

Worship Folder



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Grace Lutheran Church

December 28 & 29, 2024

Grace Lutheran's Purpose Statement

"We share God's love by welcoming all and making a Christ-like difference in our community and world."

Service of Lessons and Prayers

WELCOME

PRELUDE

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

(The assembly stands as you are comfortable)

L: A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

C: Every valley shall be lifted up,
And every mountain and hill made low;

L: The uneven ground shall become level,

C: And the rough places a plain.

L: Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed.

C: And all people shall see it together,
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isaiah 40:3-5)

RESPONSE

The season of Christmas is upon us, and we are filled with hope. We sought patience as we waited for the coming of the Christ; we shopped for just the right gifts for our loved ones; we have gatherings of celebration and remembrance with family and friends. As we move through this busy season, with all of its distractions and stress, how can we keep our hearts focused on a loving response to God's incredible gift of Love?

Look beyond our waiting, the gifts, the gatherings, the distractions and the stress.
Look forward to the gifts that are offered from wisdom and power to the tiny baby

who would grow to change the world – gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense; gifts of treasure, comfort, and sweetness.

HYMN “O Come, All Ye Faithful”



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade This selection is in the public domain.

(The assembly may be seated)

INTRODUCTION TO THE WISE MEN

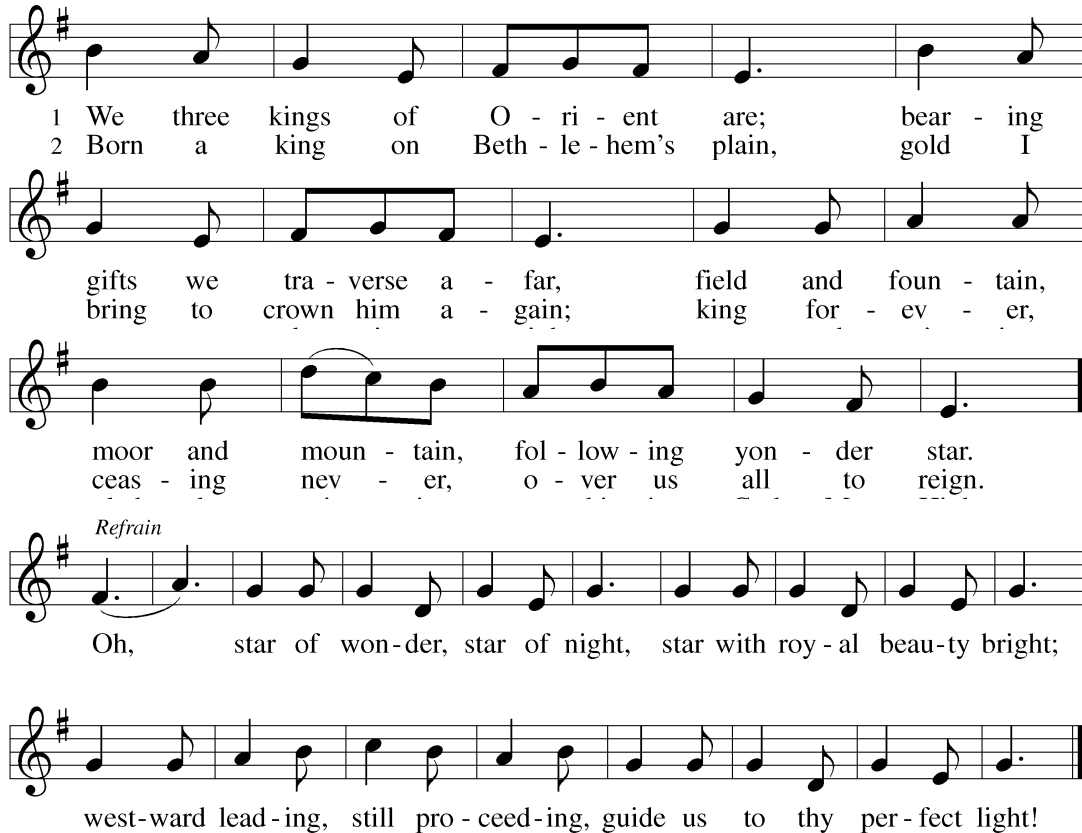
The “wise men” referred to in Matthew 2 have been the subject of much colorful speculation. The Bible nowhere says that there were three of them, though it does make mention of three gifts. Furthermore, it does not list their names, nor does it specify where they came from – apart from mentioning that they came *from the east*. It is generally assumed that they were Gentiles. If they were, the incident points to God’s intention to reach beyond the “old Israel” to gather also non-Jews into His new people. The Jews have debated at length what God intended to do about the Gentiles when the Messianic Age finally came. God gave His answer to that question in a vivid way with the visit of the wise men. Note that God communicated also with them through dreams, chapter 2 verse 12. A little later He resorted to dreams once again in communicating with Joseph, verses 19-22. Note also the references to prophetic prediction at verses 5, 6, 15, 18 & 23.

The statement “*out of Egypt have I called My son*”, verse 15 is important. It helps one understand the overall purpose of Chapter 2. The visit of the wise men is traditionally understood as having been a pleasant affair. However, several things happened as a result of it. To begin with, Herod was aroused to violent jealousy and took steps to have this new “king of the Jews” destroyed. (His opposition was an indication of what was to follow again and again in Jesus’ later life.) Furthermore, Herod’s attempt to have Jesus done away with resulted in Jesus being taken to Egypt. What was significant about that? Jesus was *the new Son of God*. It was necessary for Him to repeat in His life all that had happened to the *old* son of God, the *old* Israel. The former son of God, the former Israel, had once been in Egypt and had been called out of Egypt in the Exodus. The new Son of God, the new Israel, Jesus Christ, had to go down into Egypt that he too might be called up out of Egypt, as prophesied by Hosea 11:1. Accordingly, Jesus was taken down into Egypt and then called up out of Egypt, eventually to settle with Joseph and Mary in Nazareth. He spent his childhood, youth, and early adult years in that Galilean town. This was fulfillment of prophecy.

New Testament Reading - Matthew Chapter 2 (Lector)

Gold - Treasure

HYMN “We Three Kings of Orient Are” vs 1 & 2



1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
2 Born a king on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I

gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
bring to crown him a - gain; king for - ev - er,

moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.

Refrain
Oh, star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright;

west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt.

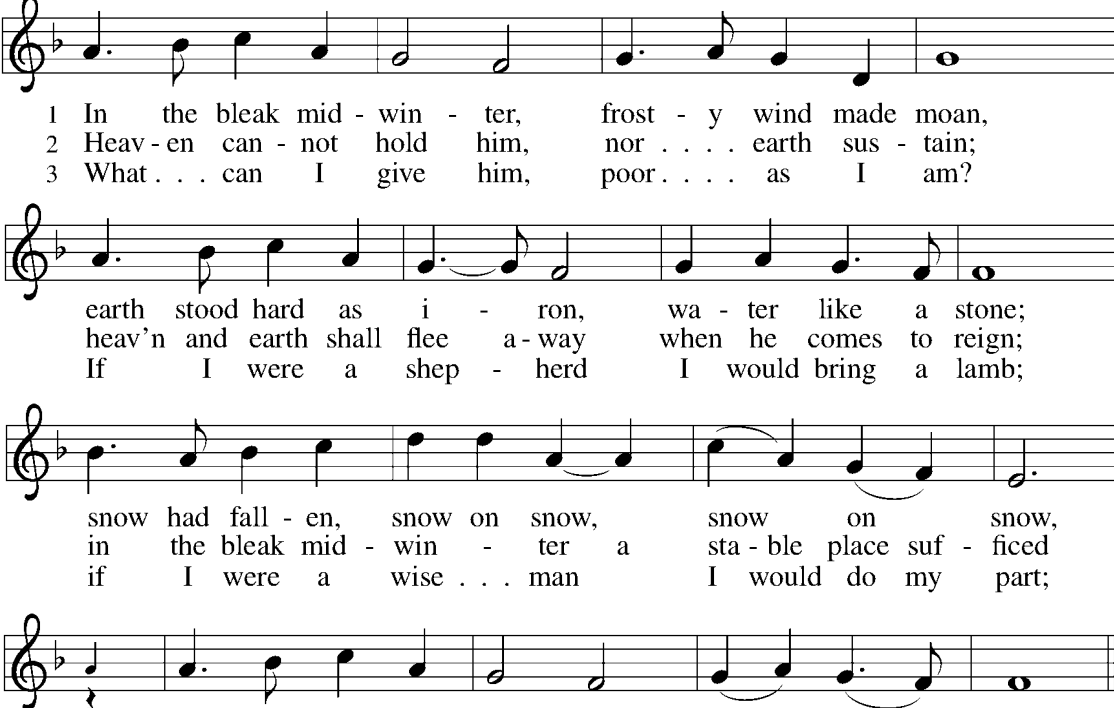
Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891 This selection is in the public domain.

Scripture Reading - John 1:14-16 (*Lector*)

RESPONSE

The first gift is gold, most highly prized of material possessions: what do you treasure? What is so dear to you that the loss of it would diminish you? Can you surrender that treasure in loving response to God's sacrificial gift of a child? What will that look like in the year to come?

HYMN “In the Bleak Midwinter” *(The assembly stands as you are comfortable)*



1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor . . . earth sus - tain;
3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed
if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830–1894

Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934 This selection is in the public domain.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Recited in unison)*

O almighty God, by the birth of your holy child Jesus

You gave us a great light to dawn on our darkness.

We confess that we often turn away from the great light of your love,

Depending instead on the poor reflection of our own efforts,

We focus on earthly treasures,

Failing to see beyond their dull glow.

We turn our backs on the needs of others

To satisfy our own desires for more things and bigger treasure.

Grant that in this season of light we may turn once again to see the light of Christ.

Bestow upon us that most excellent Christmas gift of love to all people,

So that the likeness of your Son may be formed in us,
And that we may offer to others
The ever brightening hope of everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

This is the message we have heard from God and proclaim to you,
That God is light and in God there is no darkness at all.
If we turn and walk in the light, as God is in the light,
We have fellowship with one another,
And the blood of Jesus the Son cleanses us from all sin. Amen.

(The assembly may be seated)

Myrrh - Comfort

HYMN “We Three Kings of Orient Are” vs 4

4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a
life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.

Refrain
Oh, star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright;
west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt.
Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT. John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891

Scripture - Luke 1: 46-55 (*Lector*)

RESPONSE

The second gift is myrrh, used in preparing bodies for burial, a spice that brings healing and comfort to the afflicted: How do you define comfort? In your daily walk through the world, what makes you comfortable about who you are, how you live, the work you do, your relationships? If you were stripped of these, how would your life change? How can you offer these comforts to those without them? How can you be a witness – through your service, your work, and your relationships – to the love that gave up all for your sake?

HYMN “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934

Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson

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RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

L: Holy God, heaven and earth are met this day in the newborn Child, Savior of the world.

C: We celebrate his birth: for in him you come to be close to us, that we might be close to you.

L: Especially, we give thanks

C: For the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and all he means to us...

L: For prospects of peace in the world...

C: For confidence in your almighty love...

L: For those who generously give...

C: For those who graciously receive...

L: For the Church's nurturing us in faith...

God of all mercy, as you have come in Jesus Christ to be our guest,

L: Inspire our hearts to a hospitality that welcomes all your children in his name.

C: Especially we pray

L: For those who have not heard your good news...

C: For the sick and suffering...

L: For those who know no laughter, only tears...

C: For those who govern and rule...

L: For those enslaved by tyranny...

C: For prisoners of addiction or abuse...

L: For the Church as a refuge for the needy...

All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Frankincense - Joy

HYMN "We Three Kings of Orient Are" vs 3



owns a de - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,
 glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
Refrain
 Oh, star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright;
 west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891, alt.

Music: THREE KINGS OF ORIENT, John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820–1891 This selection is in the public domain.

Scripture – Luke 2: 8-18 (*Lector*)

RESPONSE

The third gift is frankincense, a fragrant offering the Lord: What makes life sweet and fragrant for you? What makes you laugh out loud, jump for joy, weep with thanksgiving? How would your life change if joy and light and laughter were forbidden, if each day held only sorrow, violence, and darkness? How can you bring light, joy, and fragrance to the life of another? How will you say thank you for the gift of never ending forgiveness, infinite patience, and eternal love?

HYMN “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (*The assembly stands as you are able*)

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry to the new - born king;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav’n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heav’n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



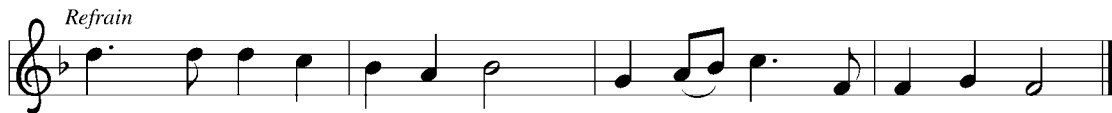
peace on earth, and mer-cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of a vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt. This selection is in the public domain.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only son, our Lord,

**who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.**

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again;

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Offering *(The assembly may be seated)*

Offertory Hymn “Away in a Manger”



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Music: AWAY IN A MANGER, James R. Murray, 1841–1905 This selection is in the public domain.

OFFERING PRAYER *Unison*

(The assembly stands as you are comfortable)

Gracious and Loving God, you have brought us again to the glad season when we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that his spirit may be born anew in our hearts this day and that we may joyfully welcome him to reign over us. Open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old. Open our lips that we, too, may sing with uplifted hearts. Glory to God, in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward all; through Jesu Christ our Lord. Amen.

EUCHARIST 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 joy... (concluding)...that we praise you name and join their unending hymn:

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed...(concluding)...one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

(all who desire to receive Christ's presence are welcome to the Eucharist.)

(The assembly may be seated)

HYMN “Joy to the World” *(The assembly stands as you are comfortable)*

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

This selection is in the public domain.

BLESSING

P: Go for the in to the world in peace; be of good courage;
 Hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;
 Strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;
 Help the afflicted; honor everyone;
 Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
 And the blessing of God Almighty – Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer –
 Be upon you, and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

POSTLUDE

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kay Grove, Darlene Freel, Bill Whitscell, Gary Bettega, Don & Myra Cross, Adam Kamyszek, Kelly Pankey, Joanne Kindt, Eleanor Coddington, Sandy Malaski, Janet Chroninger, Bonnie Cross, Elfie Jahnke, Budd & Marlene Jobson, Don Barnard, Meredith Smith, Robert Larsen, Vicki Piontkowski, Elaine Hatch, Scott Lancaster, Dorothy Hansen, Larry & Emma Nelson, Michele Amelotte, Jim Malaski -- Mychele Allmacher, Danielle Lawrence, Bishop Emeritus Gary Hansen, Deborah Al-Duwaisan, Julie Stafford, Daphne Flack, Dixie Crevier, Brenda Donajkowski, Rev. Sarah Samuelson, Linda, Kaye Harry, Sandra Beck, Kevin Carlson, Laura Fettes (Don Cross' granddaughter), Arlie Prevost, Donna Kendziorski, Jeff Kendziorski, Geraldine Rhoads, Herb Schiller, Ann Haske, Jimmy Lappan, Donna Hatch, Jordyn, Maggie, and Joseph Hansen.

Our prayer list is redone each month. If you, or a family member, would like to continue on the prayer list, please call the office (354-2640).

PRAYER PARTNERS

From the LARCC (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Congregational UCC) parishes of Alpena, this weekend we pray for the Homebound Ministry at All Saints Catholic Parish. Our Synod Prayer Partner for this week: St. Peter Lutheran Church/ Battle Creek, Rev. Edward Ruble, and Bishop Craig Satterlee and Synod Staff.

UNDECORATING THE CHURCH - SUNDAY JANUARY 5

Join in and help take down the Christmas decorations after worship on January 5. We'll have a lunch and work together to take things down and put them away for next year. Sign up in the Office Lobby for the lunch.

THANK YOU - FROM PASTOR TOM

Thank you to the congregation for the Christmas gift that you gave me. Looking forward to a few things in 2025 that this will help make possible. Thanks again. And a blessed Christmas season and New Year to all.

THANK YOU TO ALL - WHO HELPED MAKE CHRISTMAS EVE & WEEKEND SERVICES HAPPEN

Without all of you, we could not have done it

From decorators, bell choir, chancel choir, altar guild, ushers, greeters, lectors, communion assistants, livestream team who did their part, THANK YOU. To those who stepped up and pitched in where needed. THANK YOU. To those who filled in at the last minute, THANK YOU. To the staff who also had extra work for the services on the weekend, THANK YOU. Pastor Tom

SUNDAY WORSHIP LIVESTREAMED AND RECORDED

Our Sunday worship service is livestreamed, shown on the internet, as it is happening and recorded for viewing online later. People in the sanctuary attending the Sunday service may be seen as part of the livestream and recording.

HAPPENING THIS WEEK!

Sunday – 29th

Sunday School Resumes Jan. 19
9:30 am Worship

Monday - 30th

8am-noon Church Office Open
2:00 pm MLK Committee - Lounge

Tuesday - 31st

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Wednesday - 1st

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Thursday - 2nd

8am-noon Church Office Open

Friday - 3rd

8am-noon Church Office Open

Saturday - 4th

5:00 pm Worship

SERVING DECEMBER 28/29

Ministers..... God's People
Pastor Rev. Tom Orth
Music Director Claire Witt
Recorded Accompaniment..Kat Tomaszewski
Comm. Asst...Wayne & Chris Christopherson,
Diane Prevost (Saturday)
Ushers Gary & Kay Grove, Rick Engstrom
Cindy Domrase (Saturday)
GreetersRick & Sharon Engstrom
Altar Guild Gentry Family
Livestream TeamDawn Anderson, Jan
Charter, Don LaBarre, Alex Struble
Counters Cheryl Lang, Cindy Suszek
Coffee Hour..Dale & Pat Schultz, Darlene Freel

SERVING JANUARY 4/5

Ministers..... God's People
Pastor Rev. Tom Orth
Music Director Claire Witt
Recorded Accompaniment..Kat Tomaszewski
Comm. Asst. Joe Gentry, Dale Schultz
Lector.....Sandy Welch
Ushers Wayne & Chris Christopherson
Greeters Joe & Dawn Gentry
Altar Guild Brandi Stone, Nancy Platt
Livestream TeamDawn Anderson, Jan
Charter, Don LaBarre, Alex Struble
Counters Gary & Kay Grove
Coffee HourJeff & Sandy Welch

**Large print worship folders & hearing
assistance devices are available from ushers**

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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