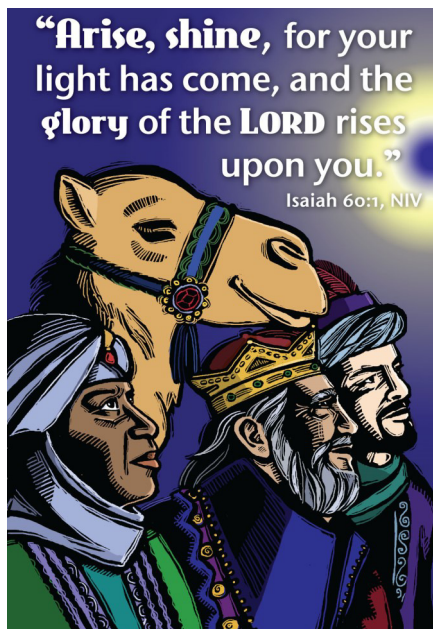


The Second Sunday after Christmas
January 4, 2026
Worship Service with Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.



"Be and Make Disciples of Jesus Christ"

Grace Lutheran Church

111 Lutheran Drive, P.O. Box 86

Eaton, Ohio 45320

937.456.6258

GraceEaton111@gmail.com — www.gracelutheranofeaton.com

Pastor: Dwight Hanson

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

In Holy Communion our Lord Jesus graciously invites those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to repent of all that separates us from God, and to receive his sacred and real presence for the forgiveness of sins.

In addition to wine, grape juice is also offered.

Children who do not yet receive Communion may come for a blessing.

Please take a moment this morning to fill out the “Attendance & Communion” Registration Cards (located in the pew racks). Pass your card to the end of your pew.

P - Presiding Minister; A - Assisting minister; **C - Congregation;**

* - PLEASE STAND

LBW - Green Hymnal

WOV - Blue Hymnal

+ + +

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

P In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:

C **Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(Kneeling or sitting; silence for self-reflection and examination)

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake,
forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of
Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of
all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

THE SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE:

P The peace of the Lord be with you, always.

C **And also with you.**

(We share the peace)

*GATHERING HYMN: *"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" (LBW 60)*



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.

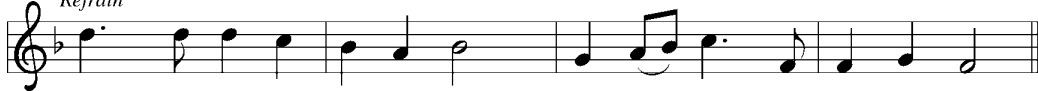


Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



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.

Refrain



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

***GREETING:**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
C **And also with you.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P Heavenly Father, as your beloved Son was sent to be the Light to all nations, so may his light shine in and through us. Send us to be Christ's light in our homes, schools, workplaces and to the ends of the earth;
C **through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 60:1-6

A A reading from Isaiah:

¹Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. ³And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. ⁴Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

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

PSALM 72:1-8—Let us read responsively from Psalm 72.

A ¹Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;
C **²that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**
A ³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the little hills bring righteousness.
C **⁴He shall defend the needy among the people; he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.**
A ⁵He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.
C **⁶He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.**

- A ⁷In his time shall the righteous flourish; there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
- C **⁸He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.**

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 3:1-12

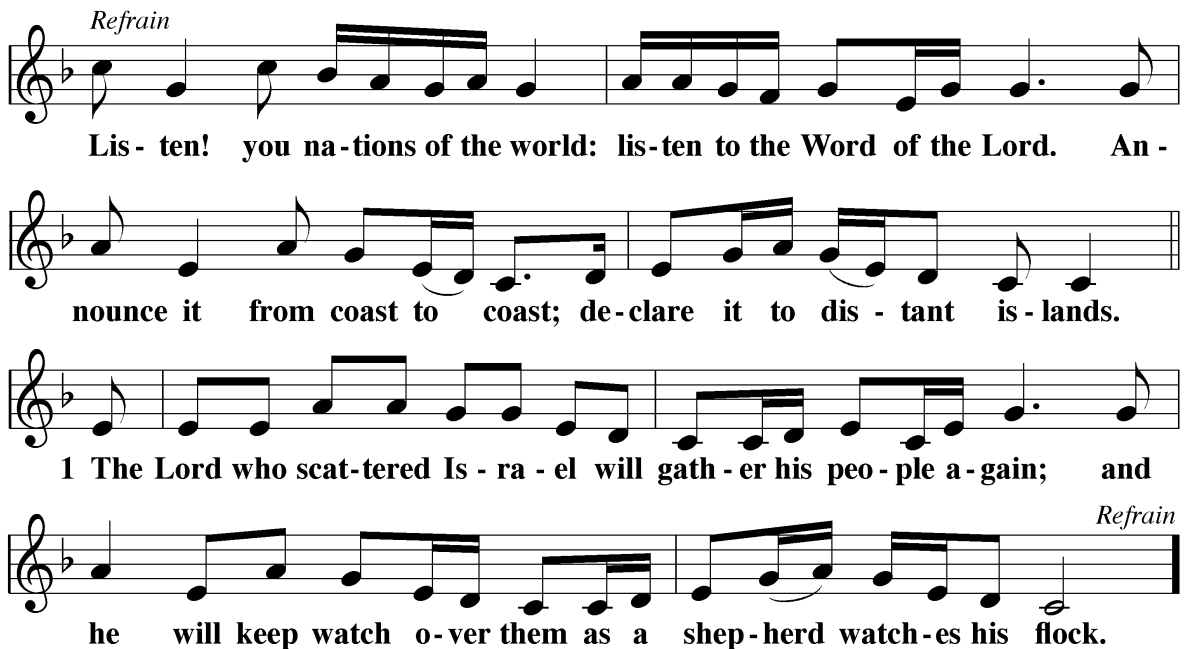
- A A reading from Ephesians.

¹For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles —
²assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ⁷Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

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

***VERSE: (From Canticle 14)**

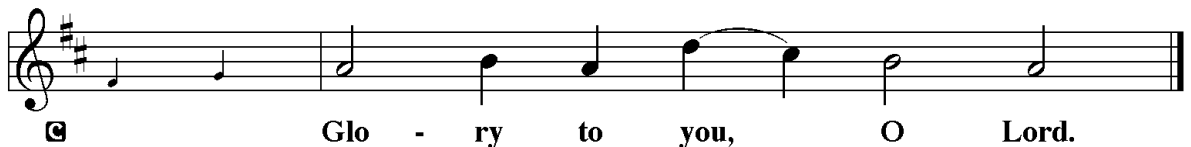
Refrain



Lis - ten! you na - tions of the world: lis - ten to the Word of the Lord. An -
nounce it from coast to coast; de - clare it to dis - tant is - lands.
1 The Lord who scat - tered Is - ra - el will gath - er his peo - ple a - gain; and
he will keep watch o - ver them as a shep - herd watch - es his flock. *Refrain*

***HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

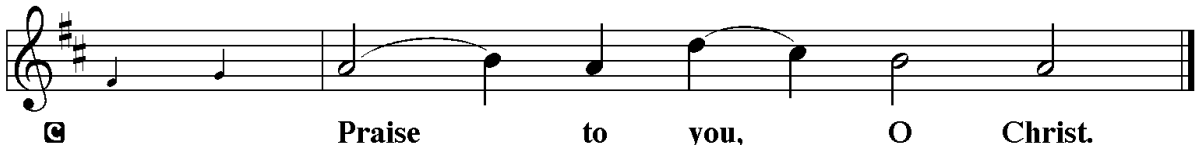


Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’” ⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I

too may come and worship him.” ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

P The Gospel of the Lord.



CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON: Pastor Dwight Hanson — The Mystery of the Ages

[NOTE: Beginning in 2026, Pastor’s written sermons will be available after Sunday, posted to the website @ gracelutheranofeaton.com]

2nd Sunday of Christmas; 1/4/2026; Grace Lutheran Church; Pastor Dwight Hanson
Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-8; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12 (using Epiphany texts/songs)

Children's message: Well, we're some of the last people still to have Christmas decorations. We do it, even if our culture doesn't, because in the Church there are twelve days of Christmas before the Wise Men arrive. Speaking of the Wise Men, they haven't arrived to see the baby Jesus yet. They're still over by the organ. Come with me and let's get the Wise Men to Bethlehem. (Traveling time.) Now, why did they bring gifts? Because Jesus is God's ultimate gift. Let's pray...

The Mystery of the Ages

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Newborn King Jesus vs. the old, established, and utterly cruel Herod—it was a *clash for the ages* that included what our second lesson called *the mystery of the ages*. To the human eye, it was completely lopsided. There was the humble, Holy Family, without palace or earthly protection, almost constantly on the move. When they finally fled for Egypt by night one pictures them trying to hush the cries of the infant Jesus, as soldiers patrol the region.

Just like that, our dear Christmas scene went from one of tender grace to desperation and danger. All because on the other side of the conflict sat a man on a throne who was appointed by the Romans decades prior. His post was kept secure by means of an iron grip. In other words, this was no fair fight.

Then again, this is *Scripture*, bearing witness to a larger plan, a hidden will. In fact, there are many biblical episodes of God vs. tyrant—*against all odds*, so to speak. One Bible teacher, writing about Matthew, chapter two, put it this way:

“This is the clash that shakes all our history.” “The enigma of history is this: How does goodness survive when badness has both conspiracy and the sword? The answer is in a governance of history above and beyond the wit of wicked men” (George Buttrick, pg. 256, *The Interpreter's Bible*; Vol. 7).

The truth about Herod the Great is that, in the historical hierarchy of mighty kings, he was simply a chunk of clay somewhere between the toes of greatness. That description may sound a little crude or dismissive, but it's actually made with biblical precision. It also closes the chapter on a prophecy which we read in our Advent series. It's absolutely fascinating to see how matters ultimately come together, which they do.

Some of you will remember what we pondered on Wednesdays in December, the second chapter of Daniel, which had occurred some 500 years before the birth of Christ. Back then, the Babylonian tyrant, Nebuchadnezzar, had been extremely troubled by a dream-vision that only Daniel could name and interpret. Furthermore, if Daniel hadn't come through with the correct answers, it would have cost the lives of all the wise men of Babylon. Here's Daniel, himself, addressing the tyrant:

^{31a} “You saw, O king, and behold, a great image...and its appearance was frightening. ³² The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” Then came the point of the revelation to Nebuchadnezzar: “you are the head of gold” (vs. 38).

Many trustworthy scholars trace the vision as such: From the Babylonians to the Persians, then to Alexander and the Greeks, followed by the Romans, as hard as iron, but with clay mixed into the feet as they worked with local monarchies like Herod the Great. It was all there in prophetic form in the revelation that God gave to Daniel for the saving of the wisemen and, more broadly, for the hope of this fallen world. The model of the Roman Empire has been the desire of every tyrant ever since. But what they didn't, and still don't, understand is the unhewn rock, the sifting wind, and the mystery of the ages.

When we think about the *unhewn rock* that would take out the great tyrannies of earth, consider it against the backdrop of Bible history. This is what Moses told Joshua just before Israel entered the Promised Land: “*You shall build an altar to the Lord your God of unhewn stones; and you shall offer burnt offerings on it to the Lord your God*” (Deut. 27:6). The altar would be sturdy, but naturally rugged. The sovereignty of the Creator and Redeemer does not need an assist from human craftsmanship, and will not hand over true glory to

pretenders. This is a solid, theological truth, embedded in the 1st Commandment, that forms a firm foundation not only for a new year, but for a new life!

Fast forward to the time of Christ, that little, unhewn stone that would grow ever bigger. You'll never guess who got a glimpse of it: "*wise men from the east*" (Mt. 2:1). Do you think that perhaps they were looking intently? Yes, they had the Creator's clue in all its astronomical splendor. But did they also remember a certain prophecy which God had given through Daniel? After all, it was through the revelation of that prophecy that all the Babylonian wisemen, and their families, were saved. It's the sort of passage that just might etch a place in one's mind, and in that of generations to come, especially if God and Daniel did the etching. Listen to what happened at the end of Daniel two:

⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel.... ⁴⁷ The king...said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery." ⁴⁸ Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon."

Let that last fact register, the exiled Israelite leading and teaching all the wise men of Babylon. Centuries passed, marching along right to Roman times, with its iron legs and feet of clay. Then Jesus was born, and along came the wise men. Connect the dots that God has placed in history and you will never view your life through the same lens again.

To summarize: Herod "the Great" turned out to be just a small piece of clay at the foot of a big idol of tyranny awaiting judgement by the Kingdom of God. And this brings us to the revelation of "the mystery hidden for ages."

God's sovereign victory in Christ, his incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection, his exaltation to the right hand of God, is the unhewn rock of ages. This divine truth even puts on notice the rebellious spiritual powers described by St. Paul as "*the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places*" (Eph. 3:10).

Let the whole world know that the ultimate Truth has come. Every false thing will be smashed and blown away like summer chaff. Jesus Christ entered the field of battle in such a manner, humbly, to win back hearts to the everlasting Lord. In him is "goodness." He's the source of all of it. And he has come to take back

what belongs to him, his own creatures, all who see the error of their ways, all who are sick of the false promises, who long for the real blessing once more.

Now, about that *mystery of the ages*...to quote our second lesson, it “*has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel*” (Eph. 3:5b-6).

At first pass, this might not sound like the biggest revelation ever made. But stop and truly ponder it. Instead of doubling down on the flood, wiping out the rebellion that had so grieved the heart of the Creator (Gen. 6-8), God chose Abraham and Sarah to be a blessing to all people, so that all whose hearts return to the Lord will be pardoned as righteous, simply for the act of giving God the due honor of being God. Thus, we have the history of Israel.

Then comes Christ. And as it turns out, he wasn't just another nationalistic messiah. He did battle with the *enemy* of the human race, the enslaver of souls. Through the cross he grants forgiveness to all who look to him. Then, when he rose from the dead, he became the first to live beyond the fallout of the curse. He promises this same life to all who trust in him, who abide in his Word, who love his name. This is what is meant by the inclusion of the Gentiles. The arms of God are open wide to all people, saying, in effect, “come home.”

Build your life on the unhewn rock of Christ. This is far beyond mere talk of an annual resolution. It's the wisest thing you could ever do. For the mystery has been revealed. The King of ages has come, and in Him is grace for those who recognize their need with open ears, hearts, and hands. Now spread the Word, for that's the mission of the Church to the ends of the earth, and to the end of time. Thanks be to God. Amen.

1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. ***Refrain***

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. ***Refrain***

4 This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. ***Refrain***

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. ***Refrain***

Text: English traditional

***NICENE CREED:**

**C We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through Him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven,
By the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
Who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

**A Let us pray: Almighty and everlasting God, the Alpha and Omega, inspire us to
number our days according to your wisdom. Amid the uncertainties of life,
teach us to find our focus, purpose, and unity by following Jesus. Watch over
us as we travel through this New Year, guiding us by the Light of Christ, even
as you once guided the Wise Men of old. Lord, in your mercy,**

C Hear our prayer.

A We pray for the needs of the world. Grant wisdom to all elected leaders, who face difficult dilemmas and opportunities to do good. Bless and protect them and their families. As we look out on a troubled world, we trust that your Light still shines in the darkness. Shine in the lives of the war-torn and weary. Grant the peace that only you, Lord, can give. Strengthen all first responders. And watch over all who honorably stand in harm's way for the good of others. Protect them and their families. And bless our schools as classes resume. May they be places of wholesome learning and growth. Lord, in your mercy,

C **Hear our prayer.**

A We entrust to your care those whom we name at this time: In their grieving—The Coffman Family at Connie's passing, In need of healing—*Sue Daniel, Rob Dell, John Hacker, Amy & Bryan Jackson, Nathan Kester, Richard Lehman, Connie Martin, Devin Mays, Katie Morris, Sally Mowell, Maggie Risko, Tom Schamel, Jackie Steiner, George Suggs, Robert Taylor, Wayne Williams*, as well as those whom we name silently in our hearts (pause for silent prayer). Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray,

C **Trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC

“One Small Child”

Carol Matevia

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE:

“What Child is This” vs. 3 (LBW 40)

3 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!

***OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P Let us pray.

P Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things.

C **Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

***THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:**

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.

***LORD'S PRAYER:**

C **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.**

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION AND BLESSING OF CHILDREN

Holy communion will be received kneeling or standing at the rail.

COMMUNION HYMNS:

“’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime” (LBW 72)

“The Hills Are Bare At Bethlehem (LBW 61)

“Lo How a Rose” (LBW 58)

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.
C **Amen.**

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:**

P Let us pray:
C **Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

***BLESSING:**

P Almighty God, Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.
C **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN: “We Three Kings” (WOV 646)**

***DISMISSAL:**

A Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Adapted from Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Liturgy reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #22413. All hymns used by permission of CCLI License #44125 or are in the Public Domain. The English Standard Version is published with the permission of Good News Publishers. ([English Standard Version - The Holy Bible Online](#)).

GRACE AT A GLANCE

Grace Lutheran Church

111 Lutheran Dr., P.O. Box 86 - Eaton, OH 45320
Phone: 937-456-6258 Email: GraceEaton111@gmail.com
www.gracelutheranofeaton.com ~ ~ Like us on Facebook

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday -Friday: 10—1, 2—5

TODAY January 4, 2026— Second Sunday after Christmas

9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
10:30 a.m. Fellowship & Adult Education
NO Youth Sunday School
6:00 p.m. Sunday S'mores

Monday January 5

Pastor's Day Off
9:45 a.m. Choose to Lose
12:30 p.m. Bulletin Production with Sermon

Tuesday January 6

Wednesday January 7

9:00 a.m. Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Undecorating of Church
NO Confirmation
6:30 p.m. Choir Resumes

Thursday January 8

7:00 p.m. AA Meeting (FH)

Friday January 9

12:30 p.m. Bulletin Production

Saturday January 10

UPCOMING WEEK SPECIAL/RESUMING EVENTS—1/11--17

Sun. 1/11—Worship w/Installation of 2026 Council Members
Youth SS w/Christian Movie & popcorn

Mon. 1/12—Pastor Off

Tues. 1/13—Mom's Bible Study

Wed. 1/14—Confirmation Resumes

Thurs. 1/15—Grace Herald Deadline
Graceful Fabric Guild

Sat. 1/17—Church Council Retreat @ Grace, Eaton

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This morning, we welcome into membership, Gary & Lynda Duke!

On Sunday, January 11th we will install the new church council members. Then on Saturday, January 17th, the Church Council will meet at Grace for their annual council retreat from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon.

HOMELESS SHELTER MEALS FOR 2026

There is a **sign-up sheet in the Narthex or you can contact Kelly Mt. Castle to sign up (937-336-1223)**. The board of elders thank you for helping with this very important ministry.

The Common Good of Preble County Food Pantry We are in need of one or more volunteers to take the food items collected in the fellowship hall, to the Food Pantry once or twice a month. You don't need to sign up to do this, just as you see the baskets filling up, let Mary in the office know that you are taking it to the pantry. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Altar Guild for January: Kelly Mt. Castle, Kelly Coffman, Rex Mt. Castle
Offering Counter for January: Susan Kiracofe

Sunday, January 4—Christmas 2

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Bryan & Amy Jackson
Usher: Darryl Leyes
Lector: Mary Shetter
Communion: Jane Coggin, Wanda Winter

Sunday, January 11—Epiphany

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Becky Lenk & Tiffany Ingram
Usher: Gary Pemberton
Lector: Debbie McKinney

Sunday, January 18—Epiphany 2

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Jeff & Lisa Kiracofe
Usher: Jeff Kiracofe
Lector: John Barnes
Communion: Kelly Coffman, John Kiracofe

Attendance & Stewardship — (\$4,187 needed wkly)

12.24.2025	7:30 p.m.	143	\$3,732.50
12.28.25	9:30 a.m.	75	\$2,764.00

Great Commission Outreach Partners:

World Mission Prayer League—Chris & Emily and family, Lutheran Military Veterans and Families, Abundant Grace, West Chester

Grace Lutheran Mission Endowment Fund: The purpose of this fund is to extend the ministry of Grace Lutheran Church, apart from the general operation of the congregation. To learn more about our Mission Endowment Fund, please contact the church office and we'll give your question to the appropriate person.

IN OUR PRAYERS

After 4 weeks we will remove names from this list. If you would like to keep someone on the list, please note their name on the back of the “Attendance & Communion Registration” form.

URGENT PRAYER LIST:

GRIEVING: The family & friends of Connie Coffman. She was called to the Church Triumphant on December 26, 2025. Funeral service was held at Grace on 12/31/2025.

HEALING: (In Alphabetical Order)

Sue Daniel: (Tiffany Ingram’s Best Friend in need of prayer)

Rob Dell: (Having health issues)

John Hacker

Amy & Bryan Jackson: (for comfort and healing)

Nathan Kester: (Nephew of Carol Matevia—prayers for treatments)

Connie Martin: (Friend of several folks at Grace—Dealing with cancer)

Devin Mays: (Great-nephew of Karen & Darren Marshall-having medical issues)

Sally Mowell: (Friend of Marshall’s—Cancer has returned)

Maggie Risko: (Lisa Kiracofe’s mother—recovering from a broken hip)

Tom Schamel: (Health issues)

Jackie Steiner: (As she deals with Huntington’s Disease)

George Suggs: (Dealing with health issues)

Robert Taylor: (Dear friend of Shetter’s— Rehabbing at home)

Wayne Williams:

LONG-TERM PRAYER LISTJackie Steiner, Rhonda Paige Atkinson, Amy Jackson, Andy Proeschel, Judy Newkirk, Mike & Judy Schamel, Suzan Pauley, Tim Lanthrop, Barb Goebel, Carmen Hasdorff, Martha Grimme, Tom Schamel, Amanda & Shayla Dell, Susan Root, Fran Kester, Teddi & Mike Watkins, Ruth Hardin, Jenifer Combs, Doug Davis, Pastor Dean & Sandy Haferman, Dave Brumbaugh, Scot Emig, Barbara Worley, Carolyn MacFadyen, Judy Jay, Will Suggs, Earl House, Barbara Lakes, Becky Hoskins, Kayli Johnson, Joe McHenry, Tom Barnes: and those serving in the military: Maj. Love Hartman; Capt. John Kettelman; SPC Brandon Mann; Brad Newkirk; Lt. Col. Kyle Hundley, Alex Pollitt, Airman, U.S. Air. Force.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY:

Fellowship & Education

Following Worship—Refreshments for all are served in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship on Sundays.

- **Youth Sunday School classes** meet @ **10:30 a.m.** — in the Sunday School music room (Education wing) and start with songs and prayer, then go to the adjacent classroom for our lesson. Bring a friend! Parents are always welcome.
- **Adult Education**— Following 9:30 a.m. worship, the adults meet to discuss the lessons of the day. Coffee and snacks provided.
- **Every other Sunday— Sunday S’mores @ 6:00 p.m.** —a Middle School- & High School-aged Youth Sunday Evening Ministry. Friends are welcome. Tina Ebright is the moderator and she can be reached at 937-472-5663.

Adult Bible Studies (during the week)

- **The 2nd Monday of each Month — 7:00 p.m.—The Phoebe Women’s Bible Study.** They are studying— *“Living with Defiant JOY”* a six-session study. Contact Kelly Mt. Castle (937-336-1223 or email: kelly.mtcastle@gmail.com).
- **The 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the Month:**
 - * **6:00 p.m. — Wine & The Word** — this group shares a light meal (at the home of Carol Perry). They will be choosing a new study. If you would like to join them, please contact Carol at 937-456-6683 or cbperry122@embarqmail.com
 - * **7:00 p.m. — Lakeside Fellowship is held** at the Lakengren home of Dan & Karen Schultz. If you would like to join this group, please contact Karen/Dan at 419-890-7965 or dkschultz52@yahoo.com.
- **The 2nd Tues. of each month — 5:30 p.m. — FOR MOMS . . .** They are studying a 6-session Bible Study for MOMS — **Mom Set Free** by: Jeannie Cunnion.
- **The Wednesday Morning Prayer & Bible Study — 9:00 a.m.** — meets in the Meeting Room off of the Fellowship Hall. They are studying the *minor prophets*.
- **The 3rd Thursday of each month — 2:00-4:00 p.m. — “Graceful Fiber Guild”** — **meets** in the Fellowship Hall or the adjacent meeting room. Bring a craft you’ve been working on or just come to learn a new craft. Everyone is welcome to join us! Our next meeting is *Thurs., Jan. 15th*.

These studies are open to any member and our friends. No prior Bible study background is needed. Please bring your Bible.



Today's Gospel Lesson

Second Sunday of Christmas
January 4, 2026

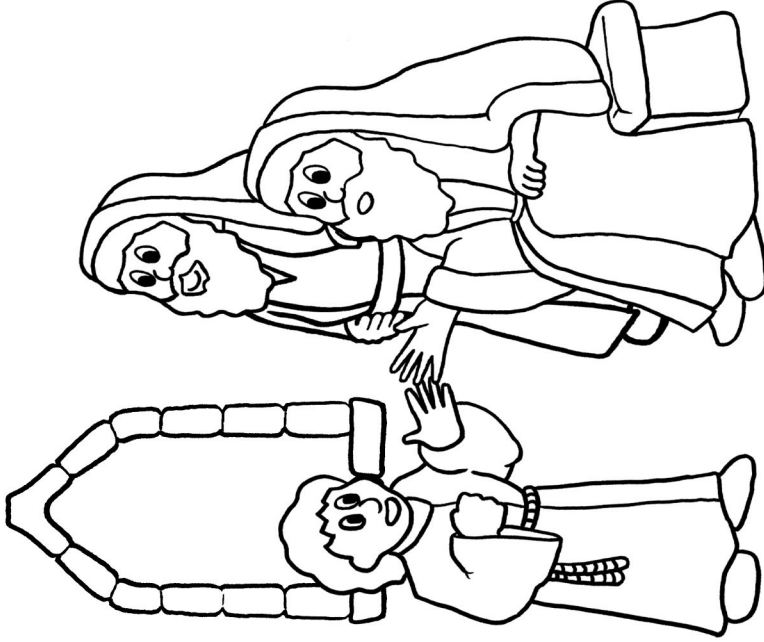
Twelve-year-old Jesus

Find the 39 **bold** words from Luke 2:40-47 (ESV)

C G N I T T I S R A E Y Z E F
E N N E P Q D B Q F V T D L O
U O G I W I S D O M D W H P U
D R R O D S E R M Y L E U M N
E T E T D N I F E F I L L E D
Y S W L R O A B L H H V I T N
A C Q U A I N T A N C E S P I
T W T U F T S U S E J A T R H
S E I Q A S I I U R E B E E E
R T A P V E P V R F E V N T B
E H N J O U R N E Y O D D I F H
W R Z E R Q D Z J S A P N A E
S E H C R A E S S Y H N G U A
N E D E Z A M A S K I N G D R
A M O N G Q P X B Z Q L A R D

And the **child** grew and became **strong**, filled with **wisdom**.
And the **favor** of **God** was upon him. Now his **parents** went to
Jerusalem every year at the **Feast** of the **Passover**. And when he
was **twelve years old**, they went up according to custom. And
when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the **boy Jesus**
stayed behind in **Jerusalem**. His parents did not know it, but
supposing him to be in the group they went a day's **journey**, but
then they began to **search** for him among their **relatives** and
acquaintances, and when they did not **find** him, they **returned**
to Jerusalem, searching for him. **After three days** they **found** him
in the **temple**, **sitting among the teachers**, **listening** to them and
asking them **questions**. And all who **heard** him were **amazed** at his
understanding and his **answers**.

Permission is granted to active Bible societies to photocopy for congregational use. Scripture quotations are from
The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV), copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a ministry of
a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

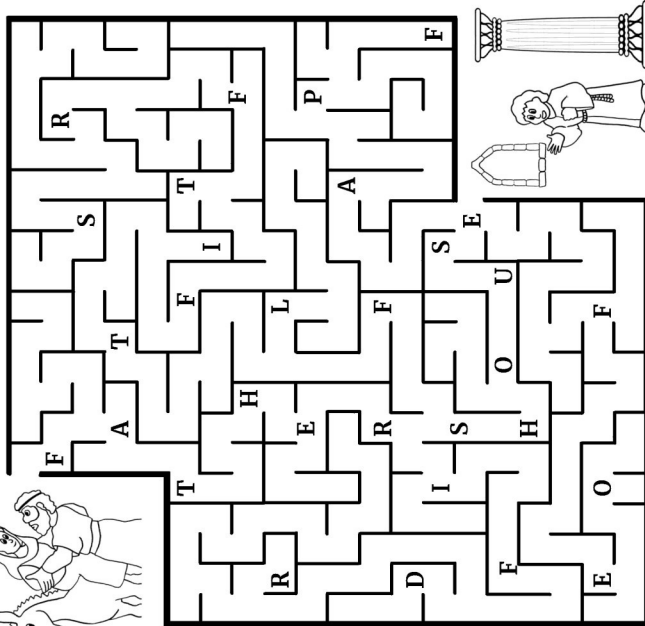


Mary and Joseph thought Jesus was lost.
But he was in the temple, talking with the teachers!

Children's Worship Pages

Mary and Joseph are searching for young Jesus.

Lead them through the maze, picking up letter "clues" as you go, and writing the letters at the bottom of the page!



Where was Jesus all along? As he told his parents when they found him in the temple, he was in his:

_____ , _____

God told Solomon to "walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and commandments." Solomon later went on to write the book of Proverbs, which was full of wise advice.

Can you tell which of the following sayings is from the Ten Commandments, and which is from Proverbs? Write a "C" beside each commandment, and a "P" beside each proverb!



- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| P | "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "Honor your father and your mother." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "You shall not steal." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "The heart of a man plans his ways, but the Lord establishes his steps." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "You shall have no other gods before me." |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart." |

Hint: To figure out which of these phrases comes from the Ten Commandments, look in Exodus 20:1-17. All other sayings come from the book of Proverbs.

Second Sunday after Christmas – January 4, 2026

⁴⁹And {Jesus} said to {Mary and Joseph}, ‘Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’⁵⁰And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.
⁵¹And {Jesus} went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.”

- Luke 2:49 – 52 –

I am the oldest of three kids in my family, and I have vivid memories of going to JC Penney with my mom and younger sister. I was about 7 or 8; my sister was 3 or 4. My sister *loved* to quietly disappear in the middle of a clothes rack. Mom would frantically look for her throughout the clothing section we were in, and eventually, Mom would let a sales associate know that my sister was missing. The entire department store would go on lock-down until my sister was found. Every time this happened, she was safely tucked away in the middle of a rack. For her, it was a game. For my mom, it was her worst nightmare.

About eight months after my husband and I, along with our three kids, moved from South Dakota to Ohio, I had a similar experience with my youngest daughter. My older daughter was involved in the Biddy Cheer. We were at a home Biddy Football game on a Sunday afternoon. I got distracted talking to another parent. When I turned around, my daughter Antonia was gone. Suddenly, a hundred people felt like a sea of millions. I felt disoriented and thrown into an ocean of chaos. I tried not to panic, and I asked my other children to help me. Just when I was about to tell another mom that I couldn’t find her, Antonia came running up. I let out the biggest exhale and hugged her tightly, asking where she had gone. She told me she was exactly where she said she would be: just a few feet away in the grass playing with her doll. She had told me, but I was distracted and didn’t hear her. She had no idea why I would be so worried. She had done everything I taught her to do, so in her eyes, it seemed rather unnecessary that I would be so worried.

“*Why were you looking for me?*” the twelve-year-old Jesus asks his mother and father. I can only imagine how Mary must have felt. Why *wouldn’t* she be looking for him? She was terrified that something had happened. Maybe she wondered how they could forget their son in Jerusalem. Jesus was never really lost because he was doing exactly what God intended for him. He was growing in wisdom and understanding the ways of God. Jesus didn’t come to get lost; he came to seek the lost.

Mary knew that her son was special. She knew that he came from God, but it still surprised her to see how wise he was when it came to his understanding of God. Oh the things that he would teach her in the years to come, but for now, he must follow the commandments and obey his parents.