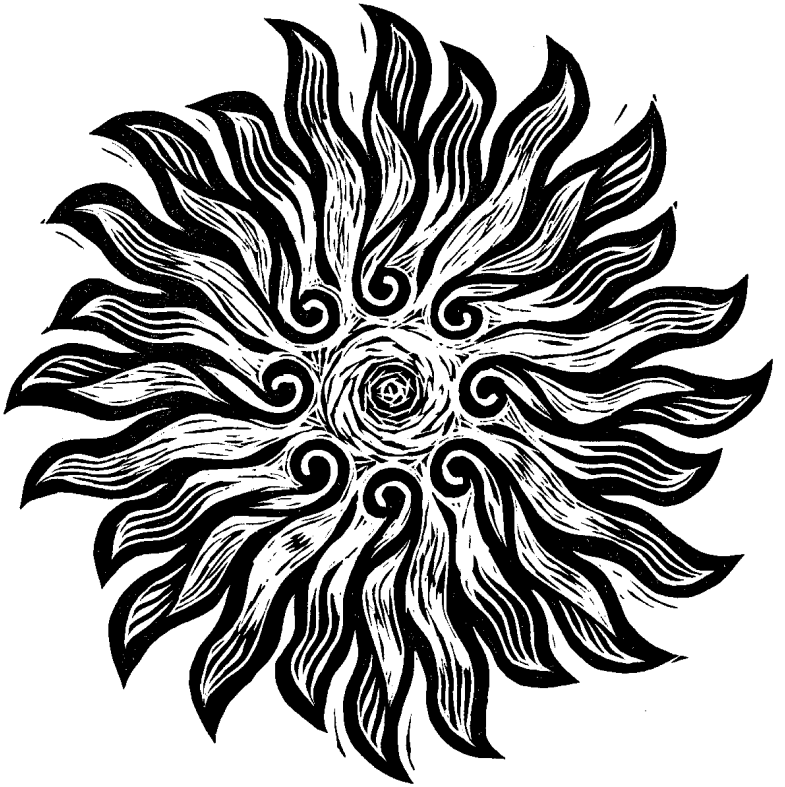
Grace Lutheran Church

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
January 5, 2024

The Twelfth Day of Christmas
January 5, 2025

During the Christmas season*, the Lectionary readings invite us to reflect on the Incarnation of God: Jesus, God's Word made flesh. In the person of Christ, God enters human history and identifies with the human condition. Traditional colors of the season include white and gold, symbolizing joy in the light of day. The use of the color gold on the Christmas Wreath symbolizes God's purity and life for all.*

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

Welcome

Gathering Music

Arise in body or Spirit
Celebration of Light on the Christmas Wreath
The Christ Candle & Christmas Good News

P The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people. To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

C **And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill to all people."**

P To us a child is born.

C **To us a son is given.**

A This morning Christ appears.

C **This morning salvation comes.**

P Today we proclaim together.

C **"Glory to God in the highest. Peace to God's people on earth!"**

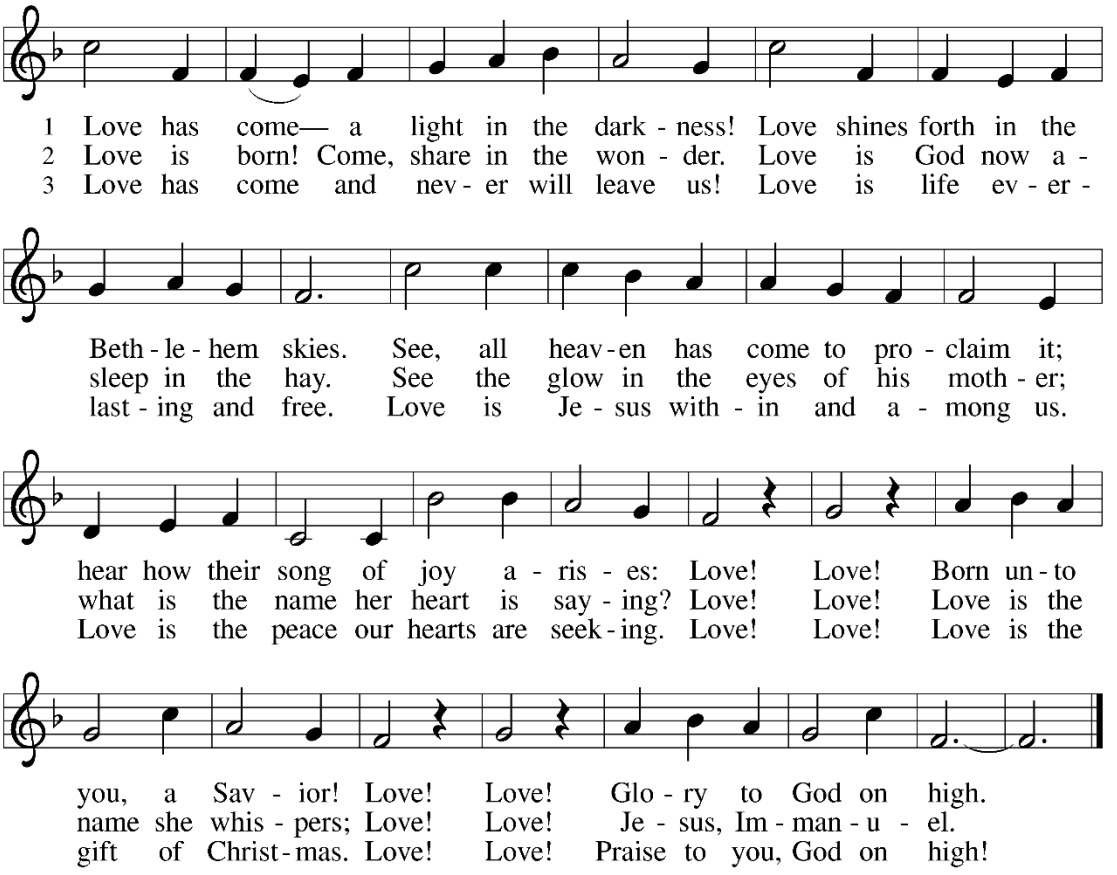
A Our God, the Lord Almighty, shows us gentle loving kindness in ways that are mysterious to us.

C **We are given a baby, but this child is indeed the Mighty God.**

P The grace of our Savior Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, born of Mary, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

Gathering Song ***Love Has Come*** **ELW 292**



Prayer of the Day

A Let us pray… Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word.

C **By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading **Jeremiah 31:7-14**

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

L A reading from **Jeremiah:**

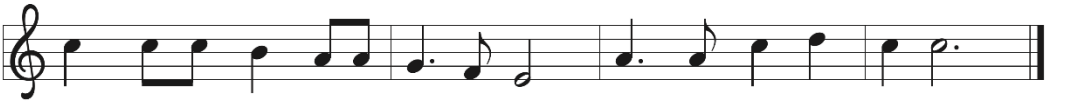
7 Thus says the LORD:
Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
"Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel."
8 See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.
9 With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

10 Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."
11 For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.
12 They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.
13 Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

14 I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

L Word of God. Word of Life.
C Thanks be to God.

Psalm 147:12-20

℟ **Refrain**

12 Worship the LORD, | O Jerusalem;
praise your | God, O Zion,
13 **who has strengthened the bars | of your gates**
and has blessed your chil- | dren within you.

14 God has established peace | on your borders
and satisfies you with the | finest wheat.
15 **God sends out a command | to the earth,**
a word that runs | very swiftly. ℟

16 God gives | snow like wool,
scattering | frost like ashes.
17 **God scatters | hail like bread crumbs.**
Who can stand a- | gainst God's cold?

18 The LORD sends forth the | word and melts them;
the wind blows, and the | waters flow.
19 **God declares the | word to Jacob,**
statutes and judg- | ments to Israel.

20 The LORD has not done so to any | other nation;
they do not know God's judgments. | Hallelujah! ℟

Second Reading **Ephesians 1:3-14**

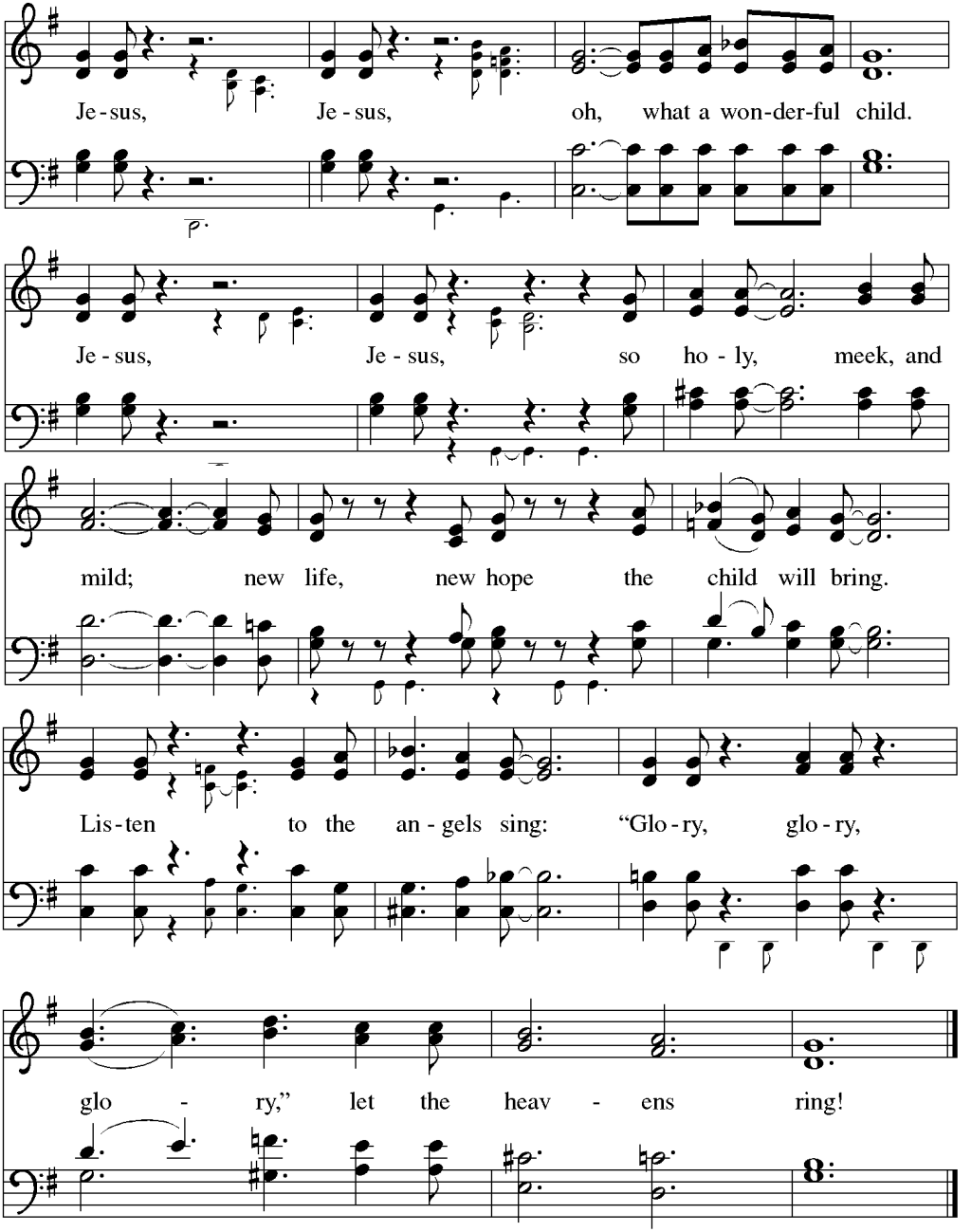
In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made know as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

L A reading from **Ephesians:**

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every
spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the
world to be holy and blameless before him in love. 5 He destined us for adoption as his children
through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace
that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the
forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all
wisdom and insight 9 he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good
pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in
him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having
been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel
and will, 12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his
glory. 13 In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and
had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; 14 this is the pledge of
our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

L Word of God. Word of Life.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Please arise in body or spirit.

Gospel Acclamation ***Jesus, What a Wonderful Child*** **ELW 297**

Gospel Reading **John 1:10-18**

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

℗ The Holy Gospel, according to **John**.

℄ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know
him. 11 He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12 But to all who
received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13 who were
born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a
father's only son, full of grace and truth. 15 (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of
whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") 16 From his
fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 The law indeed was given through Moses; grace
and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is
close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

℗ The Gospel of the Lord.

℄ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

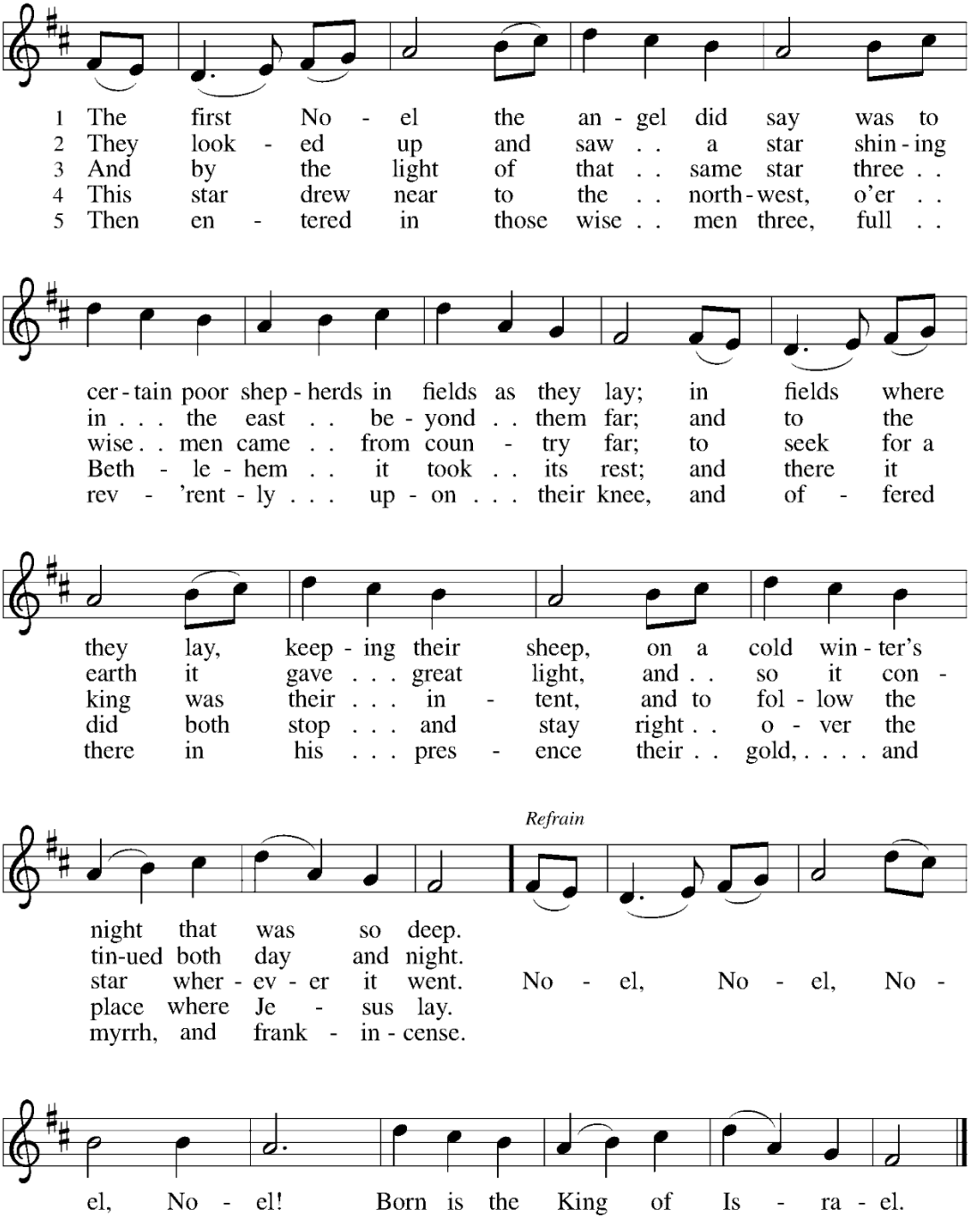
Children's Time

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

Please arise in body or spirit.

Song of the Day ***The First Noel*** **ELW 300**



Please be seated.

Prayers

We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, **God of our salvation.** *The assembly prays,* **Thank you for hearing us.**

A Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence

A O God, you reveal yourself in this assembly. In water, wine, and bread, show us again and again your grace upon grace, that your church boldly testifies to your love. Nurture our leaders and collaborators, *especially Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and David, our synod companion Trinity Lutheran Church, Battle Creek; Journey Church, Middleville; Kilpatrick United Brethren, Woodland; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken.* God of our salvation,

C **Thank you for hearing us.**

A You reveal yourself in creation. In seedlings and planets, microorganisms and galaxies, awaken us to the cry of the earth. As you nourish your people like a watered garden, empower us to nourish our creaturely companions. God of our salvation,

C **Thank you for hearing us.**

A You reveal yourself in every land and in the farthest parts of the earth. Deliver peoples who suffer under oppressive regimes. Thwart the foolish plans of unjust leaders. Give wisdom to our elected officials and be with those who safeguard the world, including *Parker Stancil (Freedlund), Cody and Myrina Crawford (Clements), Cynthia Rudesill (Hansen), Joel Taggart (Varkula), Seth Domke (Domke), and Nathen Schick (Markwart).* God of our salvation,

C **Thank you for hearing us.**

A You reveal yourself in every human being. Help us recognize your image in our siblings in Christ who are in the strong grip of addiction, depression, anxiety, hopelessness, or other illness, *especially Jennie Anderson, Pastor Michael Anton, Mark Arens, Bob Bolton, Frank Bolton, Chris Bush, the family of Kim Brandenburg, Rachel Brown, Cherie Clements, the family of Pastor Lester DeGroot, Pat DePew, the family of Robert DeVinney, Kim Domke, Bonnie Ehredt, Greg Franks, Ruby Gibbons (adoption process), Lisa Golnek, Jerry Hansen, Joy Jenks, Michelle Kaufman (pregnancy), Betty Lou Leonhardt, Dana Lepien, Larry Maupin, Sandy Mikolajczyk, Martha Misak, Dawn McElgunn, Jody Neagle, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Shirley Peterson, Kali Ranguette (pregnancy), Tammy Rodriguez, Cynthia Rudesill (pregnancy), Mike Shoemaker, Ron Smith, Kathy Surratt, Al Throop, Claudia Throop, Emma Tidd, George Ulrich Jr., Jeanette Ulrich, Brenda Watson, and Deborah Wilke.* Grant us compassion in our care for your people. God of our salvation,

C **Thank you for hearing us.**

A You reveal yourself anew every day. In this new year, renew this congregation and its ministries in our witness to the good news of the incarnation. Transform the way we have always done things into your new future for us. God of our salvation,

C **Thank you for hearing us.**

Here other intersessions may be offered.

A You reveal yourself in the lives of your holy ones. We give you thanks for those who set their hope on you, trusting the inheritance we receive in you. God of our salvation,

C **Thank you for hearing us.**

P We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

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 ***What Child is This?*** **ELW 296**

Verses 1 & 3

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

Offering Prayer

A Let us pray….Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace.

C **As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so with the church on earth, all creation and the host of heaven, we praise your name forever.
℃ **Amen.**

Eucharistic Prayer

℗ Holy God,
Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.

℃ **In the fullness of time,**
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness and to make us your daughters and sons.
Come, and give us life.

℗ 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.

C **Remembering, therefore, his birth and life among us,**
his death and resurrection, we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.
Come, and give us life.

P By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children, shining with the light of your Son.

C **Come and give us life. Through him all glory and honor is yours,**
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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

C **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.**

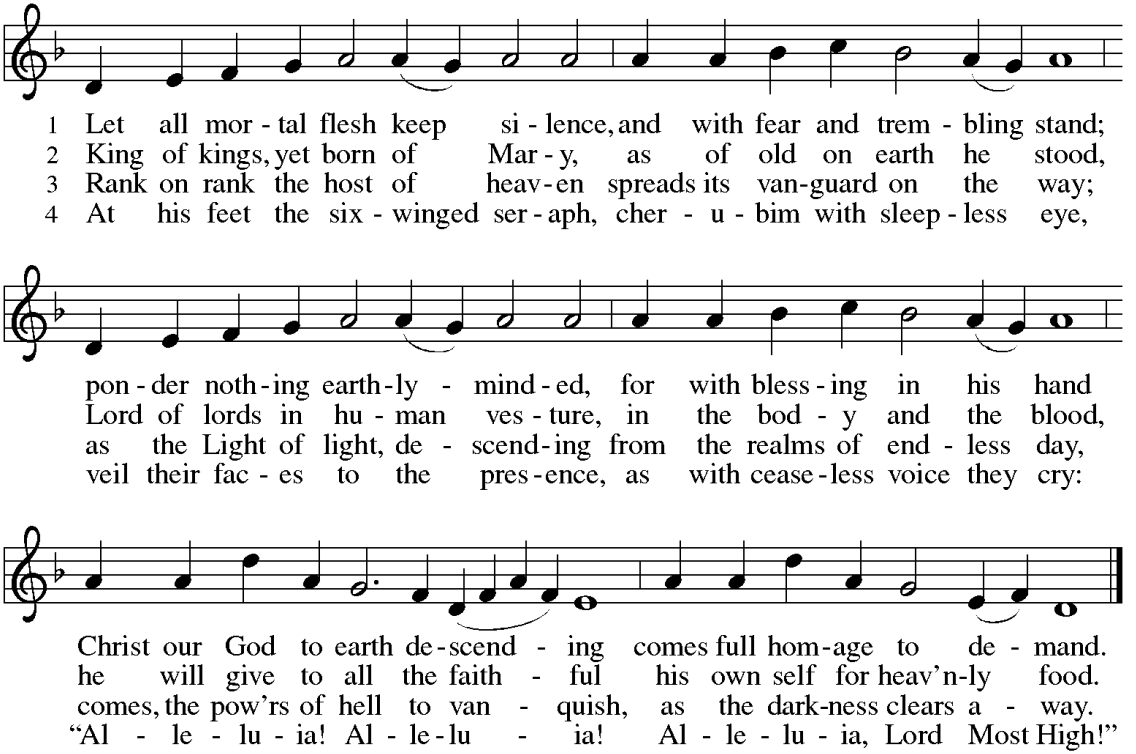
Invitation to Communion

P Joy to the world! The Lord is come.

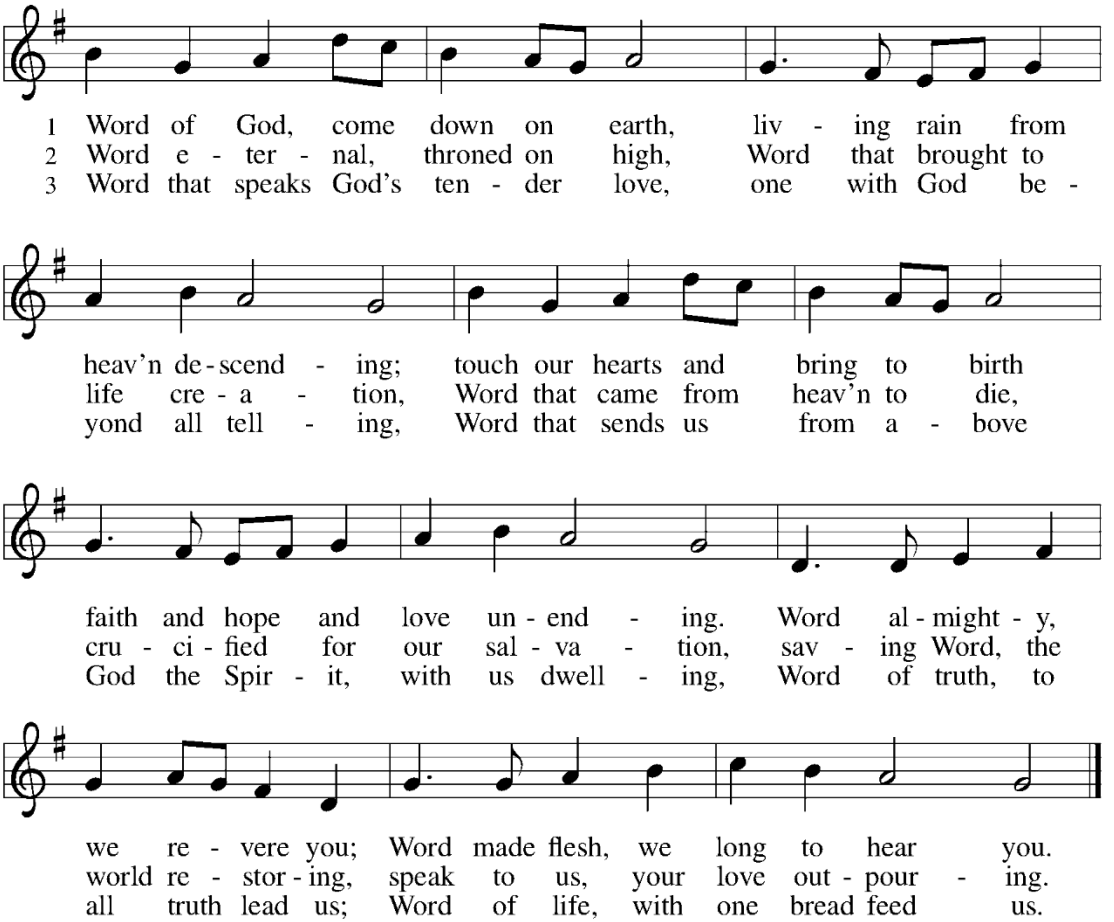
C **Thanks be to God.**

Please be seated.

Communion Songs: ***Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*** **ELW 490**



Word of God, Come Down on Earth **ELW 510**



Prayer after Communion

A On this day, O God, we celebrate that you gave us Christ the Son to save us.

C **As you sent the one foretold, send us now with good news for all people. Let the gladness of this feast have no end as we share with others the joy that fills us; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

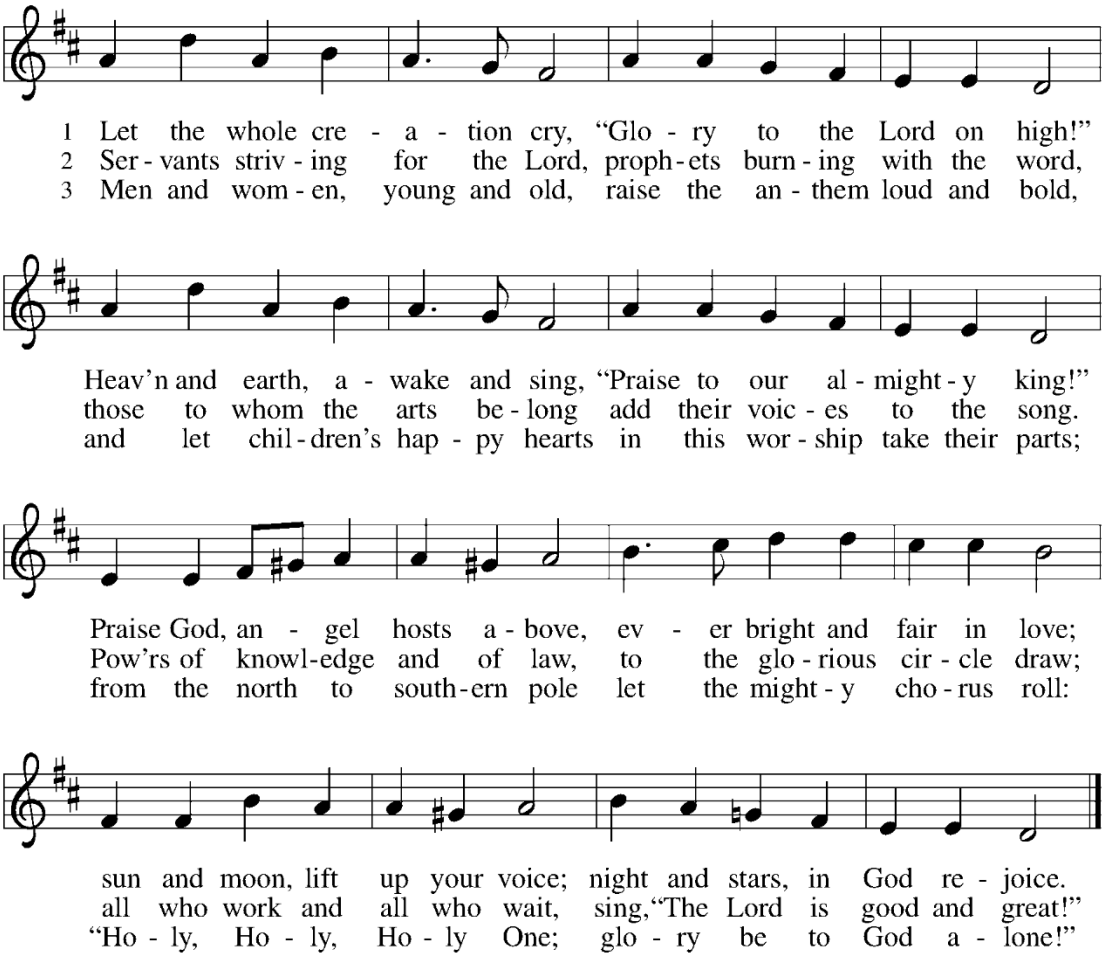
Mission Minutes

Arise in body or spirit.

Blessing

℗ Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

℄ **Amen.**

Sending Song ***Let the Whole Creation Cry*** **ELW 876**

Dismissal

℗ Glory to God in the highest!
℄ **Peace to God's people on earth!**

Ⓐ Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.
℄ **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

<u>9:30 am</u>
Assisting Minister – Traci Wales
Lector – Anna Scheck
Musician – Jeanette Markwart
Cantor – Mark Anton
Pastor – Ken Scheck
Fellowship – Jeanette Markwart

Beyond Boundaries

One difficulty with the Gospel of John as we read it in our own context is grappling with passages that draw boundaries between who is "in" and who is "out." The gospel sometimes edges toward contempt, or at least uncharity, for those who reject Jesus' identity and message. Historically, this gospel has been used to perpetuate anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic rhetoric, so we need to approach it with care and love.

The verses in our reading today reflect a concern with Jesus' identity and the boundaries between those who do and those who do not accept him. Verses 10 and 11 refer to the ignorance and rejection Jesus faces on earth. The passage continues by lifting up the benefits of choosing to receive and follow Jesus: the power to become children of God (as Jesus himself is a child of God).

Because Jesus, the Word made flesh, has come to earth to reveal the grace, truth, and glory of God—a God who pours out an abundance: "grace upon grace"! (John 1:16)—we read today's passage not as guidance about who gets cut out of God's inheritance but, rather, as assurance of the wideness of God's love.

Jesus will make God known to the world, despite conflicts and hostilities that might threaten this work. At many later places, the gospel also points to the expansiveness of this mission, whether the assurance in John 3 that "God so loved the [whole] world" or Jesus' promise in John 10 that he has sheep from other folds.

We cling to a Jesus who crosses boundaries—even the final boundary of death. There are no conflicts, powers, divisions, disagreements, or hostilities that can turn Jesus away from his message of abundant life for all.

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Worship is at 9:30 am, with Adult Forum following

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. 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.

Congregational Care Committee will tomorrow, January 6 at 3 pm.

Women of Faith meets on Tuesdays at 11 am here at Grace. Join us on January 7, 14, 21, and 28. We are studying the women of the New Testament. All women are welcome.

Brothers of Grace will meet this Thursday, January 9 at 6:00 pm. All men are welcome.

Executive Committee will meet Tuesday, January 14 at 5:30 pm.

Congregation Council will meet Tuesday, January 21 at 6:00 pm.

December's Blood Drive was full of Ugly Sweaters and Cookie Exchanging, and we collected 21 units to help with the critical need for blood during this busy time of year. Thank you for supporting this event with cookies baked, snacks purchased, and time and blood given. Our next drive is on February 25.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat is Hastings High School's musical this spring. SAC invites you to attend the 2 pm showing on Saturday, March 15, and we'll go to a local restaurant to share a meal afterwards. We ask that you buy your own tickets when they go on sale in mid-January.

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 is revealed as Savior of the world.

Stewardship Information

Please use this QR Code to access online giving.

Attendance: 49 Views: 181
Weekly Giving: $8,006.00 Budget Amount**:** $4,366.17
Online Giving for December: $1,870.05

Grace Projects Goal	**$ 25,252.00**
Received To Date	-$ 3,170.00
Total Needed	**$ 22,082.00**

Given this week toward Grace Projects: $15

The above includes giving from Christmas Eve.

Hand2Hand Thank you for your generous support of Hand2Hand this month. January's need items are individual oatmeal packets, granola bars, Yoo-Hoo chocolate milk, ramen noodles, snack pack pudding cups, and Slim Jim's. January donations are due on January 26. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

Winter Devotionals for January through March are available in the Gathering Area.

Giving Tree: We are collecting individually packaged snacks to give to local classrooms. Donations are due this week, and you can leave them under the tree in the Gathering Area.

Noisy Offering will be collected next week to benefit Barry County Cares

The nursery is available weekly during the 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 after worship today with Pastor Ken, with a study on the book of Philippians.