# **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 March 2, 2025

# **Transfiguration of Our Lord**

# March 2, 2025

**The Last Sunday of Epiphany.** Throughout the weeks of Epiphany, we welcome the gracious light of God in the diverse cultures of the world. From the mountain of transfiguring light, Christ goes forth to Jerusalem and leads us to the Passover from death to life. Here we find meaning of Jesus' birth and baptism: Christ was born to die, so that in our death, we might be born to eternal life.

Holy Silence is observed as we enter to worship.

#### Welcome

#### **Gathering Music**

Arise in body or spirit.

## Greeting

The pastor and the assembly greet each other.

- P The light of God given, experienced and shared be with you all.
- And also with you.
- ⚠ The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
- **■** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.



## Dialogue

- P The joy of the Lord is our strength.
- **©** Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord.
- **A** Let us live in the hope of the light of the world.
- **9** We walk with the One who gives us light in our darkness.
- P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.
- Amen.



#### Prayer of the Day

- Let us pray... Holy God, mighty and immortal, you are beyond our knowing, yet we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.
- Transform us into the likeness of your Son, who renewed our humanity so that we may share in his divinity, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

  Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading Exodus 34:29-35

Moses' face shone with the reflected glory of God after he received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. The sight caused the Israelites to be afraid, so Moses wore a veil to mask the radiance of God's glory, taking it off when he spoke directly with God.

L A reading from **Exodus.** 

<sup>29</sup> Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup> When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup> but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

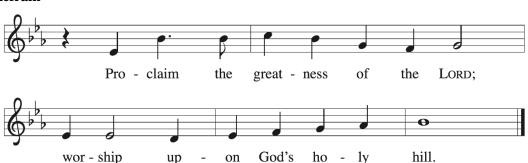
L Word of God. Word of life.

**☑** Thanks be to God.





#### Refrain



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The LORD is king; let the | people tremble.

The LORD is enthroned upon the cherubim; let | the earth shake.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD, <sup>1</sup> great in Zion, is high a- <sup>1</sup> bove all peoples.

<sup>4</sup>O mighty king, lover of justice, you have es- | tablished equity; you have executed justice and righteous- | ness in Jacob. ■

 $^6$  Moses and Aaron among your priests, and Samuel among those who call upon your  $^{\rm I}$  name, O LORD,

they called upon you, and you  $\ensuremath{^{\mid}}$  answered them,

<sup>8</sup>O LORD our God, you answered | them indeed; you were a God who forgave them, yet punished them for their | evil deeds.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Let them confess God's name, which is | great and awesome; God is the | Holy One.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Proclaim the greatness of the LORD and fall down be- | fore God's footstool; God is the | Holy One.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> you spoke to them out of the pil- lar of cloud; they kept your testimonies and the decree that you gave them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Proclaim the greatness of the LORD and worship upon God's <sup>↑</sup>holy hill; for the LORD our God is the <sup>↑</sup>Holy One. ■

In his debates with the Corinthians, Paul contrasts the glory of Moses with the glory of Christ. The Israelites could not see Moses' face because of the veil. But in Christ we see the unveiled glory of God and are transformed into Christ's likeness.

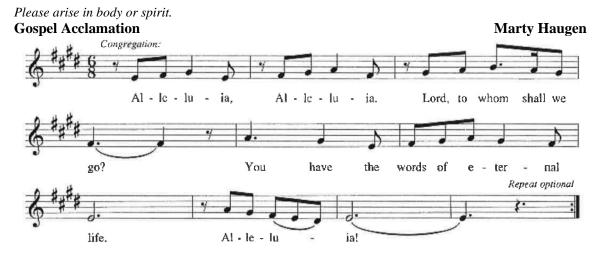
## **L** A reading from **2 Corinthians.**

<sup>12</sup> Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, <sup>13</sup> not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. <sup>14</sup> But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; <sup>16</sup> but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. <sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

<sup>4:1</sup> Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

L Word of God. Word of life.

#### **☑** Thanks be to God.



Gospel Reading Luke 9:28-36

The conversation about Jesus' suffering and death is enclosed in a dazzling foreshadowing of the resurrection. God affirms Jesus' identity, the disciples are stunned speechless, and Jesus resumes his mission with a demonstration of his power over evil.

P The Holy Gospel, according to Luke.

## **☑** Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>28</sup> Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. <sup>31</sup> They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup> Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup> While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" <sup>36</sup> When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

- **P** The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

#### 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 be seated.

#### **Prayers**

We pray the prayer response after each petition. You will hear, God of grace. The assembly prays, Hear our prayer.

A With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

- A Transfiguring God, through the glory of your presence, you transform us. Move the church from complacency to boldness in sharing the good news with others. Bless our leaders and collaborators, especially Bishops Elizabeth and Craig, Assistants Chrisy and Kjersten, our synod companion Messiah Lutheran Church, Constantine; Peace United Methodist, Nashville; Pleasant Valley United Brethren, Lake Odessa; Minister of Music Cindy and Pastor Ken. God of grace,
- **G** Hear our prayer.
- Me pray for your creation. As seasons change, give patience and skill to all who tend to animals giving birth. Grant nourishing weather for the growing of crops. God of grace,
- **G** Hear our prayer.
- (A) We pray for all in leadership, especially for those who lead states, counties, and town councils. Give them wisdom to protect local resources so that all will flourish both now and in the years to come. 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 grace,
- **G** Hear our prayer.
- A Bring your healing grace to those who feel distant from you. Speak comfort to those who need your words of mercy. We pray for those close to our communities and in our hearts, especially Jennie Anderson, Pastor Michael Anton, Mark Arens, Bob Bolton, Frank Bolton, Chris Bush, Cherie Clements, Kari Cross, Pat DePew, Kim Domke, Jeanie Droscha, Bonnie Ehredt, Greg Franks, Lori and John Giacalone, Ruby Gibbons (celebrating her baptism), Lisa Golnek, Heather Gore, Christine Jenkins, Joy Jenks, Michelle Kaufman (pregnancy), Dana Lepien, Linda Melcher, Larry Maupin, Dawn McElgunn, Sandy Mikolajczyk, Martha Misak, Kate Muraski, Jody Neagle, James Neiderheiser, Lisa Nurenberg, Kali Ranguette (pregnancy), Tammy Rodriguez, Ron Smith, Kathy Surratt, Mary Thompson, Al Throop, Claudia Throop, George Ulrich Jr., Jeanette Ulrich, and Brenda Watson. God of grace,
- Hear our prayer.
- A God of our past, present, and future, lead us into new beginnings, trusting in the promise of new life in Christ. Accompany congregations needing to close, and give courage to congregations starting new ministries. God of grace,
- Hear our prayer.

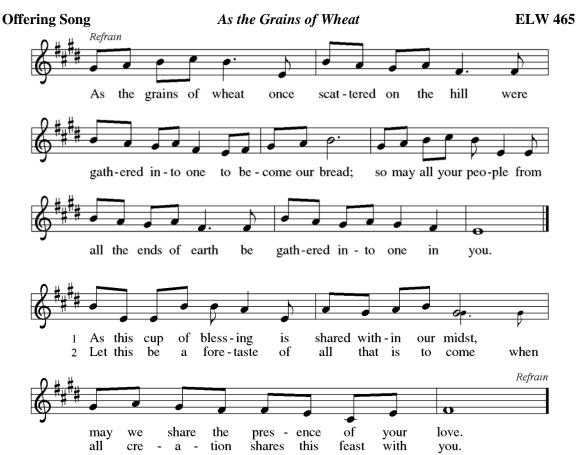
Here other intercessions may be offered.

- A Renewing God, the saints who have gone before us witnessed to the ways you transform your church and people, especially John Wesley and Charles Wesley, renewers of the church. We give thanks for their example and pray we carry it forward. God of grace,
- Hear our prayer.
- We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.
- Amen.

Please arise in body or spirit.

#### **Sharing the Peace of God**

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



#### **Offering Prayer**

- ⚠ Let us pray . . . God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas.
- **B**less what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. Amen.

#### **Great Thanksgiving**

- P The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.
- P Lift up your hearts.
- **W**e lift them to the Lord.
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- **②** 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. 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:



Transfiguration of Our Lord Page 12

## **Table Prayer**

- P 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.
- **2** We praise your Son, our Morning Star. Christ is our diamond bright, our treasure dear.
- P 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.
- With joy we tell our story of God's gift through Jesus, Alleluia! Alleluia!
- P We call for your Spirit on us and this meal. 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.

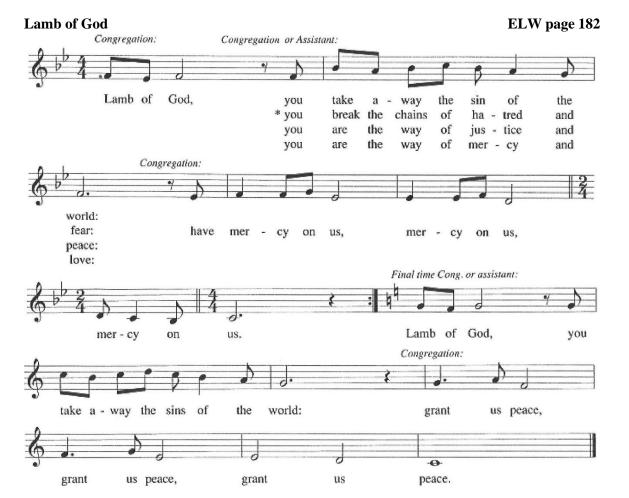
## Lord's Prayer

- P 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**

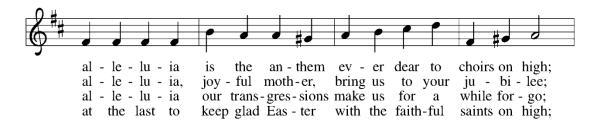
- P At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see.
- C Thanks be to God.

Please be seated.





In our hymns we pray with long - ing: Grant us, bless-ed Trin - i - ty,





## **Prayer after Communion**

- A Let us pray... Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink.
- Strengthen us for service and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

#### **Mission Minutes**

Arise in body or spirit

### **Blessing**

- The Spirit of the triune God 

  → bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.
- Amen.



## **Sending**

**A** Go in peace. Live in hope.

**☑** Thanks be to God.

#### **Postlude**

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

Fellowship – Diane Neeb

# **Chaos and Mystery**

Ghost-like prophets from generations past, a face suddenly transformed, dazzling clothes, frightening fog, and a mysterious voice: today's gospel text might sound like the beginning of a strange science fiction novel. Indeed, this passage has mystified theologians, biblical scholars, preachers, and followers of Jesus for centuries. What do we make of such an unusual tale?

Perhaps the chaos and mystery are part of the point: after all, who can fully describe an encounter with the Divine? How can we even begin to understand the glory of God? If this text leaves us speechless, we are in good company with God-seekers across the ages. Some experiences simply defy tidy explanations, and the transfiguration is one of them.

This story offers us glimpses of some of the most profound mysteries of our faith. Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, the one sent and affirmed by God. Jesus is the glory of God revealed among us. In him, we find our past, present, and future all wrapped up into one. Even the most devout disciples might find themselves confounded by these revelations. Perhaps we are given these truths only in glimpses to spark our curiosity and wonder, and to let the gift of faith reveal their meaning.

This story also assures us that although Jesus shines with God's glory on the mountaintop, he is sent back into the day-to-day world to carry on the work of life-saving mercy, healing, and justice. Like Peter, James, and John, we might encounter God on the mountaintops of life and be tempted to set up camp there. But God is the one who leaves the mountain for the often-unglamorous work of serving others. We trust that here, too, God is with us—not just on the mountaintops but in the valleys and everywhere in between, transforming us for the work of discipleship here and now in the ordinariness of life.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

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

**Social Activities Committee** meets tomorrow, March 3 at 4:30 pm.

**5**<sup>th</sup> **Sunday Potluck** will be on March 30 after worship. Look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board next Sunday. We look forward to this time of fellowship together.

**Ash Wednesday,** the beginning of Lent, is this week. On Wednesday at **noon**, you are invited to join in worship here at Grace. This service includes communion and the imposition of ashes.

**Ash Wednesday Evening Ecumenical Service** You are also invited to an evening ecumenical service at 6:00 pm at the Hastings Church of the Nazarene.

**Daylight Savings Time** begins next weekend. Make sure to set your clocks forward an hour, or else you might show up for worship an hour late!

Outreach Committee meets on March 10 at 3:00 pm.

**Executive Committee** will meet on March 11 at 5:30 pm.

Midweek Lenten Community Gatherings will begin next week. Everyone is invited to join in on Wednesday lunches and community conversations throughout Lent, focused on the theme "The Things that Unite Us: Promoting Christian Unity." Lunch locations will rotate to a different one of our ecumenical partners each week, with a presentation from a community pastor. On March 12 at noon, you are invited to lunch at Green Street United Methodist Church with a presentation by our very own Pastor Ken on the theme "One Body."

**Midweek Lenten Services and Dinners** will begin on March 12, and continue throughout Lent on Wednesday nights. At 6:00 pm, we will gather for a meal in the fellowship hall. Then, at 7:00 pm, we will have a service of evening prayer in the sanctuary.

**Study Statement: Sharing God's Grace with All People, Especially the Outcast** Please join us Palm Sunday during fellowship time for our one-hour discussion about our strategic welcoming of the LGBTQIA+ community.

**The Blood Drive** was a fun day, and our donors seemed to love the Club Grace theme. We had slightly fewer donors than normal, due to illness and a concurrent drive elsewhere in the Hastings community. Nonetheless, we collected 16 units of blood. We look forward to our next drive on April 23, 2025.

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 shines God's love into our lives.

#### Please use this QR Code to access online giving.



### **Stewardship Information**

Attendance: 48 Views: 179

Weekly Giving: \$2,410.00 Budget Amount: \$4,366.17

Helping Hands: \$40.00

 Grace Projects Goal
 \$ 25,252.00

 Received To Date
 -\$ 3,210.00

 Total Needed
 \$ 22,042.00

Given this week toward Grace Projects: \$20



**Hand2Hand** Thank you for your generously supporting Hand2Hand this month - we are helping 90 students who may be hungry over the weekends. March's need items are Slim Jim's, Yoo-Hoo Chocolate Milk, individual pudding cups, microwave popcorn, granola bars, chicken gravy packets, and instant mashed potatoes. The donation deadline is Sunday, March 30. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

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

Lenten Devotionals "Hope-Full Living" are available in the Gathering Area.

**Women of Faith** meets on Tuesdays at 11:00 am here at Grace. Join us in studying "Listening to God" on March 4, 11, 18, and 25. All women are welcome.

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 Hosea.

**Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** is coming up on Saturday, March 15 at 2 pm. Some tickets are still available at: https://hastings.ludus.com/index.php. Contact Bill Freedlund if you need help ordering your tickets. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you want to come to dinner at Seasonal Grille following the show.