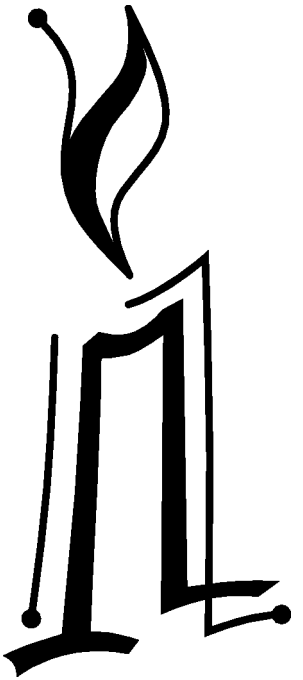
Grace Lutheran Church

239 E North St
Hastings MI 49058



Website: www.grace-hastings.org
Facebook: Grace Lutheran Church-ELCA Hastings, MI
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9:00am-1:00 pm

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

Pastor Ken Scheck II
Ms. Cindy Olson, Minister of Music
December 1, 2024

First Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024

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

Gathering Music

Arise in body or Spirit

The Celebration of Light on the Advent Wreath - Prophecy Candle

P From the one who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty God: grace, light and peace be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

A In the darkness we light a flame of hope.

C **May it dance not only upon our Advent Wreath but within each of our hearts.**

P Hope is the flower that blooms from the ground of faith.

C **With joy we celebrate the light on this Advent Candle in prayerful expectation.**

A This dancing flame sings out that the reign of God, that pure light is slowly dawning in our world.

C **Let this Advent season, now beginning, bring us a new birth of hope in the ancient promise of God.**

Advent Hymn ***Angels Singing in the Heavens*** **tune ELW 275**

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.

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 alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**
Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading **Jeremiah 33:14-16**

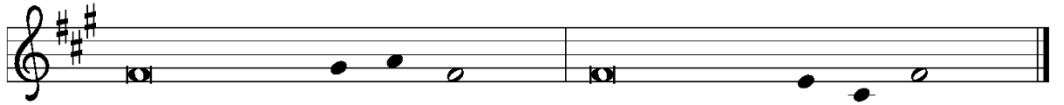
In the Old Testament, "righteousness" often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today's reading, Jerusalem's future name—"The LORD is our righteousness"—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

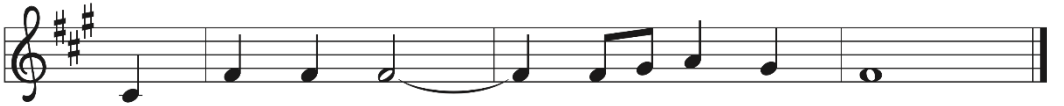
L A reading from **Jeremiah.**

14 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house
of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to
spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days
Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be
called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

L The Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 25:1-10



℟ **Refrain**

[1] To | you, O LORD,
I lift | up my soul.
[2] **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,**
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.

[3] Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.
[4] **Show me your | ways, O LORD,**
and teach | me your paths. ℟

[5] Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.
[6] **Remember, O LORD, your compas- | sion and love,**
for they are from | everlasting. ℟

[7] Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good- | ness, O LORD.
[8] **You are gracious and up- | right, O LORD;**
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.

[9] You lead the low- | ly in justice
and teach the low- | ly your way.
[10] **All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast | love and faithfulness**
to those who keep your covenant and your | testimonies. ℟

Second Reading **1 Thessalonians 3:9-13**

Upon Timothy's report from the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul is exuberant with gratitude for them. In this passage from his letter, Paul voices overflowing thanks, joy, and blessings for the people of this growing church.

L A reading from **1 Thessalonians.**

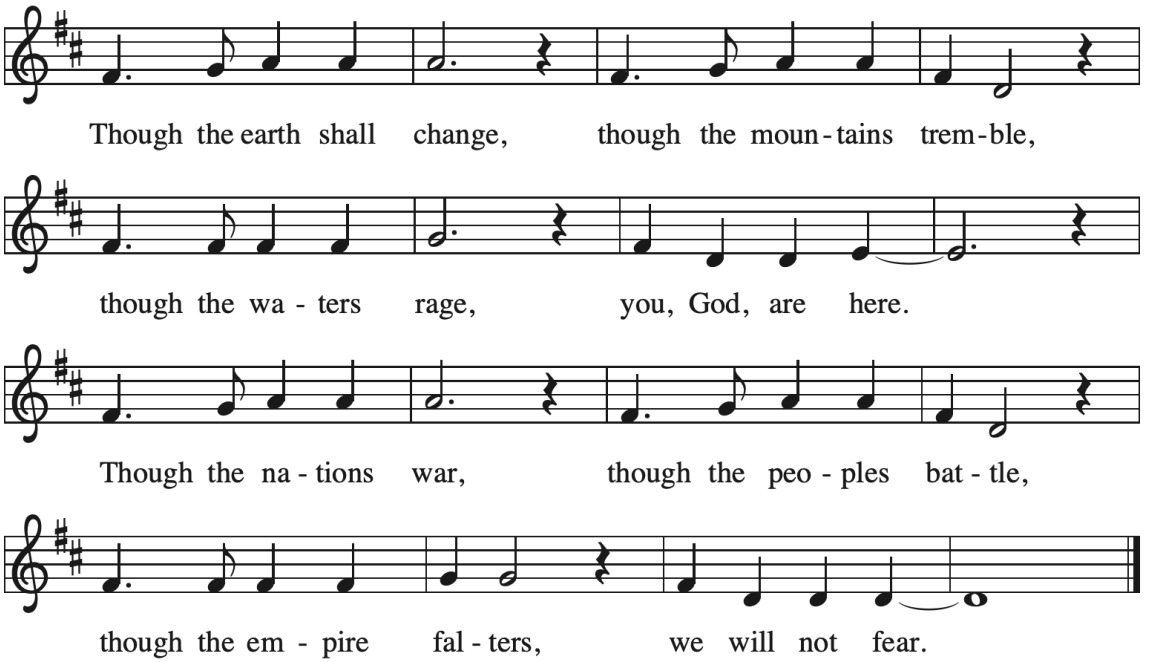
9How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because
of you? 10Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore
whatever is lacking in your faith.

11Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 12And may the
Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love
for you. 13And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our
God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

L The Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Please arise in body or spirit.

Gospel Acclamation ***Though the Earth Shall Change*** **ACS 1035**



Gospel Reading **Luke 21:25-36**

God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

℗ The Holy Gospel, according to **Luke.**
℄ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] 25"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. 26People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. 28Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

29Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; 30as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. 31So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. 33Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

34"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, 35like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. 36Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

℗ The Gospel of the Lord.
℄ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

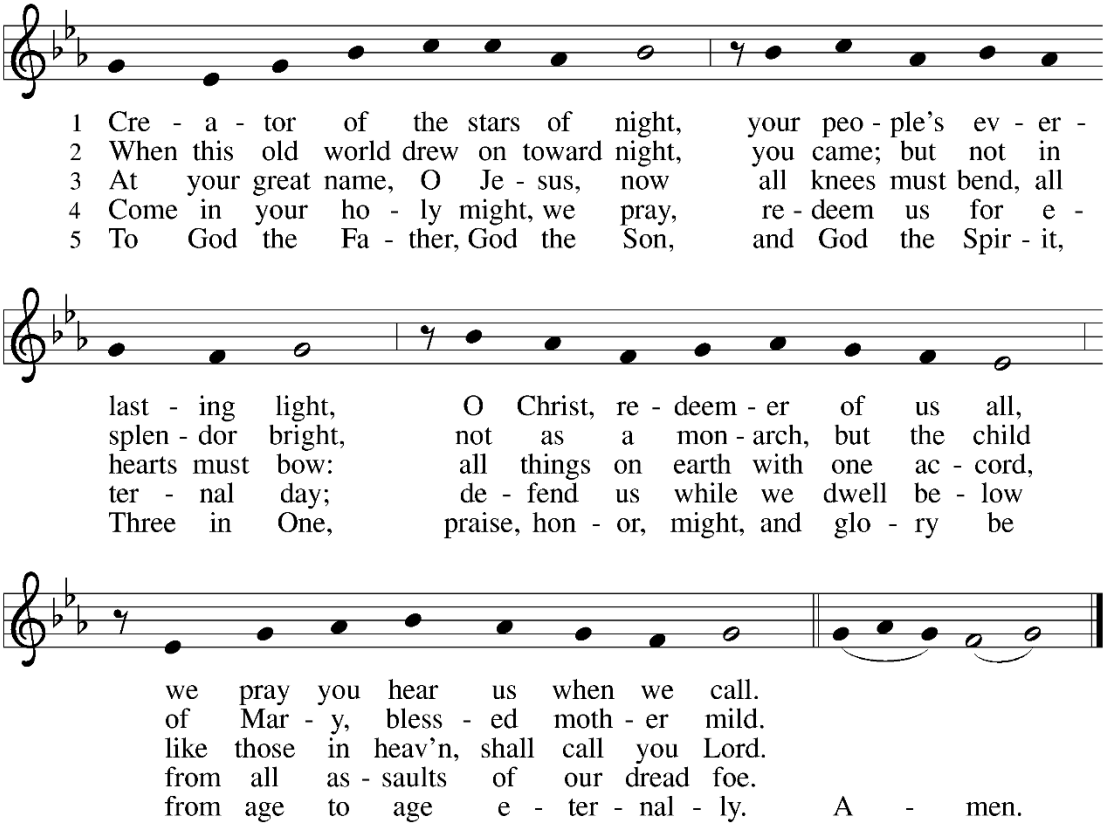
Children's Message

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 ***Creator of the Stars of Night*** **ELW 245**



Please be seated.

Prayers

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

A As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A brief silence

A God of righteousness, your people live in hopeful expectation of your coming. Fill your church with renewed passion for our shared mission, and deepen our relationships with other Christians and other faith traditions in our local community and across the world, *especially Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and David, our synod companion Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Alpena; Hastings Baptist Church; Hastings Church of the Nazarene; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A God of the cosmos, all creation shows that your presence is near. Help us sense your goodness and love in the sun and moon, in sprouting leaves and bare branches, in the roaring sea and quiet breeze. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A God of the nations, your reign extends over all principalities and powers. Give leaders and all in authority hearts for justice and peace. Encourage efforts to enact policies that benefit the common good. 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).* We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A God of change, you accompany us through life's transitions. Be near to all who are changing jobs, moving, welcoming children, or facing the loss of loved ones. Sustain those who are ill or suffering, *especially Pastor Michael Anton, Mark Arens, Bob Bolton, Frank Bolton, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Pat DePew, Kim Domke, Bonnie Ehredt, Ruby Gibbons (adoption process), Lisa Golnek, Joy Jenks, Michelle Kaufman (pregnancy), Betty Lou Leonhardt, Dana Lepien, Martha Misak, Dawn McElgunn, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Corrina Palmer, Rick Palmer, Shirley Peterson, Kathy Politis, Tammy Rodriguez, Cynthia Rudesill (pregnancy), Mike Shoemaker, Ron Smith, Al Throop, Claudia Throop, George Ulrich Jr., Jeanette Ulrich, and Brenda Watson.* In times of change, remind us of your steadfast love. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A God of community, your Spirit holds us together. Sustain our care for one another, *especially through our food baskets and Adopt-A-Family, Hand2Hand, and the food pantry.* Inspire us to seek new ways to live together and to embrace the diversity of thought and identity in our communities. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Here other intersessions may be offered.

A God of memory, we give you thanks for faithful ones who have died. Tend to our grief and sorrow with renewed trust in your promise of abundant and eternal life. We lift our hearts to you,

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

C **Amen.**

Please arise in body or spirit.

Sharing the Peace of God

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

Offering Song ***God of the Fertile Fields*** **tune ELW 759**

God of the fertile fields,
shaper of earth that yields our daily bread:
forth from your bounteous hand
come gifts your love has planned,
that all in ev'ry land
be clothed and fed.

We would be stewards true,
holding in trust from you all that you give;
help us in love to share,
teach us like you to care
for people ev'rywhere,
that all may live.

Offering Prayer

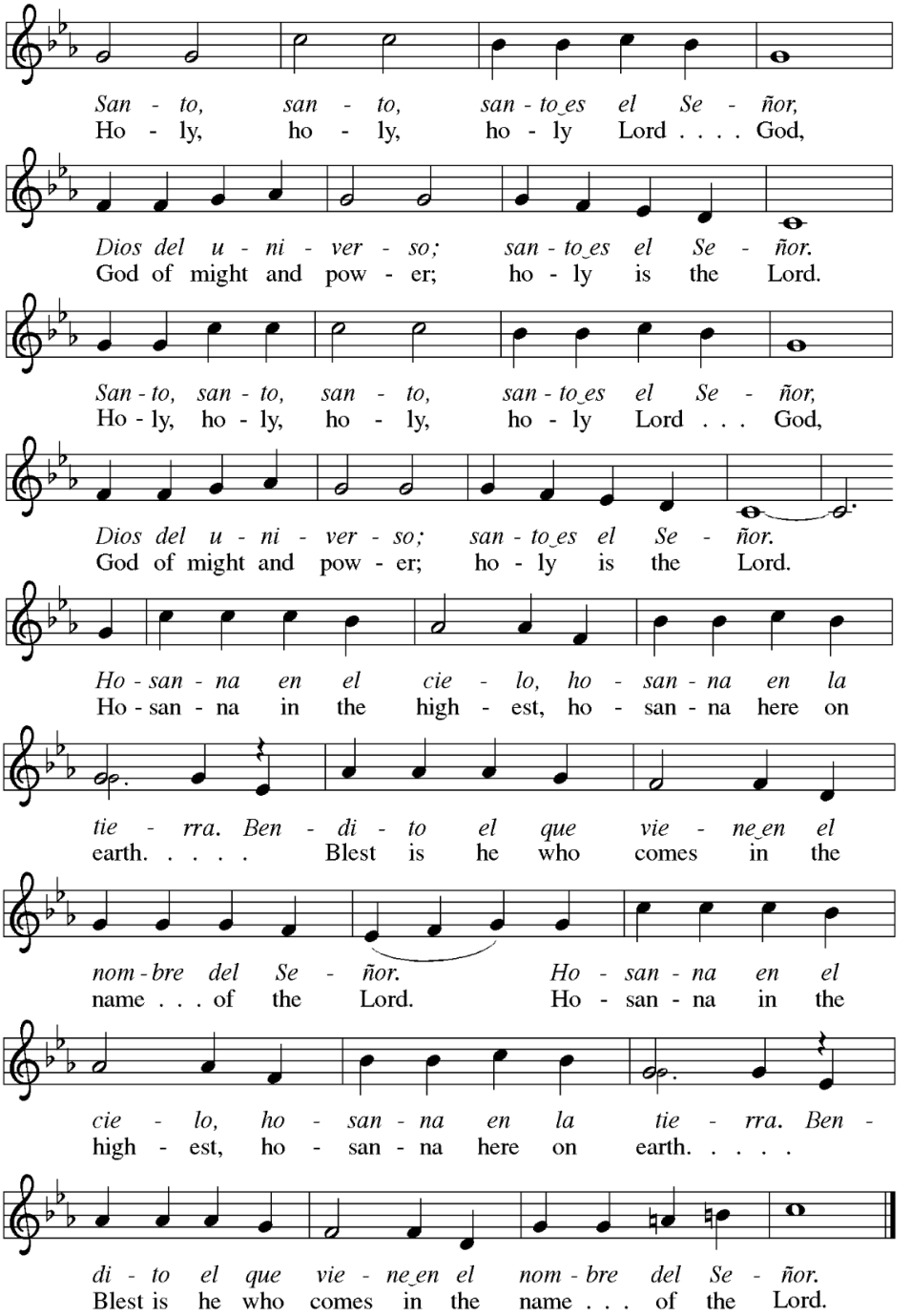
A Let us pray . . . Generous God, you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season.
C **Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. Amen**

Great Thanksgiving

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.
C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right, 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:

San - to, san - to, san - to es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . . God,
Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.
San - to, san - to, san - to, san - to es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,
Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.
Ho - san - na en el cie - lo, ho - san - na en la
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na here on
tie - rra. Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en el
earth. . . . . Blest is he who comes in the
nom - bre del Se - ñor. Ho - san - na en el
name . . . of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
cie - lo, ho - san - na en la tie - rra. Ben -
high - est, ho - san - na here on earth. . . . .
di - to el que vie - ne en el nom - bre del Se - ñor.
Blest is he who comes in the name . . . of the Lord.

℗ 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.

℗ **Amen.**

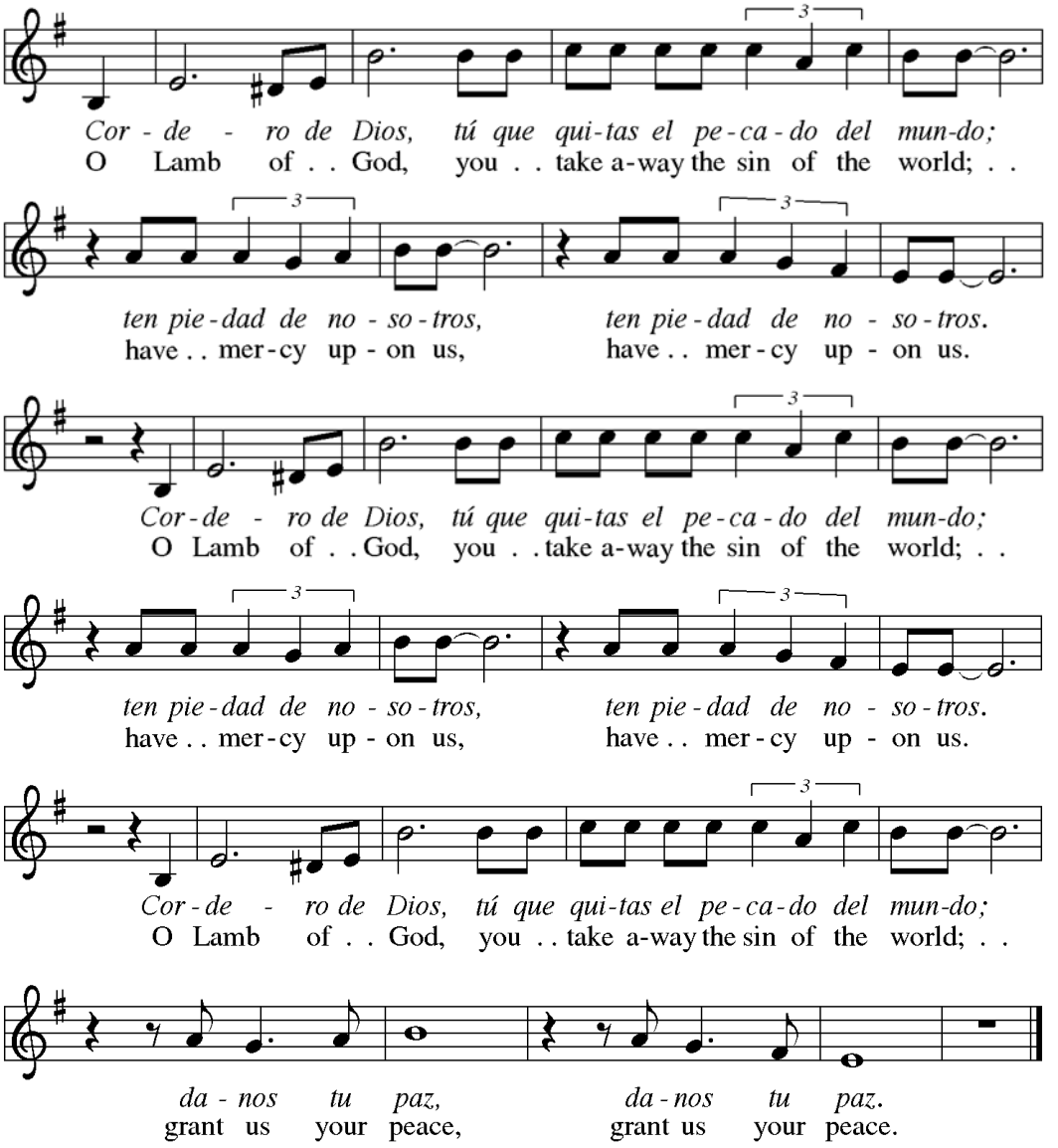
Lord's Prayer

℗ Gathered by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught:

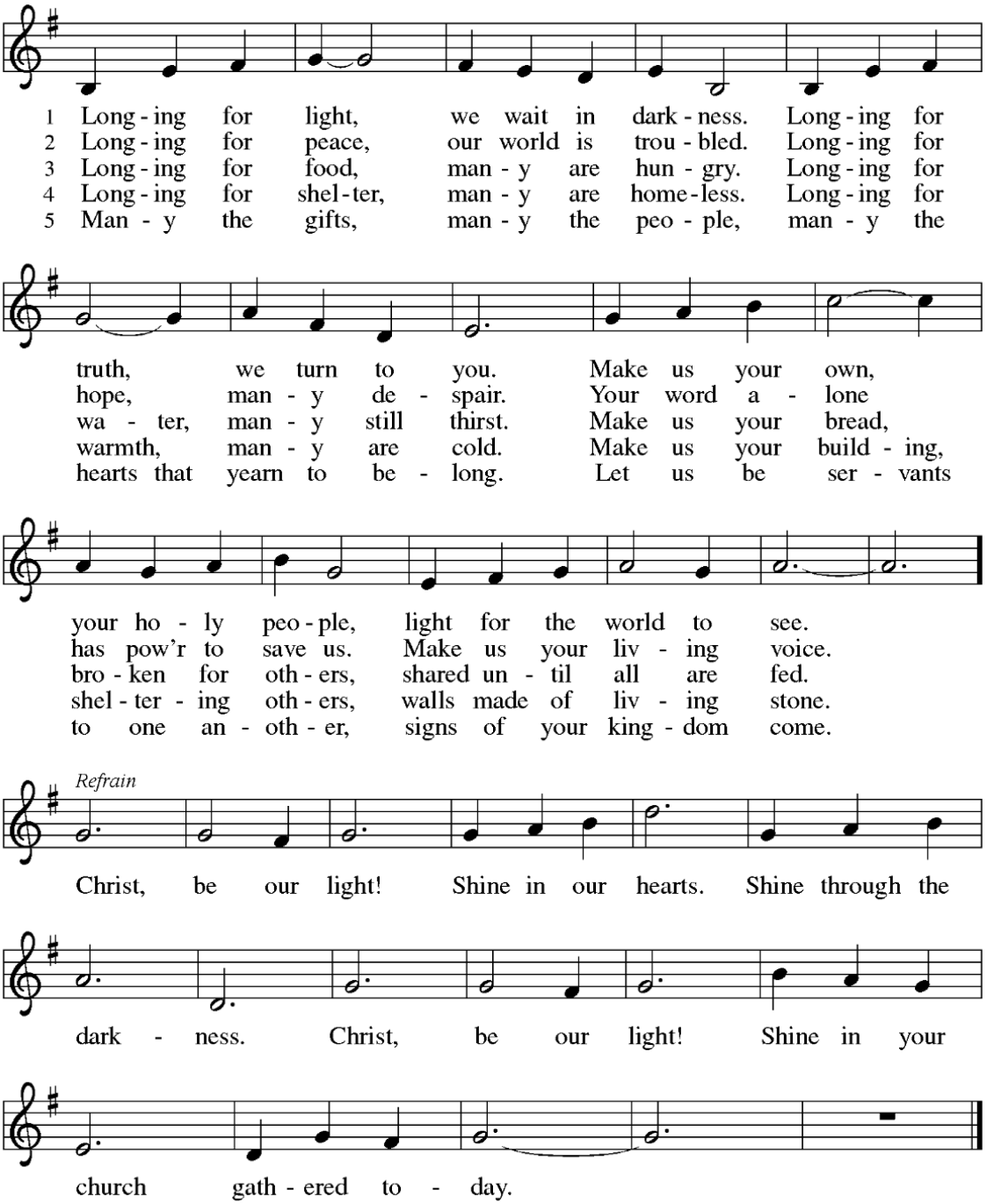
℗ **Our Father in heaven, holy be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

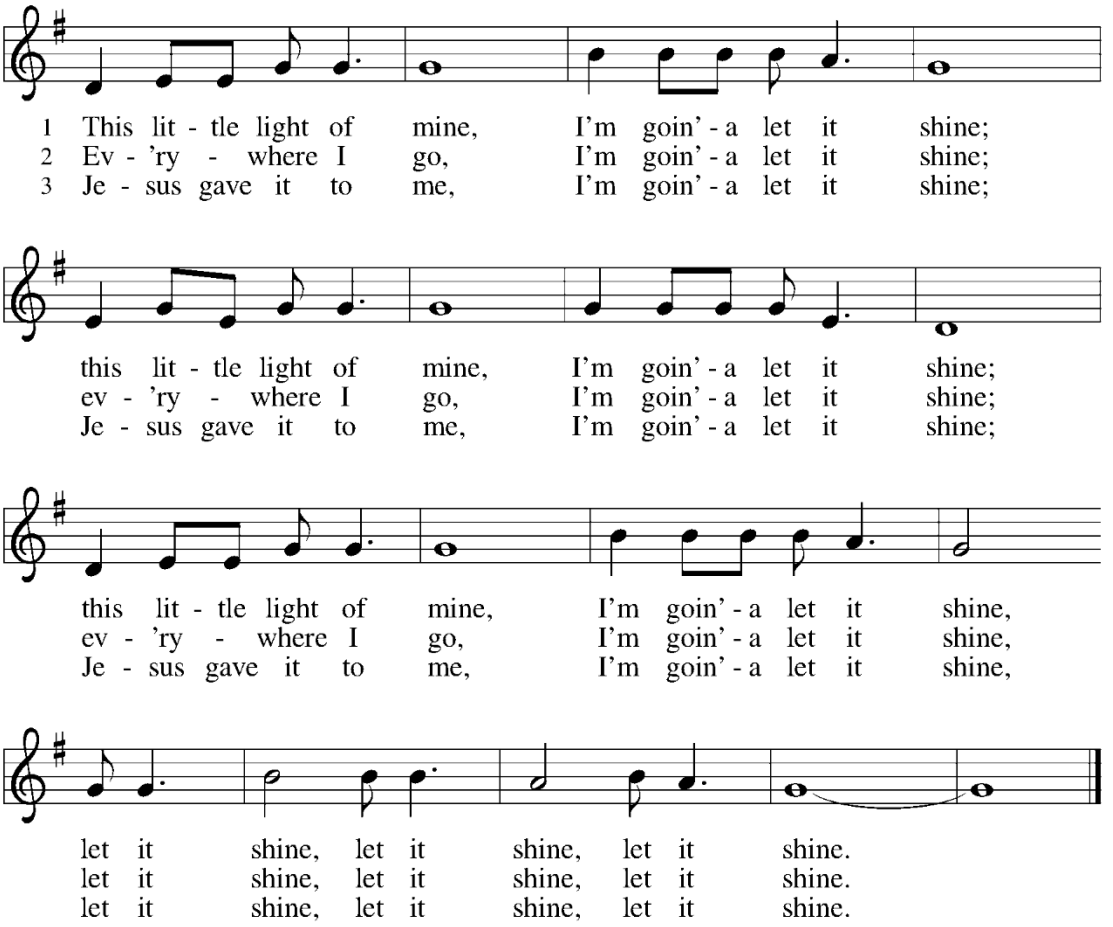
Invitation to Communion

℗ Holy food for Holy people.

℗ **Thanks be to God.**

Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .
ten pie-dad de no - so-tros, ten pie-dad de no - so-tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.
Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .
ten pie-dad de no - so-tros, ten pie-dad de no - so-tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.
Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .
da - nos tu paz, da - nos tu paz.
grant us your peace, grant us your peace.

Communion Songs: ***Christ, Be Our Light*** **ELW 715**





Prayer after Communion

℣ Let us pray . . . Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation.

℟ **Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

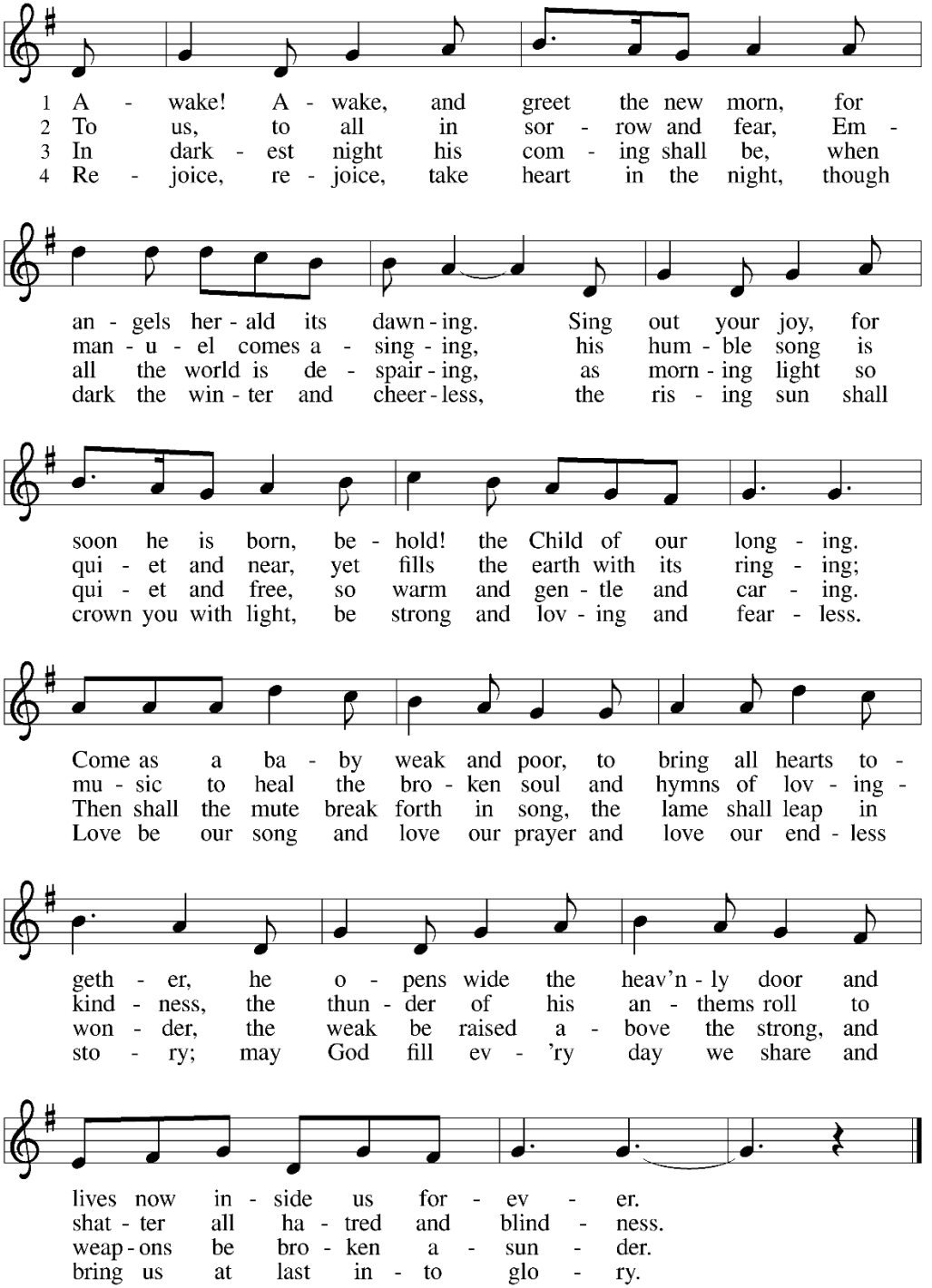
Mission Minutes

Arise in body or spirit

Blessing

℣ God's blessing be with you, ✢ Christ's peace be with you, the Spirit's outpouring be with you all, now and always.

℟ **Amen.**


1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though
an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall
soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.
Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less
geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and
lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Sending

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

Postlude

9:30 am
Assisting Minister – Traci Wales
Lector – Mark Anton
Musician – Cindy Olson
Cantor – Mary Kuhlman
Pastor – Ken Scheck
Fellowship – Diane Neeb

Real Worries, Real Hope

"Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again." With these words, often invoked at the table of holy communion, the church proclaims "the mystery of faith" (*ELW*, p. 110). At communion, we remember the good story of Jesus' death and resurrection. But there is more! We also look forward to a time yet to be.

Thoughts of the future can inspire hopefulness for the promise of good things to come. Yet looking ahead can also conjure worries about what we do not know, or a sense of foreboding about what is out of our control. It's hard not to hear in Jesus' references to nature a warning about the dramatic effects of climate change. We inhabit a world in which ordinary signs that used to reliably mark the change of seasons are shifting. So when he talks about the trees sprouting leaves as a sure sign that summer is near, the image may leave us unsettled. In recent times, trees in some places have started budding when meteorological spring and summer are still months away. How will the trees respond when frost comes again? How is the church to respond in times such as these? Will the fig tree bloom on time this year?

Jesus' parable of the fig tree comes smack-dab in the middle of some very disturbing news. Jesus offers an image of hope amid circumstances that seem all but hopeless. He talks of new growth even while what is old and familiar is passing away. Much like Jesus' parable, the season of Advent invites the church to hold together these multiple, seemingly contradictory realities. We are called to rise up with courage and hope as we anticipate Jesus coming to us, without ignoring the weight of the world or neglecting our very real concerns. Jesus gathers us to the table where we remember his death but also his resurrection, where we pray for the world and also anticipate God's redemption of all things.

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Worship will be at 9:30 am starting today, with Adult Forum following

Advent Lessons and Carols service will be at 4 pm today at Emmanuel Episcopal Church. All are welcome to start off advent with this service of expectation for the Savior.

Women of Faith continues to meet at 11:00 am on Tuesdays here at Grace. Join us December 3, 10, and 17. We are studying the women of the New Testament. All women are welcome.

Ecumenical Advent Lunches are an opportunity to connect with the greater community for a noon meal and fellowship with a Bible study or worship component. The first one is this Wednesday at Green St UMC on December 4, then Nashville UMC on December 11, and finally here at Grace on December 18.

Midweek Evening Advent Dinners will be December 4, 11, and 18 with a meal at 6 pm in the fellowship hall, and a short service of evening prayer at 7 pm. Our first meal will be Breakfast for Dinner provided by the council. Proceeds from the meals will go toward Green Gables Haven, which is a safe haven for those who endure domestic violence.

Jesus Birthday Party and White Elephant exchange will be after worship next Sunday, December 8. The Social Activities Committee is sponsoring the fellowship time and there will be good things to eat. You are invited to bring a wrapped gift that is either regifted or a value of $5-$10 if you're buy something new for a White Elephant Exchange. We will then play the game of choosing one wrapped gift each, or if someone else's pick looks better to you, you can steal it!

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. If you are interested in sharing ministry in any capacity, please let Tim Schoessel know.

Parish Administrator is Anna Scheck; office hours 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

Hastings Women's Club is once again collecting plastic bags for a community project: making tote bags and selling them for $15 each. All funds collected will be donated to the **Pierce Cedar Creek Institute's Science Strong** program. They bring **Environmental Programs** into the schools beginning at the 3rd grade level. If children are exposed to this issue at a young age, they are more likely to carry the benefits and practices into adulthood. The shopping bags should all be of the same plastic weight: think Walmart, Family Fare, Farm & Home, Tractor Supply, and Goodwill bags. All colors accepted. Just leave your bag of bags in the carboard bin/box in the coat room; if it is full, please leave your bags next to it. Deborah Wilke will collect them and take them to the women's club. Thank you for your support of this outreach program.

Outreach Committee meets on Monday, December 9 at 3:00 p.m.

Executive Committee meets on Tuesday, December 10 at 5:30 p.m.

BOG Christmas Night Out will be on Thursday, December 12 at 6:00 pm at the Riverdog Tavern in Middleville. Sign up on the bulletin board – all men are welcome.

Christmas Decorating will be after worship on December 15. You are invited to help take the Christmas decorations out of storage.

Christmas Eve Service will be at 6:30 pm on December 24, the first 30 minutes is preservice music.

December Blood Drive: save the date for our Ugly Sweater / Cookie Exchange blood drive on December 30. Registration is open, call 1-800-733-2767 or go to https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html. If you would like to help with snacks for donators or working the check in table, sign up in the Gathering Area.

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 guards and protects us and challenges us to do the same.

Stewardship Information

Please use this QR Code to access online giving.

Attendance: 50 Views: 188
Thanksgiving Service Attendance: 52
Weekly Giving: $1,890.00 Budget Amount: $4,173.03

Barry County Cares – Thanksgiving Offering: $159.00

Grace Projects Goal	**$ 25,252.00**
Received To Date	-$ 3,155.00
Total Needed	**$ 22,097.00**

Given this week toward Grace Projects: $0

Hand2Hand December needs are microwave popcorn, granola bars, Slim Jim's, Yoo-Hoo chocolate milk, Snack Pack pudding cups, and individual hot chocolate mix. Donations are due December 15, which is an earlier deadline than most months because of the winter break.

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

Advent Devotionals are available in the gathering area.

Christmas Baskets We are also beginning to collect items for our Christmas baskets. Once again, we are planning to feed and gift 5 families. We still need: 3 hams, 6 boxes each of kids breakfast cereal, 10 boxes of mac and cheese, 5 jars of jelly, 5 cake mixes, 5 cans of frosting, 5 sets each of adult and kid shampoo and conditioner, ~~12 Hamburger Helper or Rice Aroni ,~~ ~~6 boxes each of adult breakfast cereal,~~ ~~6 6-roll packs of toilet paper,~~ ~~5 jugs of laundry soap,~~ ~~5 bottles of liquid dish soap~~, ~~stuffing~~ , ~~peanut butter~~, ~~5 5lb. Bags of Potatoes~~, ~~5 Family Sized Jars of Applesauce,~~ and ~~5 Boxes of Holiday Cookies~~. Thank you for your partnership in ministry.

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 am today with Pastor Ken, with a study on the book of Philippians.