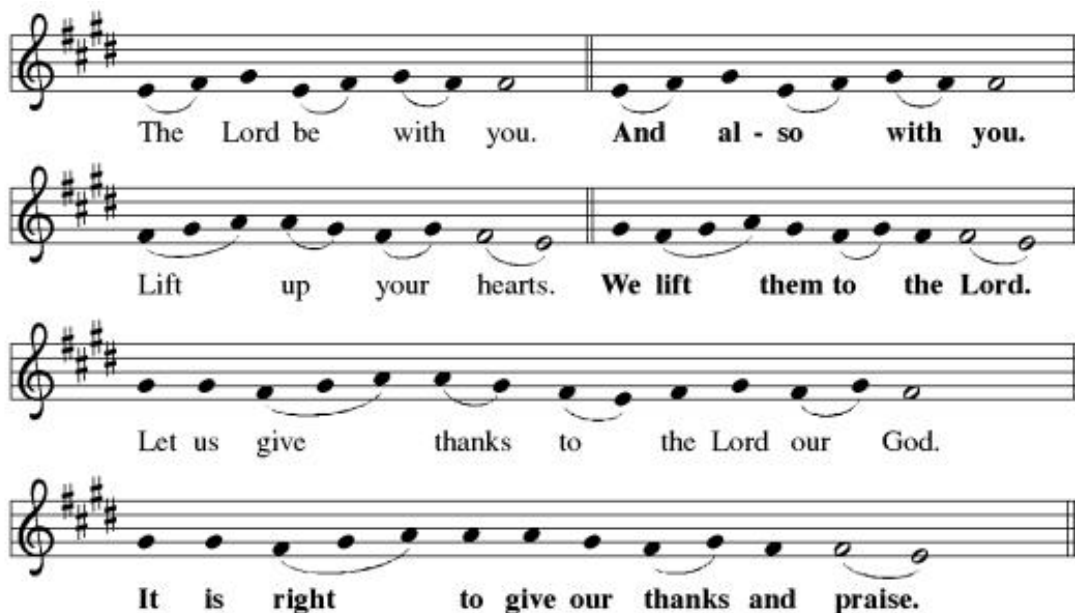
Sharing the Peace of God

☐ The peace of Christ be with you.

☑ **And also with you.**

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

Great Thanksgiving



☐ 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. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. 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, God of pow - er, God of might;

Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of your name.

Sing ho - san - na in the high-est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;

Bles-sed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

Table Prayer

- ☞ Almighty Lord, we praise your shining light, your glowing grace.
 - ☞ **From before the earth's foundation, you loved us and promised us life forever. Within the earth's deep sadness, we laud your great and glorious might. Despite our tears and sinning, we sing of the gladness of your mercy.**
 - ☞ 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.**
 - ☞ We call for your Spirit. Refresh our souls with this heavenly food, the body and blood of your Son. Nourish us as branches of your tree and enlighten us with your undying flame. We sing out to the Father, we ring out to the Son, we exult in the Spirit.
 - ☞ **Be for us our purest pleasure, our victorious crown, our never-ending love. 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

- ☞ At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see.
- ☞ **Thanks be to God.**

Sit.

Communion Songs

<i>Healer of Our Every Ill</i>	ELW 612
<i>Goodness is Stronger than Evil</i>	ELW 721

Prayer after Communion

- ☞ Giver of every gift,
- ☞ **Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body . Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever. Amen.**

Mission Minutes

Arise in body or spirit

Blessing

- ☞ God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you ✝ bless you and remain with you always.
- ☞ **Amen.**

Sending Song

<i>Christ, Be Our Light</i>	ELW 715
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Sending

- ☞ Go in peace. You are God's beloved.
- ☞ **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Teaching in Words and Actions

Jesus' teaching in the synagogue surprises, shakes, and even shocks the people of Capernaum who have gathered for the weekly celebration of the sabbath. His proclamation is different from what they are accustomed to hearing. Mark doesn't tell us *what* Jesus taught this particular day, but all the gospel writers describe his message as consistently one of compassion, peace, hope, and love. Clearly, listeners heard something they found surprising in Jesus' words.

In addition, Jesus' teaching goes *beyond* words; he lives out his message in transforming and liberating actions, as we see in his healing of the man with an unclean spirit. The people sense an authority in Jesus only found in one whose words and deeds match—one who moves beyond theory to practice. It's like learning from a physician who regularly practices medicine, a theologian who pastors a parish, a coach who plays the sport personally. In the synagogue, when Jesus unexpectedly practices what he has been preaching, it's so new to his audience that they find it frightening and life-giving all at once.

At first, the healing miracle Jesus performs in today's reading may seem distant from the preoccupations of our contemporary society. This kind of exorcism may be uncommon for us in mainline Christian churches, but we know well that various troubles have a grip on our existence and our being. On the one hand, we experience our own "unclean spirits" such as despair, jealousy, hatred, or guilt. On the other hand, we regularly encounter the "unclean spirits" of our society: intolerance, selfishness, indifference, materialism, or contempt. But even in the moments when we are divided, disoriented, and destabilized, Jesus speaks surprising, wondrous words that challenge and heal us, so we can be restored to the life God intends us to enjoy and share with others.

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8:00 am

Assisting Minister – Mark Anton

Lector – Dave Neeb

Cantor – Cindy Olson

Musician – Cindy Olson

Pastor – Ken Scheck II

10:45 am

Assisting Minister – Vickey Argo

Lector – Jack Vos

Cantor – Mary Kuhlman

Musician – Cindy Olson

Pastor – Ken Scheck II

Fellowship – Paul Kuhlman

Giving Numbers Just a reminder that some people will be keeping their current numbers, but many will get new numbers for 2024 so it will be helpful to write your name on the outside of your envelope during the month of JANUARY in case there are changes we need to make. If you need to know your giving number, they are listed on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area. Thank you.

Book Study entitled Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist. The next study session is **TODAY** at 9:30

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.

Congregational Care meeting is tomorrow **Monday, January 29 at 3:00 p.m.**

Ash Wednesday February 14, 2024, at 7:15 p.m. meal provided before worship starting at 6:15 p.m.

Look for the Lenten Devotional which is available in the Gathering Area. This year the title is *Lifted Up in Love* by Henri J.M. Nouwen.

Meals for Lent Traditionally Grace Lutheran Church has shared a meal on Wednesdays of Lent followed by worship. If you are interested in providing a meal, please let Pastor Ken or Brenda know. Each of these meals begin at 6:15 followed by worship at 7:15 pm. Join us on Wednesdays in February 14, 21, 28, March 6, 13, and 20.

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 reveals God's presence in our lives. It is by God's grace that we are made a child of God, who is blessed by God's rich grace, mercy, and peace.

Stewardship Information

Please use this QR
Code to access
online giving.



Attendance: 34
Weekly Giving: \$9,615.29
Noisy Offering: \$29.11

Views: 326
Budget Amount: \$4,366.17
Helping Hands: \$50.92

Grace Projects As you know, we have fully funded a new HVAC system for the Fellowship Hall. The Congregation Council has voted to have a fundraiser to replenish the funds we raised. Much like the roof deductible, we are seeking to make sure we have funds for any future property needs. The cost of the HVAC was \$25,252. We appreciate any contributions toward this future need of caring for our building.

Women of Faith meet Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. All ladies are welcome. A reminder that if Hastings Schools are closed due to inclement weather we will not meet. Thank you.

Adult Forum please join us next Sunday at 9:30 as we continue our study of Galatians.

Please Pray for the Community Ministry of Diversity The *Roundtable Companions for Racial Equity* are a local group of people dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion in our community. Their fundamental belief is Every individual, regardless of their background, deserves to be valued, respected and included. In the month of February, they are hosting a series of events at the Hastings Library called ***Lift Every Voice***. These events will offer education and dialogue focused on diversity issues and will involve panel discussions, film, music and art. Please see the January GraceGram for additional information.



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. For January, they are in additional need of Snack Pack pudding cups. **The deadline for January has been extended to February 4.** Thank you for your continued support of this valuable program.