

Grace Lutheran Church

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Hastings MI 49058



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Pastor Ken Scheck II
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music
August 25, 2024

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 25, 2024

Pentecost is a season for growing represented by the color green. We celebrate the founding of the church and the fruits of the Spirit, and the continued growth given by our gracious God.

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Welcome

Gathering Music

Arise in body or Spirit

Opening Sentences

- P** O Lord, open our lips,
G and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.
- A** Blessed God, satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
G that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
- P** Give praise to the Holy Trinity our true God,
G who gives us life, salvation, and resurrection.

Gathering Song

He Comes to Us as One Unknown

ELW 737

Greeting

The pastor and the assembly greet each other.

- P** The grace of God that extends to all nations in Christ Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
G And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

- A** Let us pray... Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal.
G Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.

📖 A reading from **Joshua**:

¹Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. ^{2a}And Joshua said to all the people, ¹⁴“Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. ¹⁵Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; ¹⁷for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; ¹⁸and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 34:15-22




Refrain



¹⁵The eyes of the Lord are up- | on the righteous,
and God's ears are open | to their cry.

**¹⁶The face of the Lord is against those | who do evil,
to erase the remembrance of them | from the earth.**


¹⁷The righteous cry, and | the Lord hears them
and delivers them from | all their troubles.

**¹⁸The Lord is near to the | brokenhearted
and saves those whose spir- | its are crushed.** 

¹⁹Many are the troubles | of the righteous,
but the Lord delivers them from | every one.

**²⁰God will keep safe | all their bones;
not one of them | shall be broken.**

²¹Evil will bring death | to the wicked
and those who hate the righteous | will be punished.

**²²O Lord, you redeem the life | of your servants,
and those who put their trust in you will | not be punished.** 

Second Reading

Ephesians 6:10-20

Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.

📖 A reading from **Ephesians**:

¹⁰Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 **Thanks be to God.**

Please arise in body or spirit.



☒ Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel Reading

John 6:56-69

The “hard saying” that offends Jesus’ disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: “To whom shall we go?”

☐ The Holy Gospel according to **John**.

☒ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said,] ⁵⁶“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

⁶⁰When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?”

⁶¹But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? ⁶²Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. ⁶⁵And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

⁶⁶Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” ⁶⁸Simon answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☒ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

Children's Message

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

Please arise in body or spirit.

Song of the Day

Eat this Bread, Drink this Cup

ELW 492

Please be seated.

Prayers

*We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, **In your mercy.** The assembly prays, **Receive our prayer.***

- A** Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence

- A** Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness. We lift up *Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and David, our synod companion Spruce Lutheran Church; Church of Christ, Hastings; Church of the Nazarene, Nashville; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* In your mercy.

C **Receive our prayer.**

- A** Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates. In your mercy.

C **Receive our prayer.**

- A** God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations. 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), Seth Domke (Domke), and Nathen Schick (Markwart).* In your mercy.

C **Receive our prayer.**

A God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our **hearts** especially Pastor Michael Anton, Mark Arens, Dennis Baarson, Veronica Baarson, Bob Bolton, Frank Bolton, Veronica Brown, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Eric Crux, Pat DePew, Kim Domke, Bonnie Ehredt, Magdalena Garcia, Ruby Gibbons (proud parents, Shayna and James Gibbons), Opal Gillons, Lisa Golnek, Caitlyn Habben (pregnancy), Ruth Hill, Joy Jenks, John Kleinbrink, Ed Markwart, Martha Mizak, Dawn McElgunn, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Shirley Peterson, Kathy Politis, Patty Renne, Jennifer Rohr, Cynthia Rudesill (pregnancy), Nick Seifert, Mike Shoemaker, Ron Smith, John Surratt, Deb Talsma, Al Throop, Russ Trongo, George Ulrich Jr., Jeanette Ulrich, Gary Wagner and Brenda Watson. In your mercy.

G **Receive our prayer.**

A God of new life, protect students and teachers for a new school year. Bring an end to school shootings and cycles of violence. Move us to do all that is necessary to ensure a safe future for our children. In your mercy.

G **Receive our prayer.**

Here other intersessions may be offered.

A God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys on earth. Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end. In your mercy.

G **Receive our prayer.**

P We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping.

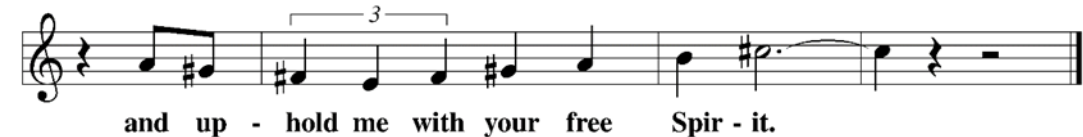
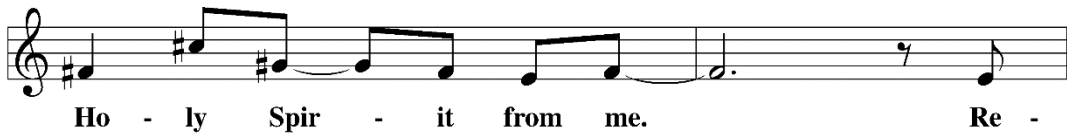
G **Amen.**

Please arise in body or spirit.

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.)*



Offering Prayer

- Ⓐ Let us pray . . . Gracious God, you bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor.
- ☑ **Accept the first fruits of time and toil, field and orchard we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen**

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 our thanks and praise.**

☐ 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:

Holy, Holy, Holy

TFF page 56



☑ **Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,**



heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -



san-na. Ho-san - na. 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, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

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 Christ's love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end. 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

P Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

C Thanks be to God!

Lamb of God

TFF page 39



C Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us.



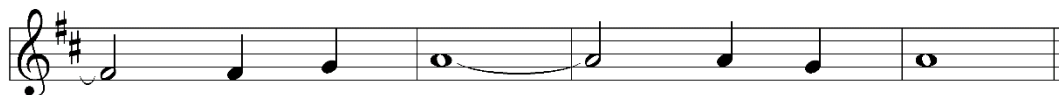
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer-cy on us, 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: *Give Thanks*
Blessed Assurance

W&P 41
ELW 638

Prayer after Communion

A Let us pray . . . We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life.

C In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mission Minutes

Arise in body or spirit

Blessing

☩ The holy Three, the holy One increase your hope, strengthen your faith, deepen your love, and
✠ grant you peace.

☩ Amen.

Sending Song

Now Thank We All Our God

ELW 840

Sending

☩ Go in peace. Christ is sending you.

☩ Thanks be to God.

Postlude

8:00 am

Assisting Minister – Mark Anton

Lector – Tim Schoessel

Musician – Cindy Olson

Cantor – Cindy Olson

Pastor – Ken Scheck

10:45 am

Assisting Minister – Vickey Argo

Lector – Jack Vos

Musician – Cindy Olson

Cantor – Anna Scheck

Pastor – Ken Scheck

Fellowship – Paul Kuhlman

Game and Snack Night Social Activities is hosting a game and snack night on Saturday, September 21st from 6:00 pm till 8:30 pm. Please sign up on the bulletin board. This time we will forgo pizza and instead you are welcome to bring a snack to share with the group. Hope to see you there!

Adopt-A-Highway Volunteers gather 9 am at the church on September 14. Rain date is the 21st. If you have any questions, please contact Joe Longcor.

Brothers of Grace resumes on Thursday, September 12th at 6:00 p.m. We meet at the church. All men are welcome.

Barry County Cropwalk is October 13, 2024.

Questions Remain

Throughout his time on earth, Jesus taught the disciples what it means to follow him, delving deeper into difficult concepts with each step toward the cross. Jesus' thought-provoking and life-changing words challenged existing wisdom, stretching the boundaries of belief, forcing each person who heard them to reevaluate everything they thought they knew. How could they eat this bread and live forever?

Is it any easier for us to wrap our minds around Jesus' teachings? How do we open our hearts to the mystery of flesh given for us, blood shed for us, and bread come down from heaven when our culture insists that there is a simple black-and-white answer to every question? Who takes time to slow down and reflect on challenging Bible passages? Can we allow those words we do not understand to just be, to percolate and take root in the fertile soil of Christ's presence until the Spirit can coax a shoot of understanding to spring forth and grow into the light?

Too many unanswered questions weighed heavily on some of Jesus' followers. They wanted out; it was too difficult. They turned back to the safety of familiar routines and comfortable ideologies, prompting Jesus to wonder if all the disciples would abandon him. "Do you also wish to go away?" he asked the twelve (John 6:67). He asks the same question of us today whenever the circumstances of our lives challenge our faith, whenever our hearts are broken and our bodies exhausted, whenever it feels like we cannot take another step. Will we trust in Jesus' promise that his words are spirit and life? Do we believe he is the Holy One of God?

Questions remain, but the good news is that God's love is stronger than our doubts and fears, calling us back to worship, filling us with strength and giving us peace in the midst of uncertainty.

From sundaysandseasons.com.
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Grace is looking to have people share in ministry

Grace is currently looking for servants of God to share the ministry of Jesus Christ by finding a Stewardship Chair, an Outreach Chair and a “fulltime” Treasurer. We thank Chris Bush for her time as Stewardship Chair, Mike Kemper for his time as Outreach Chair and Linda Maupin as “fulltime” Treasurer. We are thankful that Randy Teegardin has stepped into the role of Treasurer, but he is away from Hastings for a good chunk of time. If you are interested in sharing ministry in any capacity, please let Tim Schoessel know.

Parish Administrator The Executive Committee voted to offer Anna Scheck an interim position as Grace Lutheran Church Parish Administrator. We are grateful that Anna is willing to step into this position. Hours will be 9 am until 1:00 pm Monday through Thursday. Welcome Anna!

Congregational Care Committee will meet on Monday, September 16 at 3:00 p.m. Please contact Sharon Varkula for more information and to sign up to be a Shepherd.

Fifth Sunday Combined Worship is being held on September 29, 2024, at 10 am. We hope that you can join us for this time of joining our community together to worship.



Welcome to worship today! We are thrilled that you are here. 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 Jesus who walks among us and gives us living bread.

Please use this QR Code to access online giving.

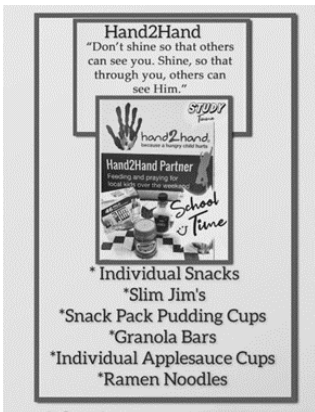


Stewardship Information

Attendance: 45 Views: 234
 Weekly Giving: \$1,033.00 Budget Amount: \$4,173.03

Grace Projects Goal \$ 25,252.00
 Received To Date -\$ 2,976.32
Total Needed \$ 22,275.68

Given this week toward Grace Projects: \$0.00



Hand2Hand It's hard to believe that it's time to start thinking about "Back to School". Hand2Hand is getting ready for the 2024-2025 school year. August donations are due by the 25th. If you have questions, please see Patti Comp. Thank you for helping needy students over the weekends.

Relay for Life is on Saturday, September 14-15, 2024, noon to noon. Bags are a \$10 donation. Make checks out to: **American Cancer Society** memo Barry RFL Place donations in RFL envelope and place in the offering plate or office. Thanks!

Calendars are available in the Gathering Area for \$5.00 each.

Worship Committee meets September 8th after the second worship service.

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.

Adult Forum please join us at 9:30 with Pastor Ken leading a study based on the book of Titus. Look forward to our next study from the book of Song of Songs, also known as the Song of Solomon.