



JANUARY 2026

GRACEGRAM

Grace alone . . . Faith alone . . . Word alone . . .

A New Song

From every tribe
and every nation,

from every
people
and every
tongue,

from every
corner
of the whole
creation

comes a new
song that must
be sung.

~ Ray Makeever



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors
in the world. God is not a secret to be kept.

Matthew 5:16



Grace Lutheran Church, Hastings & Zion
Lutheran Church, Woodland begin new
partnership on January 1, 2026

Pastor Ken Scheck will officially continue his letter of call with Grace Lutheran Church. Grace signed the Letter of Agreement on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, between Grace and Zion. The contract will last for three years. Pastor Scheck will spend 50 percent of his time in doing ministry at each congregation. This will be a very different model for ministry for Grace, but it has been done in many settings throughout the ELCA.

In fact, two other locations in the synod are using the same model for shared ministry. Lansing and Battle Creek are going through the process of sharing a pastor for two congregations. **Grace, Lansing & Christ, Dewitt;** and **St. Peter, Battle Creek & Trinity, Battle Creek.**

**Deadline for the
February GraceGram is
January 17, 2025.**

**Send your articles to:
Cindy Olson**

parishadmin@grace-hastings.org

The following is ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry's Children's message for Christmas. Watching him interact with the youngsters is a joy. You can view it on the elca.org homepage, or look it up by title on YouTube.com.

Have you ever heard a whisper?

"Hello!" Can you all whisper back to me? Whispers are quiet, gentle, almost like a secret. You have to lean in close to hear them. And I wonder if it's possible for the heavens to whisper at Christmas?

One silent night, far away, in a town called Bethlehem, the stars twinkled brighter than ever.

And the angels were there, too. It was as if the whole sky was whispering: "Something wonderful is happening ..." Let's all look up at the ceiling like we're looking at the stars. Can you twinkle your fingers like stars? Now let's whisper together, "Something wonderful is happening ..." The heavens weren't shouting. They weren't making a big noise. They were whispering, because whispers make us stop, listen and pay attention. And what was the whispering about?

A baby. A tiny baby lying in a manger. His name was Jesus. Can you pretend to rock a baby in your arms? The night Jesus was born, the shepherds heard the whisper in the sky when the angels sang. The Wise Men sensed the whisper in the star that guided them. And Mary and Joseph felt the whisper in their hearts: "This child is special. This child is God's gift."

Sometimes we think God only speaks in loud voices or through big miracles. But Christmas reminds us that God often whispers. God whispers love and kindness and peace.

Can you think of one kind thing you could whisper to someone this week?

So, this Christmas, listen closely. The heavens are still whispering: "Jesus is here. God loves you. Share that love with the world."

Let's all whisper together: "Jesus is here."

Now say "God loves us" in a joyful voice!

Amen.



The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Merry Christmas



Scan this QR Code to access secure online giving.

"Let your light shine before others... that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."
- Matthew 5:16

Your kindness turns hope into reality for Michigan families and children - welcoming, keeping families together, and creating forever homes with compassion in action.

May the light of Christ bring you peace and joy in the year ahead.

*With heartfelt thanks,
The Samaritas Family & Leadership*



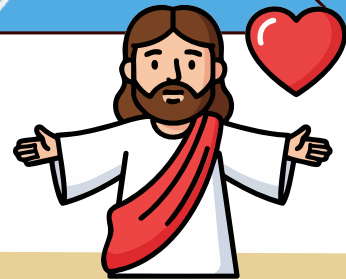
To our friends at Grace Lutheran,
On behalf of Jenny NeSmith-Laur and our Hand2Hand program
Thank You so much for your generous donations for students and families! We are very grateful! Because of your generosity, families will have food to help them through their weekends. With rising prices the needs are many. May God richly bless you!

Thank you!
Becky Wright
for our Hand2Hand ministry



hand2hand®
because a hungry child hurts

thank you



"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever."

-Psalm 107:1

As we reflect on the past year of ministry, we're filled with gratitude for the ways your faith has inspired generosity and transformed lives. May your own gratitude guide your heart - and may God's abundant grace light your path - as we enter a new year together in faith.

In Christ,
Your friends at the ELCA Foundation



IN ALL THINGS

GIVE THANKS

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:30 am

Leadership for 2024-2025

Executive Committee:

President: **Tim Schoessel**
Vice President: **Vickey Argo**
Secretary: **Jamie Heise**
Treasurer: **Randy Teegardin**



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

God's work.

Our hands.

Childcare is available

Worship also On-line:
www.grace-hastings.org

**Church Council
Members/Liaisons:**

Erin Franks
(Congregational Care)
Dave Neeb (Property)
Gary Golnek (Outreach)
Mark Anton (Youth & Family)
Bill Freedlund
(Social Activities)
Greg Franks (Stewardship)
Deb Watson (Small Groups)
Carla Neil (Worship)

Our Staff:

Ken Scheck II *Minister of Word and
Sacrament* kscheckii@aol.com

Cindy Olson, *Minister of Music
& Parish Administrator*
Mon-Weds 10AM- 2:30PM
parishadmin@grace-hastings.org

Kim Domke, *Bell Choir Director*
kdomke08@gmail.com

Aurora Collins, *Nursery*
Nathan Freedlund, *Custodian*

Grace Lutheran Church

239 E. North Street
Hastings, MI 49058

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Address Service Requested

Website:

www.grace-hastings.org

Facebook:

Grace Lutheran Church—
ELCA Hastings, MI

Phone:

269-945-9414
269-945-2645

Letter of Agreement



We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this letter of agreement and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Grace Lutheran Church, Hastings has called Pastor Ken Scheck II. As the ELCA mandates, Pastor Scheck can only have one call. Therefore, by the Spirit's leading, Grace Lutheran Church, Hastings (Grace) enters into shared ministry with Zion Lutheran Church, Woodland (Zion) by having Pastor Scheck share his responsibilities 50 percent of the time with Zion and 50 percent of the time with Grace. The people of God realize there will be times that more attention will be given to one institution by Pastor Ken Scheck II, as ministry need may demand his attention. Examples would be such things as a funeral, a wedding and catechism camp. The list is incomplete and will change throughout the three-year agreement. Each congregation would continue to have its own council and committees. Pastor Scheck would only have voting privileges at Grace, since he can only be a member of the calling congregation. Pastor Scheck would have voice only at Zion and share in ministry with the people of God in both settings.

Zion and Grace congregation councils will have a joint meeting twice a year.

The two congregations agree to share the expenses of Pastor Ken Scheck II 50/50 for an ELCA pastor with 31 years of service. This agreement will increase each year, unless the North/West Lower Michigan Synod does not have an increase. The shared expenses include Salary, Housing, Self-employment tax and Portico package. Each congregation also will pay separately for mileage, continuing education and professional expenses for ministry. An example of professional expense would be Zion would pay for any expenses that occurred to take the youth to a youth event that Zion members would be attending. Another example of a professional expense would be Grace would pay for any expenses that occurred to attend a retreat that Grace was hosting. If the congregations have any duplicate event, the professional expenses would be shared between the two congregations.

If there is a conflict with the shared ministry agreement, Grace and Zion will meet with Pastor Ken Scheck II. Zion Lutheran's Personnel Committee will gather with Grace Lutheran's Executive Committee.

In testimony of this agreement, which begins January 1, 2026, we have subscribed our names on behalf of the congregations of Zion Lutheran Church, Woodland, Michigan and Grace Lutheran Church, Hastings, Michigan on this 16th day of December 2025. A.D.


President, Paul Meade, Zion


President, Vickey Argo, Grace Lutheran Church,

 +



Let us pray for God's Guidance



There is a current (ongoing) need for blood, so please spread the word to family and friends to join us at our next **Blood Drive** **December 29, 2025** **10am-3:45 pm**



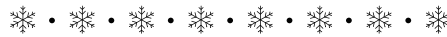
Give Something that Means Something®



Our Theme is: *Toyland*



Pr. Ken's Office Hours Monday & Wednesday 10:00 am - 12:00 pm



Social Activities Committee will not meet this month. Their next meeting will be Monday, February 2nd, at 1:30 pm.



Cindy's Office Hours Monday - Wednesday 10:00 am - 2:30 pm

January Meetings

- Women of Faith - 11:00 am Tuesdays 1/6, 1/13, 1/20 & 1/27
- Brothers of Grace - 6:00 pm Thursday 1/8
- Outreach Committee - 1:30 pm Monday 1/12
- Executive Committee - 5:30 pm Tuesday 1/13
- Congregational Care Committee - 1 pm Monday 1/19
- Congregation Council - 6:00 pm Tuesday 1/20



Note Time Change >>

SHARING GOD'S GRACE WITH ALL PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE OUTCAST



LGBTQIA+ = Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic.

We, Grace Lutheran Church, Hastings, Michigan, believe we are all created in God's image and are all called to love our neighbors as Jesus loves us. We believe we are many members, but one body in Christ, and called to unite all people in God's love. We welcome and affirm all people. We invite those who are seeking God's presence in their lives to join us in our common journey, which includes the LGBTQIA+ community. Our faith community seeks to unite persons of all ages, race, nationalities, ethnic background, sexual orientations, gender identities, mental and physical abilities, socioeconomic levels, and theological backgrounds. Together in our diversity, and being empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit, we will continually strive to "Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God." Micah 6:8

Let Us Pray: If you are aware of others that should be put on the lists, please notify the office.

Our Homebound Friends:

Shirley Beck Hope Landing
1252 North Cochran #116
Charlotte, MI 48813

Karl Golnek c/o Medilodge
2786 - 56th Street, SW
Wyoming, MI 49418

Kay Howell 2950 McKeown Rd, Apt 820
Hastings, MI 49058

Diana Brown 703 W Woodlawn Ave
Hastings, MI 49058

Jeanette Ulrich 3887 S M-37 Hwy
Hastings, MI 49058

Loved Ones Serving in the Military:

Grandson of Freedlunds
Parker Stancil (US Army)

Daughter & son-in-law of Cherie Clements
Myrina & Cody Crawford

Granddaughter of Gwen Hansen
Cynthia Rudesill

Nephew of Joe & Sharon Varkula
LT Joel Taggart (USN, Virginia)

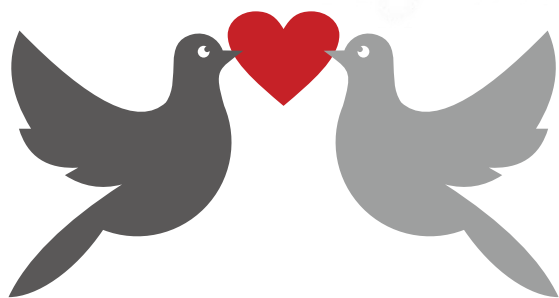
Nephew and Godson of Ed and Kim Domke
Seth Domke (Cherry Point, North Carolina)

Nephews of Ed and Jeanette Markwart
Hudson Schick (Air Force, New Mexico)
Leopold Schick (Air Force, Germany)



Happy
New Year
JANUARY
ANNIVERSARIES BIRTHDAYS

John and Mary Kleinbrink 01/05



Jeannette Ulrich 01/07
Clyde Watson Jr 01/11
Carl Schoessel 01/13
Dean Rounds 01/14
Christine Pontius 01/14
Mary Kuhlman 01/18
Rick Duits 01/20
Logan Clements 01/22
Sheryl Gordon 01/26
Eve Wright 01/26
Jane Power 01/30

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<i>Let your Light Shine</i>		1 	2	3 
4 Worship 9:30 am 	5	6 <i>Women of Faith</i> 11 am <i>Epiphany of our Lord</i>	7 	8 BROTHER <i>Brothers of Grace</i> 6 pm BROTHER	9 	10
11 Worship 9:30 am  <i>Baptism of our Lord</i>	12  <i>Outreach Committee</i> 3 pm	13 <i>Women of Faith</i> 11 am <i>Executive</i> 5:30 pm	14	15	16	17 
18 Worship 9:30 am	19 <i>Congre- gational Care</i> 1 pm  MLK DAY	20 <i>Women of Faith</i> 11 am <i>Council</i> 6 pm	21 	22	23 <i>Cindy's Office Hours</i> Mon - Wed 10am - 2:30pm	24
25 Worship 9:30 am 	26	27 <i>Women of Faith</i> 11 am	28	29 <i>Pr. Ken's Office Hours</i> Mon & Wed 10am - 12pm	30	31 