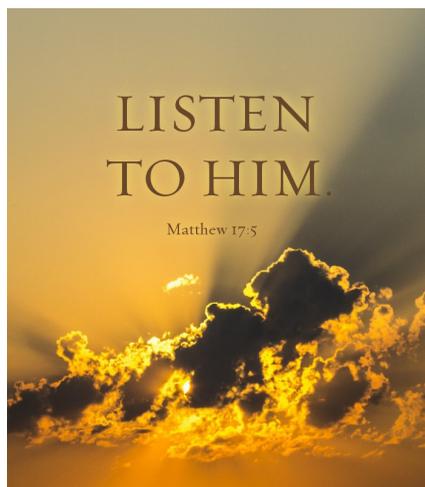


The Festival of the Transfiguration

February 15, 2026

Worship 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.

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.

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

*** - PLEASE STAND**

LBW - Green Hymnal

WOV - Blue Hymnal

+ + +

Please silence electronic devices.

+ + +

PRELUDE: “*Prelude on an Early American Hymn*” (arr. Broughton)

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.**

***GATHERING HYMN: “God, Whose Almighty Word” (LBW 400)**

***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: God of majesty, through Jesus’ transfiguration you reveal him as your beloved Son. Keep us faithful in the promise that through the cross and the empty tomb we are joint heirs with Christ and will one day enjoy the fullness of your glory for eternity;

C **through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Exodus 24:7-18

A A reading from Exodus.

⁷Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” ⁸Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.” ⁹Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank. ¹²The LORD said to

Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.” ¹³So Moses rose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴And he said to the elders, “Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. Whoever has a dispute, let him go to them.” ¹⁵Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The glory of the LORD dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 2:6-13

A ⁶ “I myself have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.”

C ⁷**Let me announce the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my Son; this day have I begotten you.**

A ⁸Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession.

C ⁹**You shall crush them with an iron rod and shatter them like a piece of pottery.”**

A ¹⁰And now, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.

C ¹¹**Submit to the LORD with fear, and with trembling bow before him;**

A ¹²Lest he be angry and you perish; for his wrath is quickly kindled.

C ¹³**Happy are they all who take refuge in him!**

SECOND LESSON: 2 Peter 1:16-21

A A Reading from 2 Peter.

¹⁶We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” ¹⁸we

ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

A The Word of the Lord.

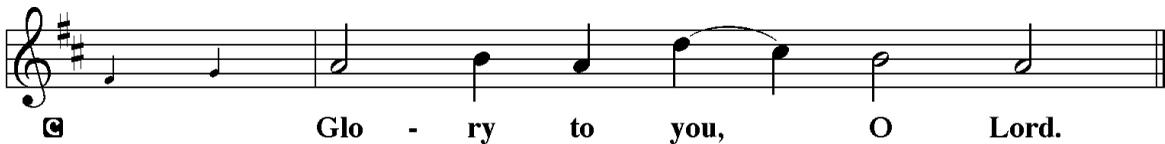
C **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**



***GOSPEL: Matthew 17:1-9**

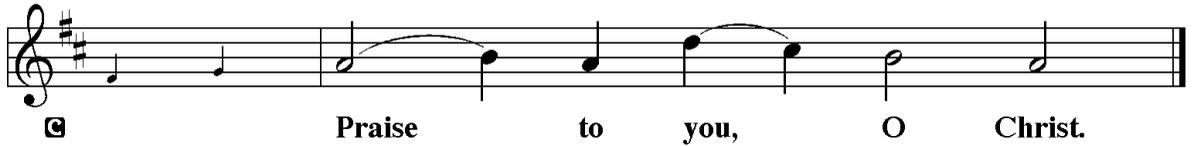
P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the seventeenth chapter.



¹After six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. ³And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁵He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." ⁶When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were terrified. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and

have no fear.” ⁸And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. ⁹And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.



CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON: Pastor Dwight Hanson: A Lamp in a Dark Place (See end of bulletin)

***HYMN OF THE DAY: “Be Thou My Vision” (WOV 776)**

*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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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:

A Almighty and everlasting God, your Word is an everlasting lamp shining in the darkness. Inspire us to read it, proclaim it, and hold it fast. Open our hearts and minds to what Peter, James, and John witnessed with their eyes, the shining face of Jesus. Fill us with authentic hope and endurance. When we get discouraged in the valleys of this world, remind us of the truth that abides. Form us into effective ambassadors for Christ. Shine on us, in us, and through us. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

A We pray, O Lord, for the needs of the world: For all who have struggled through the winter. For justice and peace in Ukraine, the Middle East, and wherever there is turmoil. We ask your guidance for our civic leaders, that they would be led by wisdom for the good of all. We pray for those who honorably serve in harm's way, and their families. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

A We pray for all who need healing in any way... *Jim Carlisle, Mike Coe, Kelly Coffman, Rob & Suzie Dell, Kennedy Giordano, Barb Goebel, Adriane Guinn, The Guthries, John Hacker, Amy & Bryan Jackson, Richard Lehman, Devin Mays, Sally Mowell, Barb Orr, Brenda Renner, Maggie Risko, Judy Schamel, Tom Schamel, Jackie Steiner, George & Barbara Suggs, Robert & Betsy 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

ANTHEM:

“You Are Lord”

Choir

*OFFERTORY HYMN: *“Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning”* (LBW 84)

3 Shall we not yield him, in costly devotion,
fragrance of Edom and offerings divine,
gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?

5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783-1826, alt.

*OFFERTORY PRAYER:

P Let us pray. 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**

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING:



♩ The Lord be with you. ♪ And al - so with you.



♩ Lift up your hearts. ♪ We lift them to the Lord.



♩ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



♪ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY:**



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.

***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.

***THE 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 SACRAMENT AND BLESSING OF CHILDREN

COMMUNION HYMNS: *“Lamb of God”*



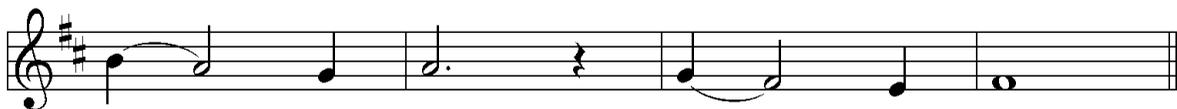
C Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

“How Good, Lord, to be Here” (LBW 89)

“Beautiful Savior” (LBW 518)

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee” (LBW 479)

***THE BLESSING:**

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

C Amen

***THE POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE:**



☐ 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



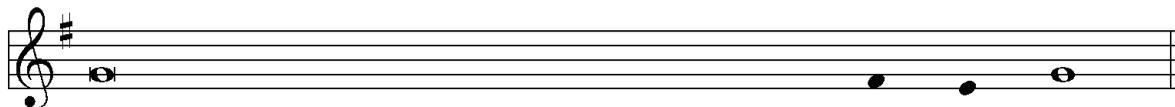
with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:**

P Let us pray. Almighty God, you provide the true bread from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Grant that we who have received the Sacrament of his body and blood may abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the power of his endless life, now and forever. Amen**

***BENEDICTION:**



☐ The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.



☐ A - - - - - men

***SENDING HYMN: “Thy Strong Word” vs. 1-2, 6 (LBW 233)**

***DISMISSAL:**

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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**Schedule of MidWeek Worship for Lent:
Lent 2026: Thirsty for God**



**Five Lenten Wednesdays after Ash Wednesday - (2/18/2026)
Feb. 25—Mar. 25**

Wed., Feb. 25 ~ *The Bitter and the Sweet*

Wed., Mar. 4 ~ *A Stiff Neck at the Fountain of God*

Wed., Mar. 11 ~ *The Wise Consider, Remember, & Proclaim*

Wed., Mar. 18 ~ *Like a Thirsty Deer*

Wed. Mar 25 ~ *The Spring of the Water of Life*

Maundy Thurs., Apr. 2 ~ *This Cup*

Good Fri., Apr. 3 ~ *The Cup that He Drank*

6:00 PM Simple Soup Supper

7:00 PM Vespers

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 February 15, 2026

9:30 a.m. Festival Worship of Transfiguration with Holy Communion
10:30 a.m. Chili Cook-Off

Monday February 16—President’s Day — OFFICE CLOSED
Pastor’s Day Off

Tuesday February 17—Homeless Shelter Meal sponsored by Schamels
12:30 p.m. Bulletin Production with Sermon from 2/15 & Ash Wednesday Bulletin

Wednesday February 18

9:00 a.m. Bible Study
5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class to Attend Ash Wednesday Worship
7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes

Thursday February 19

1-3 p.m. PERI Meeting (FH)
2:00 p.m. Graceful Fiber Guild
7:30 p.m. AA Meeting (FH)

Friday February 20

12:30 p.m. Bulletin Production for 2/22

Saturday February 21

1-5 p.m. Proeschel Family Gathering

UPCOMING WEEK SPECIAL EVENTS

Sun. 2/22—Worship, Fellowship, Education for all ages

Mon. 2/23—Pastor Off, Bulletin Production from 2/22

Tues. 2/24—Mom’s Bible Study, Wine & the Word, Lakeside Fellowship

Wed. 2/25—Bible Study, Choir, Confirmation, Soup Supper, Midweek Worship

Thurs. 2/26—Lifeline Screening, AA Meeting

Fri. 2/27—Bulletin Production (3/1)

Sat. 2/28

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.

Calling ALL ladies! If you are still interested in attending the

“Extraordinary Women” conference in Ft. Wayne, IN on April 17-18, you can contact Tiffany Ingram for information you will need to register. There are 8 women attending and we have 4 rooms reserved. The cost of the event is \$79/person. We would love to have you as part of the group. Speakers include: Tim Tebow, Lysa Terkeust, Margaret Feinberg, as well as a concert with Anne Wilson. Reach out to Tiffany Ingram if you are still interested. For more info: **ewomen.net**

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Altar Guild for February: Becky Lenk & Tiffany Ingram
Offering Counter for February: Carol Perry; 2/25—Janice Barnes

Sunday, February 15—Transfiguration

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Allen & Kelly Coffman

Usher: Allen Coffman

Lector: Kelly Coffman

Communion: Tiffany Ingram, Debbie McKinney

Wednesday, February 18—Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m.

Greeter/Usher: Rex & Kelly Mt. Castle

Lector: Dan Schultz

Communion: Elaine Fudge, Jane Coggin

Sunday, February 22—Lent 1

9:30 a.m.

Greeter: Dean & Mary Shetter

Usher: John Kiracofe

Lector: Barb Myers

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)

02.08.26 9:30 a.m. 70

\$4,020.89

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:

HEALING: (In Alphabetical Order)

Jim Carlisle: (Healing from hip surgery)

Mike Coe: (As he recovers from knee surgery)

Kennedy Giordano: (Kelly Coffman's niece—She had surgery to due to an infection and is now recovering well)

Barb Goebel: (she is in the hospital with an infection)

Adriane Guinn: (Owner of Buckeye Jake's & friend of the Shetter's & others—she is dealing with serious health issues)

Nancy Guthrie: (Mother of Savannah Guthrie's (TV broadcaster) & siblings— for their needs)

John Hacker

Amy & Bryan Jackson: (for comfort and healing)

Richard Lehman: (He has returned home still healing)

Barb Orr: (Friend of Debbie McKinney—Dealing with multiple cancers)

Brenda Renner: (Prayers for upcoming biopsy on 2/18)

Maggie Risko: (Lisa Kira cofe's mother—prayers asked for healing of a broken hip)

Judy Schamel: (Prayers for Healing at home)

George & Barbara Suggs: (Dealing with health issues)

Robert & Betsy Taylor: (Dear friends of Shetter's—Prayers for their well-being)

Wayne Williams

LONG-TERM PRAYER LISTSally Mowell, Devin Mays, Connie Martin, Jackie Steiner, Rhonda Paige Atkinson, Amy Jackson, Andy Proeschel, Judy Newkirk, Mike & Judy Schamel, Suzan Pauley, Barb Goebel, Carmen Hasdorff, 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 are beginning a new study at our next meeting (2/24) **The Acts of the Apostles—Part 1**. If you would like to join them, please contact Carol at 937-456-6683 or cbperry122@embarqmail.com, so that we can order additional books.
 - * **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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IN FEBRUARY



TODAY!!!!!!

THE GREAT CHILI COOK-OFF & COMPETITION IS BACK!!!
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.
Find additional information in the February issue of the Grace Herald



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



LIFE LINE SCREENING — You're invited to a Life
Line Screening event! at Grace Lutheran Church on **Thursday,**
Feb. 26, 2026 — *Life Line Screening is the nation's leader*
in Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screenings

(Trusted by over 11 million customers) - Screenings are simple and painless. Get peace
of mind or early detection.

Who should attend: Anyone age of 40+

Special Pricing for \$129—Carotid Artery Disease Screening; Atrial Fibrillation
Screening; Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening; Peripheral Artery Disease Screening.

4 ways to book your appointment...1) Call 800-324-9458 and use promo code
HABCO01; 2) Visit [lla.social/habc](https://www.lla.social/habc); 3) Scan to QR Code (found in the Feb. Grace Herald);
4) Text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607.

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Transfiguration of Our Lord – February 15, 2026

“Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel.”

- Exodus 34:17 -

Imagine what it must have been like at the foot of the mountain when Moses went to talk with God. The Hebrews did not know the God of their forefathers very well after four hundred years in Egypt. They saw divine reward in every good thing and divine wrath in every natural occurrence. It must have been frightening to see the fiery cloud descend down the mountain as Moses was climbing up. Was it a bad sign? Was Moses going to be safe? What did the fire mean? Would this God really save them?

In a very different time and place, on August 23rd, 79 AD, the Roman people celebrated Volcanalia, a festival honoring the Roman god Volcanus. The festival was meant to placate the god so that the people would be blessed by him. The people began August 24th with a sense of assurance because they had just offered sacrifices to Volcanus. But it was on this particular day in history that day Mt. Vesuvius erupted. The Roman city of Pompeii was buried under ash in a matter of hours, trapping the people and their environment in that moment for eternity.

Luther tells us in the Catechism that we should “fear and love and trust God above all things.” It doesn’t take long for us to turn away from the one true God. Sometimes it is fear itself that works against love and trust.

Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights. “How could Moses survive in that fiery cloud?” the people asked. So they sought comfort from the gods they knew. The people forgot the God who led them out of Egypt, and by the time Moses returned they were worshipping an idol of gold. It was then they discovered what true fear meant!

When it comes to our trust in God, the tension between fear and love cannot be done away with by us; it is resolved only in Christ. Just as on the day of Transfiguration, there are times in our lives when the terrible cloud will descend on us. But we have the promise: Christ himself is with us. The One who reveals himself in frightening glory is the same One who has called us by name in love. He walks with us on the brightest mountaintop as well as in the darkest valley.



Only Jesus

Find the 39 bold words from Matthew 17:1-8 (ESV)

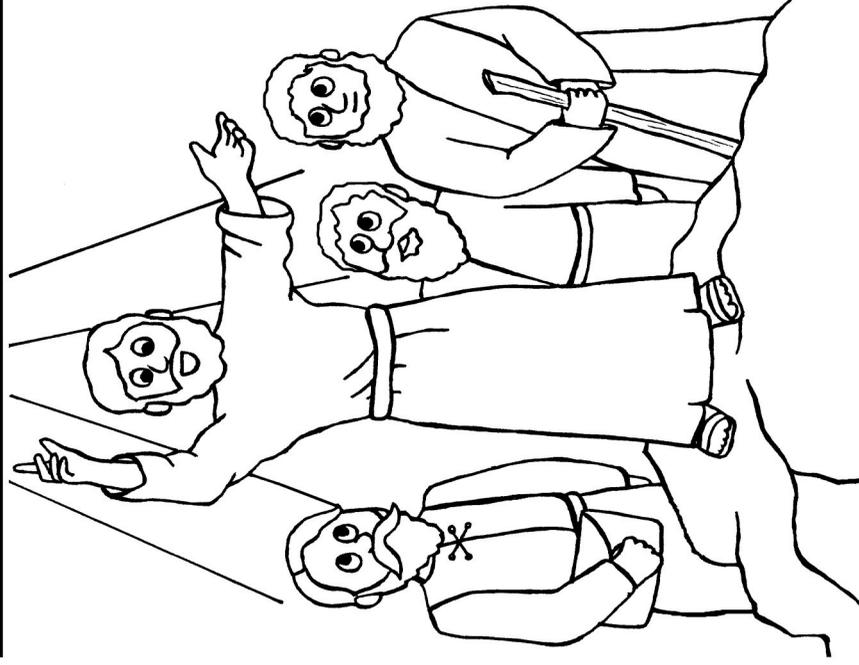
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And after six days Jesus took with him **Peter** and **James**, and **John** his brother, and **led** them up a **high mountain** by themselves. And he was **transfigured** before them, and his **face shone** like the **sun**, and his **clothes** became **white as light**. And **behold**, there **appeared** to them **Moses** and **Elijah**, talking with him. And Peter said to Jesus, "**Lord**, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make **three tents** here, one for you and one for **Moses** and one for **Elijah**." He was still speaking when, **behold**, a **bright cloud overshadowed** them, and a **voice** from the cloud said, "**This is my beloved Son**, with whom I am **well pleased**; **listen** to him." **When the disciples** heard this, they fell on their faces and were **terrified**. But Jesus came and **touched** them, saying, "**Rise**, and have no **fear**." And when they **lifted up their eyes**, they **saw** no one but **Jesus only**.

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Today's Gospel Lesson

Transfiguration of Our Lord
February 15, 2026



A voice from a cloud said, "This is my beloved Son."

Transfiguration Sunday; 2/15/2026; Grace Lutheran Church; Pastor Dwight Hanson
Exodus 24:7-18; Psalm 2:6-13; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

Children's message: What have I got here? (An old-fashioned oil and wick lantern.) How does it work? When would it be needed? In the dark. The Bible for today says that God's Word is like a lantern for our hearts and minds. It gives us light from God. And Jesus, himself, is the light of the world. We're here to listen to the Word and to let it shine on the path before us, something we'll need for our whole lives. Let's pray...

A Lamp in a Dark Place

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. St. Peter, mature in his apostolic faith, reminded the whole Christian Church that we have what we need to navigate this life. 2 Peter 1:19, "*And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*" When a God-given authority tells us to "pay attention," it's a good idea to do just that, beginning with a closer examination of this very verse.

So first, "*we have the prophetic word,*" and beyond that, we have it "*more fully confirmed.*" The prophetic word is God's Word revealed to ancient Israel for the sake of the whole world. The Bible, cover-to-cover, is comprehensive. The universe was created by the will and proclamation of God. Genesis clearly articulates *purpose* for our existence. The Creator spoke, and here we are! Between those two points can be found the entire history of earth, all that the sciences methodically strain to know, and all that the humanities seek to understand through the wisdom of culture, literature, and experience.

Also, what God revealed in the Old Testament was "*more fully confirmed.*" The words and deeds of the Lord Jesus in the Gospels provide *confirmation* of what God has been doing from the start—and it was "good," and it was "very good" (Gen. 1:31). It was people who broke faith and ushered in the troubles. The Savior saves us from ourselves by restoring us to the will of God.

Peter's testimony, sealed at the cost of his life, has become part of the written witness that serves as "*a lamp shining in a dark place.*" Yes, *a dark place.* The Apostle pulled no punches describing our lived reality. From Genesis, chapter three, a spiritual darkness has fallen over the world, an unholy, unwholesome shadow. It began with false claims of personal sovereignty, manifesting in a hand grasping for divinity. Such folly has corrupted the blessing.

When we realize just how troubled the world is, and the source of it—brazen spiritual mutiny—it’s shocking that God has been so patient. Yet, despite the miseries that sin has produced, the grace of God has sustained us through the goodness we still experience in creation and community. The Lord did not pull the plug, though He would have been fully justified in doing so (see Genesis 8:20-22). With determination, He lovingly reached into the suffering and the madness, so that humble souls may be drawn closer to Him for healing.

Through the writing and preservation of the Scriptures, God has communicated precious truth to all generations, among whom some have always quieted themselves and their lives so that faith can listen and receive. God knows how dark the human mind can become when we lose vertical contact. So, the Lord provided a “*lamp*.”

Imagine a scenario where you have to go out on the darkest night, when even the moon and stars are blocked. All you’re given is an old-fashioned lamp. Might you come to cherish that lamp, and tend to it? If your path leads to some patch of difficult terrain with uncertain footing, will you not hold up that lamp and try to see the way forward? So it is with the testimonies of faith and our lives in this world. The Word of the Lord gives true Light, having been revealed to generations just like us in all the essentials, including the same spiritual battle.

Remember who was inspired to write today’s epistle. It was *Peter*. When *he* wrote about a “*dark place*,” he knew whereof he spoke. Go back with him to that long night when he lost his way, stumbling first due to foolish bravado, quickly followed by fright and insecurity. Though he tried to warm himself by a fire, nothing in the natural world could touch that kind of coldness and darkness. He ended up panicking, right into a final face-plant in the dark, with an emphatic denial the he even knew the Light (Mt. 26:74).

By the grace of the Savior, he was forgiven, renewed, and inspired. Drawing from his own experience, he had something to say to all who would read his words, those who also faced spiritual darkness. Keep focused on the lamp that God has provided, “*until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts*.”

When the light of God rises in the heart of a person who’s been humbled, the spiritual rebellion that’s done so much damage can be seen for what it is. There’s a surge of longing to be back with God, to care for people, to tend the garden, to be a blessing. Such a soul is bound to be an influence for good, small though its sphere of influence may be. But imagine millions of such stories, each circle of blessing

overlapping throughout the world. Such is the mission of the Church. There's no other lasting fix. It comes down to living from the Word of God.

To hold the written Word is to hold the very lamp that God has provided so that we can find the way Home. At the same time, it's crucial to understand that this very path has been severely contested, and remains so within our lifetime, and will be until Christ returns. A lack of realism about the challenges of the spiritual battle leads to a lack of readiness, perhaps even a tendency to wander off where lambs should not go.

St. Peter knew about this, of course, which is why he wrote: "*We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty*" (2 Peter 1:16). Peter, James, and John were there on the mountain of Transfiguration. They got a glimpse of what it will be like when our Lord returns. Why was this so important? Let me read from later in the epistle: "*First of all you must understand this, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own passions and saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming'*" (2 Peter 3:3-4a; RSV)? "*But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*" (2 Peter 3:8; RSV).

Now, a little more about those "*cleverly devised myths*" (2 Peter 1:16). There's intentionality in something "cleverly devised." Listen to what Jesus once said about the Tempter: "*When [the devil] lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies*" (John 9:44c; RSV). Of course, an outright lie may be easily detected. This is where the "clever" part comes in, the almost-truth peddled as truth. The human race fell from a subtle twisting of words and a temptation that should have been resisted.

Back in the 20th century, there was a guy on the radio who was known as "The Bible Answer Man." Well-versed in Christian apologetics—explaining the faith—he took phone calls from anyone. Over the years, he became very educated on cults and wrote a book on the matter. Here's a fascinating quote: "Within the theological structure of the cults there is considerable truth, all of which, it might be added, is drawn from biblical sources, but so diluted with human error as to be more deadly than complete falsehood" (Walter Martin, pg. 24, *The Kingdom of the Cults*; 1997 edition).

He felt that Christians, if we are to handle all the troubling twists and turns of modernity, need to be well-grounded. As an example, he told of a time when the American Banking Association had a "training program." Bank tellers from

around the country were invited to Washington to learn how to detect “counterfeit money.” The most intriguing part was that during their entire time at the training event they never once handled counterfeit money. Those who set up the program were convinced that people who were “thoroughly familiar with the original” would be able to detect a phony. Dr. Martin concluded “that if the average Christian would become familiar once again with the great foundations of his faith, he would be able to detect...counterfeit elements...” (pg. 23).

So, how can we come into contact with the “great foundations” of our faith? We have a written witness. Furthermore, this witness finds its center in a person, the Savior of the world. “*And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only*” (Mt. 17:8). He’s the Word through whom all things were made. He’s the Light that shines in the darkness. And he called Apostles to bear witness in spoken word, in written account, and in lives laid down—witnesses to the will of God and the mighty deeds of mercy and reconciliation.

Ah, but an objection rises. Are these matters so simple? Do we not live in a complex, cosmopolitan world? In one of the suburbs of Chicago, I passed by a building dedicated to something called “Theosophy,” and the sign by the road said: “Find your own light.” Is that how it is? Does humility demand that we acknowledge the full equality of a pantheon of beliefs?

In his study of cults, one of the things that shocked Dr. Martin the most was their “sincerity” (pg. 437). They believed what they believed. Was that the end of it, then? On what basis were the beliefs founded? Or are we not supposed to raise that question? Dr. Martin concluded that their sincerity shouldn’t be mocked, *but also* that sincerity, itself, cannot be the deciding factor.

The love of Christ does not come at the expense of God’s truth. Personal humility? It’s mandatory. Respect for others? Also mandatory. But respect for God and His Word above all! “*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him*” (Mt. 17:5). “*And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only*” (Mt. 17:8).

One of the three who lifted those eyes was Peter, who reminded us: “*you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place*” (2 Peter 1:19). For two-thousand years the Church has lifted up the witness of the Prophets and Apostles, refilling the lamp of faith with the oil of revealed truth, ever returning to that vision of the shining face of the Savior—“*Jesus only.*” Thanks be to God.