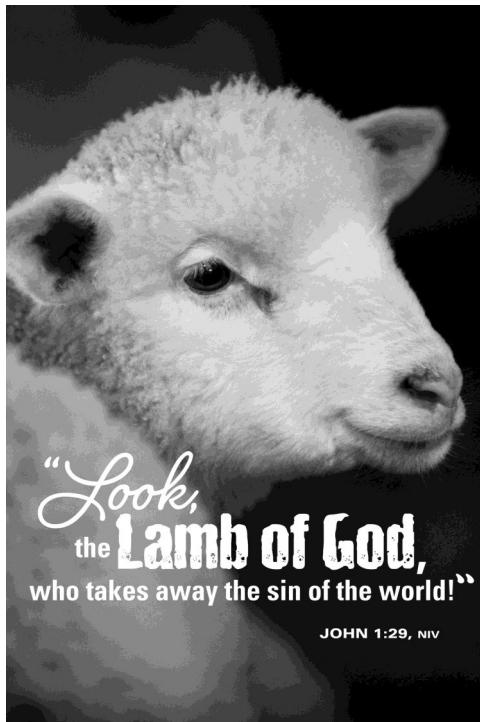


THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Sunday, January 18, 2026

9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion



"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 — 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.

Holy Communion will be offered at the communion rail this morning.

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.

+++

Please silence all electronic devices.

PRELUDE:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CONFESSİON AND FORGIVENESS:**

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

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 Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Please kneel or sit as you are able.

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.**

***PEACE:**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

***GATHERING HYMN: “Arise Your Light Has Come” (WOV 652)**

***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 Let us pray: Holy God, through your Son, Jesus, many came to faith in you. Bring us to faith by your grace that we may obediently worship and follow you;

C **through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 49:1-7

A A reading from Isaiah:

¹Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. ²He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. ³And he said to me, “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” ⁴But I said, “I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my right is with the LORD, and my recompense with my God.” ⁵And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him — for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength — ⁶he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” ⁷Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nation, the servant of rulers: “Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves; because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”

A The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 40:1-12

A ¹I waited patiently upon the LORD; he stooped to me and heard my cry.

C **²He lifted me out of the desolate pit, out of the mire and clay; he set my feet upon a high cliff and made my footing sure.**

A ³He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; many shall see, and stand in awe, and put their trust in the LORD.

C **⁴Happy are they who trust in the LORD! they do not resort to evil spirits or turn to false gods.**

A ⁵Great things are they that you have done, O LORD my God! How great your wonders and your plans for us! there is none who can be compared with you.

C **⁶Oh, that I could make them known and tell them! but they are more than I can count.**

A ⁷In sacrifice and offering you take no pleasure; you have given me ears to hear you;

C **⁸Burnt-offering and sin-offering you have not required, and so I said, “Behold, I come.**

A ⁹In the roll of the book it is written concerning me: ‘I love to do your will, O my God; your law is deep in my heart.’

C **¹⁰I proclaimed righteousness in the great congregation; behold, I did not restrain my lips; and that, O LORD, you know.**

A ¹¹Your righteousness have I not hidden in my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your deliverance; I have not concealed your love and faithfulness from the great congregation.

C **¹²You are the LORD; do not withhold your compassion from me; let your love and your faithfulness keep me safe forever,**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

A A reading from First Corinthians:

¹Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, ²To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: ³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge — ⁶even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you — ⁷so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the

revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

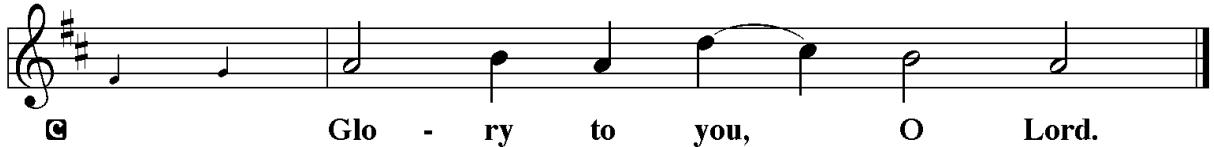
***VERSE:**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

***GOSPEL: John 1:29-42a**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

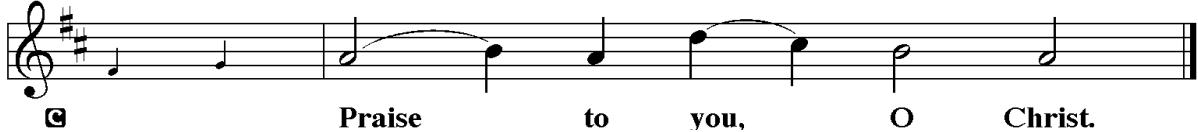


Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

²⁹The next day {John} saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ³¹I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” ³²And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.” ³⁵The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” ³⁷The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” ³⁹He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with

him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). ^{42a}He brought him to Jesus.

P The Gospel of the Lord.



CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

**SERMON: Pastor Dwight Hanson — Warmth and Light from God
(See last pages)**

***HYMN OF THE DAY: "Great is Thy Faithfulness" (WOV 771)**

***THE APOSTLES' CREED:**

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He 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.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

A Let us pray: Almighty and everlasting God, source of all that is good and true, draw us continually to the revealing and healing light of Christ. Inspire us to be Christ-centered, honoring the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, even our own sin. Cleanse us by your grace. Remove from our hearts the desire to reign supreme over our lives, or to seek to dominate others. Form us into servants of the everlasting Kingdom so that your Word goes out to all the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

A We pray for the needs of the world: For wisdom to guide all of our civic leaders; for nations in turmoil that justice and dignity would be shared by all people; and for those who suffer from disasters or inadequate resources. Inspire good neighbors to assist in ways that make a difference. And we pray for your protection over all who serve with honor in harm's way, and their families. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

A We lift up the names of all who near your healing at this time: In their grieving—The family of Anna Emrick; For healing — *Rob Dell, John Hacker, Amy & Bryan Jackson, Richard Lehman, Connie Martin, Devin Mays, Sally Mowell, Brenda Renner, Maggie Risko, Tom Schamel, Jackie Steiner, George Suggs, 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

ANTHEM: **“Ancient Words”** **Choir**

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: “We Three Kings” vs. 1 w/refrain (WOV 646)

1 We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain

Oh, star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

A Merciful Father,
C we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—
ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious
love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*HOLY COMMUNION

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING:

The musical notation consists of four staves of music in G major, 2/4 time. The first staff contains the text "P The Lord be with you. C And al - so with you." The second staff contains "P Lift up your hearts. C We lift them to the Lord." The third staff contains "P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." The fourth staff contains "C It is right to give him thanks and praise." The notation uses a treble clef and includes various note values such as quarter and eighth notes.

P The Lord be with you. C And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts. C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

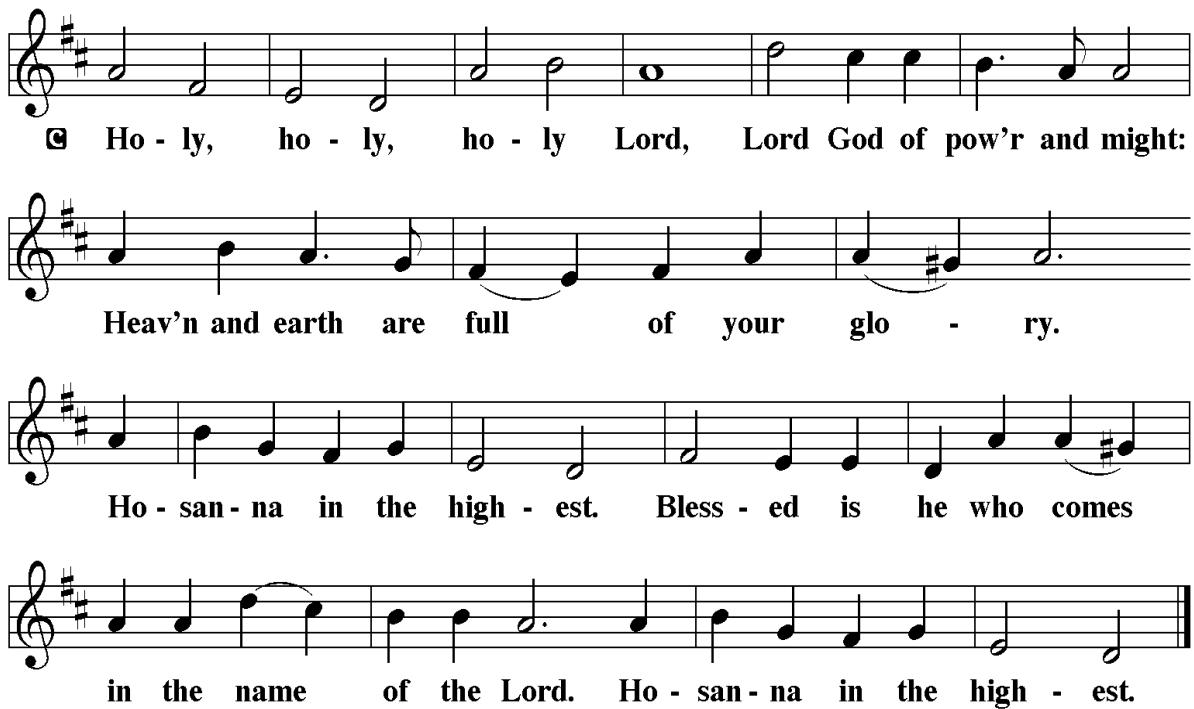
C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*PREFACE:

P It is indeed right and sal - u - tar - y that we should at all times and in
all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, ho - ly Fa - ther,
through Christ our Lord. Shar - ing our life, he lived among us to reveal
your glo - ry and love, that our darkness should give way to his
own bril - liant light. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts
of heav - en, we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:



*SANCTUS:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*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 COMMUNION & BLESSING OF CHILDREN

COMMUNION HYMNS: “*Lamb of God*”

“*I the Lord of Sea and Sky*” (WOV 752)

“*Brightest and Best*” (LBW 84)

“*We Are Marching in the Light of God*” (WOV 650)

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

*POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE:

C Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev- 'ry- one what he has done.
Let ev- 'ry- one who seeks the Lord re - joice and proud- ly bear his name.
He re - calls his prom - is - es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy
with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:

P 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.

C Amen

*THE BLESSING:

P Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and for - ever.
C A - men

*SENDING HYMN ***“As With Gladness” (LBW 82)***

*DISMISSAL:

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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

9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
10:30 a.m. Fellowship & Adult Education
10:30 a.m. Youth Sunday School
6:00 p.m. Sunday S'mores

Monday

January 19—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—OFFICE CLOSED
Pastor's Day Off

9:45 a.m. Choose to Lose

Tuesday

January 20—Homeless Shelter Meal Sponsor: Carol Matevia
12:30 p.m. Production of Bulletin with Sermon from 1/18/2026
7:00 p.m. Worship Committee

Wednesday January 21

9:00 a.m. Bible Study
5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class
6:30 p.m. Choir

Thursday January 22

7:30 p.m. AA Meeting (FH)

Friday January 23

12:30 p.m. Bulletin Production for 1/25/26

Saturday January 24

In the coming Week:

1/25 Worship, 10:30 Fellowship & Education for all ages

1/26 Pastor's day off, 9:45 Choose to Lose, Production of Bulletin with Sermon from 1/25

1/27 Wine & the Word (Perry's), Lakeside Fellowship (Schultz's)

1/28 Bible Study, Confirmation class, Choir

1/29 AA Meeting

1/30 Production of bulletin for 2/1

1/31 Annual Meeting of Civil War Re-enactors (FH)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGN-UP TO SPONSOR A HOMELESS SHELTER MEAL 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 thanks you for helping with this very important ministry.

Help Needed to Take Food Items to 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.

And while we're on the subject of The Common Good of Preble County and Volunteering ...



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**

**CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!
WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

Retail Support:
Responsible for general customer service, stocking merchandise, sorting donations and/or operating a simple cash register.

Food Pantry:
Assist in distributing food and processing donations.

Join our team, to build a stronger community!
Please contact Jenny McCarty at 937-456-6560
or jmccarty@commongoodpreble.org

Calling ALL ladies! The Phoebe Women's Bible Study is exploring attending the "Extraordinary Women" conference in Ft. Wayne, IN on April 17-18. This would be an overnight event and cost is \$79/person, also will be getting hotel rooms. We would love to have a group of us go. Speakers include: Tim Tebow, Lysa Terkeust, Margaret Feinbreg, as well as a concert with Anne Wilson. Please let Tiffany Ingram know if you would be interested in attending before 2/8. For more info: ewomen.net

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

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

Sunday, January 18—Epiphany 2

9:30 a.m.

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

Sunday, January 25—Epiphany 3

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Rex & Kelly Mt. Castle
Usher: Rex Mt. Castle
Lector: Tina Ebright

Sunday, February 1—Epiphany 4

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Terry & Evelyn Good
Usher: Clayton Kiracofe
Lector: Tiffany Ingram
Communion: Patty Barnes, Janice Barnes

Sunday, February 8—Epiphany 5

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Marti Good-Ernst & Michael Good
Usher: Darryl Leyes
Lector: Mary Shetter

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

01.11.26 9:30 a.m. 65 \$5,977.32

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 Emrick & Schaeff families at the passing of Mickey Emrick's wife Anna. She passed on Wednesday evening.

HEALING: (In Alphabetical Order)

Jim Carlisle: (Fell and broke his hip—he had surgery and is recovering)

Rob Dell: (Having health issues)

John Hacker

Amy & Bryan Jackson: (for comfort and healing)

Richard Lehman: (He is rehabbing at Kingston of Miamisburg)

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)

Brenda Renner: (Prayers for upcoming biopsy)

Judy Schamel: (Prayers for Healing from aspiration pneumonia)

Maggie Risko: (Lisa Kira'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)

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 Ketteman; 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., Feb. 19th.***

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

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Epiphany 2 – January 18, 2026

*“He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.”*

- Psalm 40:2 -

The playground had a big sandbox. One day the sandbox was filled with rainwater. The teachers knew that it would be messy, but allowed the children to play in the sand anyway. The children were clothed in smocks to keep them clean and were encouraged to play nicely. It worked well for a while; some muddy water fell on skin and smocks with the occasional slip of a shovel, but it could easily be washed with soap and water. Eventually the children became wild. The splashing stopped being accidental; some became greedy and vengeful and threw mud on the other children.

The teachers tried to be peacemakers, speaking with firm, kind voices about proper behavior, but it didn't work. They had to get right into the middle of it all to stop it with action rather than words. The sandboxes were closed. The children were cleaned and the extremely dirty ones were given clean clothes.

We are like those children. Our toys are different, and the mud we sling is not made with sand and water. We are selfish and vengeful. We will do anything to get our way, no matter who gets hurt in the process. Unfortunately, spiritual mud is not so easy to clean. We are wallowing in the mud of sin and death, and the consequences can be eternal. We don't always see how our self-centeredness affects others, but our neighbors are harmed by our behavior. The consequence of sin is never limited to us; it affects others to some degree.

The psalmist speaks as a child of God who has realized his own sinfulness. He cries out for the saving grace that will save him from his sin. God is the peacemaker. He is the teacher that speaks to those who will not hear. Like the children who did not see how their play was harming others, the world does not recognize its sin and need of a Savior. But Jesus enters in, nevertheless. Jesus was willing to “get his hands dirty” in the cross to make things right for us. He lifted us out of the mud, and by his own blood, he made us clean. In Christ, we are clothed with something new: His righteousness, without a spot or blemish.

The Lamb of God

Find the 30 **bold** words from John 1:29-34 (ESV)

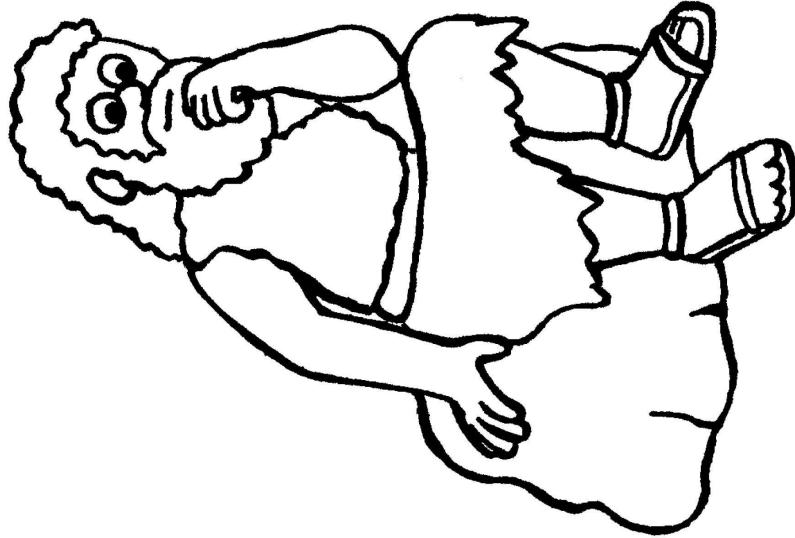
E E B W H T S W L D E S M Q N
U J A Z R T A K S E L A M B E
K O P Y I S P K N J A Y H G V
N H T R E T F A E A N R L P A
G N I Z I T P A B S R E S O E
A P Z D D W I T N E S S B I H
S W E L E T M S H O J E S U S
D R A R N S L X P R H X O U Z
N E S Y I K C R U O W Q N V E
E T L N A T U E L E O Y T I W
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

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the **Holy Spirit**.' And I have seen and have **borne witness** that this is the Son of God."



Today's Gospel Lesson

Second Sunday after the Epiphany
January 18, 2026



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The Holy Spirit helped John the Baptist realize that Jesus was God's Son.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IN FEBRUARY



**GET YOUR CHILI RECIPES BACK OUT ... WE'RE BRINGING BACK
THE CHILI COOK-OFF COMPETITION FOR
SMI HAITI—RICE AND BEANS FUND**

Sunday, February 15, 2026

In the Fellowship Hall

Following worship

Anyone interested in participating is asked to sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.

Then, on **2/15** ***bring your chili to the fellowship hall*** with your name and type of chili. (If you'd like to share the recipe, please bring a few copies of that too!). Everyone who would like to participate will taste the chilis and vote for their favorites by placing loose change, bills, or checks in the containers provided. The 3 chilis that bring in the most money will win "bragging rights".

All funds raised will go directly to the SMI Haiti Rice & Beans Fund. If you don't care for chili but would like to join in the fellowship and/or make a donation you are welcome to do that too! Checks may be made payable to Grace Lutheran Church

Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026—Worship with Holy Communion & the Imposition of Ashes

 Sun, Feb. 22—Lent 1
Wed. Feb. 25 — Midweek Lent 1—Soup Supper, Worship



IN MARCH

Sunday, March TBD — ***"Bring Your Favorite Casserole"*** lunch—Following Worship

Sun, Mar. 1—Lent 2 — Worship with Holy Communion

Wed. Mar. 4 — Midweek Lent 2—Soup Supper, Worship

Sun. Mar. 8 — Lent 3 — Worship, Begin Ordering Easter Flowers

Wed. Mar. 11 — Midweek Lent 3—Soup Supper, Worship

Sat. Mar. 14—Assembling Easter Cards

Sun. Mar. 15—Lent 4—Worship with Holy Communion

Wed. Mar. 18—Midweek Lent 4—Soup Supper, Worship

Sun. Mar. 22 — Lent 5—Worship with Holy Communion

Wed. Mar. 25—Midweek Lent 5—Soup Supper, Worship

Sun. Mar. 29 — Palm Sunday—Worship with Holy Communion



2nd Sunday after Epiphany; 1/18/2026; Grace Lutheran Church; Pastor Dwight Hanson
Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-12; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42a

Children's message: Psalm 40:4, "Happy are they who trust in the Lord!" What do you think that means? Does it mean that if you trust God you'll get everything you want, which is why you'll be happy? It's too easy for our wants to slip into selfishness. The happiness God gives is tied to the trust, because God can be trusted. Jesus takes care of everything we truly need, whether we understand it at the moment or not. That's why it's called "trust". What will happen tomorrow? Trust the Lord. Yes, but what about...? Trust the Lord. Then comes "happy." Then maybe even a smile! Let's pray...

Warmth and Light from God

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

It may be helpful just to name the symptoms:

- cracked skin and frizzy hair;
- a general state of dehydration;
- lingering cough;
- a tired look in the eyes;
- a feeling that the walls may be closing in;
- coffee cup permanently attached to the hand;
- a tendency to squabble, with or without cause;
- persistent negative outlook.

If you have four or more of these characteristics, you likely suffer from a condition called *January*. Treatment may include the immediate drinking of a glass of water, followed by a phone call to a travel agent who specializes in Florida or Arizona. Others insist that a home-remedy works best of all—consecutive Sundays at church. We'll get to that in a minute. But let's not rush past the reality of the condition.

There's no getting around the fact that deep winter can be tough for northerners, as most people crave a good dose of warmth and light. The sun goes down early, taking the temperature with it. Adding insult to injury, there are the usual colds and flus of the season, accompanied by advertisements for expensive Caribbean trips. It borders on the cruel.

Speaking of which, at some point in the mid-1980s there was a January cold-snap that stretched from Ohio to North Dakota, and perhaps further than that. It still lingers in bone-chilling memory. My memory of it involved the necessity of doing outside chores when the *high* temperature for several days stayed *colder* than

twenty below zero. Our animals were fed with round bales, requiring an operational tractor. That was the biggest challenge, along with keeping running water running. We finally got the tractor going by throwing a tarp over the front end and firing up a kerosene heater under the tarp to warm the fluids and metals. We stored the battery in the house, with a charger on it, until it was called into service. That old tractor engine fired up with a grumpy start, and turning the wheel led to creaking and groaning. But it did the job. It just needed some warmth and care. That's our image.

Like that old tractor, are there not times when *we* recognize our need for help from outside ourselves, warmth and light from God to unfreeze us, enabling us to serve again? Could there be a January thaw simply by coming to church?

Isaiah 49:6 speaks of Israel's call to be a light to all the nations. *Rise and shine and do marvelous things!* But what happens when the people of God, then or now, hit one of those spiritual and emotional cold snaps? If you've ever felt that way—down, troubled, used up—read vs. 4 of our first lesson: “*But I said, 'I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity'*” (Isaiah 49:4a). These words convey the spiritual equivalence of being frozen stiff!

This passage is *pivotal* in the sense that people can go one of two ways. We can turn for help from above. Or, losing that vertical bearing, a sense of failure and frustration can easily slip into despair. In such a state of mind, a person can become blinded to the Light. Everything gets viewed through dark lenses.

Years ago, I remember seeing a television ad for nature videos. One of them was called something like “nature's children,” with images of young otters sliding down a winter slope and baby antelopes frolicking on a hillside. It was a very happy show. But, for some reason, they offered another video that focused exclusively on nocturnal hunters, stalking their prey with glowing eyes. It was rather disturbing.

When a person starts to despair, it's like they've put this second video into the play-loop of their mind. They just can't see the sunny side of anything. If that ever happens to you, the first important thing to do is to recognize it and run toward the Light. Draw close to the Word and Christian fellowship. The temptation is to isolate, and excuses are easy to come by. Loving family and friends can also play a vital role here, with God's help, providing prayer and care. Low times call us to remember that God is still present, and everlasting goodness

endures forever. But we do have to look in the right place. Then, in time, spiritual springtime returns, by the grace of God.

Israel was faltering in Isaiah 49 because it got stuck in itself, its own thoughts and plans. What they needed was a proverbial opening of the shades. Let in the Light of God! We were not made to handle everything in this life on our own. When St. Paul gave thanks for the Corinthians, he thanked God for the *grace given* them in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:4). That tractor, faced with an Arctic blast, froze up. It needed help, to be enveloped in warmth. Then it became remarkably effective, despite the lingering cold. A little warmth and light in just the right ways, and we can face much in this old world. How important it is for us to be humbled and to recognize that only by the warmth and grace of God do we rise to meet each day.

Look closely at the passage from Isaiah—*God said* vs. *I said*. I wonder which statement has the most staying power? Vs. 3: God said to me, “*You are my servant...in whom I will be glorified.*” Vs. 4: “*But I said, ‘I have labored in vain...’*”. Alright, so life has rarely worked out according to your plan. All that this means is that you fit within the mission of the Son of God. What I mean is this: Did Jesus come for the perfect, whose lives were perfect? He came for you. Think bigger perspective and longer timeframe.

The prophecy of Isaiah included a time when the children of Israel were stuck in Babylon, captives, forced servants of foreign kings. And it would continue with the struggles in the land upon return home, wandering through the rubble of a fallen Jerusalem. All the forever-kingdom-promises given to David must have seemed like a cruel joke, like taunting. There’s that despair again, a sign that fallen people have once again made an idol out of human reason. The low-point of the suffering was *not* the end of the story. We don’t stop at Good Friday. *I am with you always, to the end of the age*, said the risen Christ (Mt. 28:20b). “The Lamb,” after laying down his life, rose up, forever! He’s the Lord. There are implications for us—for life and faith.

One implication is that a little patience goes a long way. It’s always the case that God is working out a plan that’s larger than our immediate perception of that plan. We see failure. He’s sowing the seeds of a deeper faithfulness, one that’s humble and recognizes the need to trust Him come what may. The most beautiful Light from God often shows itself at dawn, after the dark of night. That’s when we

stop repeating the words, “I said.” We move on to what “he said.” Then we’re ready to be actually helpful servants of the Kingdom in a broken world.

In closing, notice what it says in Isaiah 49:6, “*I will make you as a light for the nations....*” *Make*. We’re all works in progress. Like the disciples in the Gospel, we’re called to travel on a journey through the years. As Jesus put it, “*Come and you will see*” (John 1:39). There’s a cumulative effect for those who walk in the Light of the Lord and His Word. We grow along the way.

Do you know someone in need of the warmth and Light of God? Share your own humble story, and encourage them to seek the Light. Jesus came for them, too. Thanks be to God. Amen.