

**Hope Lutheran Church**  
2001 S 500 E, Columbia City, IN 46725  
**Grace Lutheran Church**  
204 North Main Street Columbia City, Indiana 46725  
**Phone: 260-244-7118      Fax: 260-248-2138**  
**E-Mail:** office.gracelutheran@gmail.com  
**Web Page:** www.gracecolumbiacity.org

Reverend Matthew Converse, Pastor  
Kirsten Jines, Preschool Director  
Joyce Dubach, Organist

**January 4, 2026**  
**Epiphany of Our Lord**



### **Introduction to the day**

The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

**Food pantry need: cereal and soup**  
**Attendance for December 28, 2025 - 46**

**PRELUDE**

*please stand if you are able.*

**GATHERING** *The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism,  
as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,  
Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty Savior,  
Prince of Peace.  
**Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness,  
let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God,  
**we yearn for your presence to transform  
our grief, pain, and despair.  
We confess that we have not always prepared  
room in our hearts for your love;  
we have not always recognized  
your presence among us;  
we have not always embraced your message of peace.  
We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,  
oppression, and fear.  
We confess our failure to make room  
for those seeking refuge;  
our participation in violent systems  
that harm your innocent ones;  
our reluctance to embody your good news.  
Be born in us today  
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.  
Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you.

✠ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!

**Amen.**

## GATHERING SONG

(ELW 308)

### . O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*

Music: Philipp Nicolai

## GREETING

*During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.*

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

## HYMN OF PRAISE

(ACS 914)

### Jesus, the Light of the World



- 1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, Je-sus, the Light of the world;
- 2 Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; Je-sus, the Light of the world;
- 3 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Je-sus, the Light of the world;
- 4 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Je-sus, the Light of the world;



“Glo - ry to the new-born king,” Je-sus, the Light of the world.  
join the tri - umph of the skies; Je-sus, the Light of the world.  
Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord! Je-sus, the Light of the world.  
Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the Light of the world.

*Refrain*



We'll walk in the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright.



Shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je-sus, the Light of the world.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, stanzas; George D. Elderkin, 1845–1928, refrain

Music: WE'LL WALK IN THE LIGHT, Traditional; arr. George D. Elderkin

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**WORD** *God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup> Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth  
and thick darkness the peoples,  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.

<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

<sup>4</sup> Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together; they come to you;  
your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms.

<sup>5</sup> Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you;  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

<sup>6</sup> A 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 proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

- <sup>1</sup> Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to <sup>1</sup> the king's son;  
<sup>2</sup> **that he may rule your <sup>1</sup> people righteously  
and the <sup>1</sup> poor with justice;**  
<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity <sup>1</sup> to the people,  
and the <sup>1</sup> hills, in righteousness.  
<sup>4</sup> **Let him defend the needy among the people,  
rescue the poor, and crush <sup>1</sup> the oppressor.**  
<sup>5</sup> May he live as long as the sun and <sup>1</sup> moon endure,  
from one generation <sup>1</sup> to another.  
<sup>6</sup> **Let him come down like rain upon <sup>1</sup> the mown field,  
like showers that water the earth.**  
<sup>7</sup> In his time may the <sup>1</sup> righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall <sup>1</sup> be no more.  
<sup>10</sup> **May the kings of Tarshish and of the <sup>1</sup> isles pay tribute,  
and the kings of Sheba and Seba <sup>1</sup> offer gifts.**  
<sup>11</sup> May all kings bow <sup>1</sup> down before him,  
and all the nations <sup>1</sup> do him service.  
<sup>12</sup> **For the king delivers the poor who cry out <sup>1</sup> in distress,  
the oppressed, and those who <sup>1</sup> have no helper.**  
<sup>13</sup> He has compassion on the lowly and poor,  
and preserves the lives <sup>1</sup> of the needy.  
<sup>14</sup> **From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,  
and precious is their blood <sup>1</sup> in his sight.**

## SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

A reading from Ephesians.

<sup>1</sup> This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, <sup>2</sup> for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you <sup>3</sup> and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, <sup>4</sup> a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. <sup>5</sup> In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: <sup>6</sup> that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

<sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power.

<sup>8</sup> Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ <sup>9</sup> and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, <sup>10</sup> so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup> in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*please stand if you are able.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 124)**



*Alleluia.* We have observed his star<sup>1</sup> at its rising,\* and have come to<sup>1</sup> worship him. *Alleluia.* (Matt. 2:2)

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

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

<sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” <sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**SERMON**

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

## When a Star Is Shining



1 When a star is shin-ing o - ver east - ern hills,  
 2 Where the world is wait-ing for an un - known day,  
 3 Lead us on, O Day-star, in the qui - et night;



when the air is si - lent, and the clam - or stills,  
 where a voice for - got - ten cries, "Pre - pare the way!"  
 guide us through the shad - ow with your gen - tle light;



when the night is wait-ing, and the old hopes rise,  
 Where an earth - ly pow - er makes the heart turn cold,  
 show us in a man - ger our re - demp - tion's sign;



then the time has rip - ened and the heart grows wise.  
 there the gifts are of - fered— in - cense, myrrh, and gold.  
 bring us to a morn-ing where the prom - ise shines.



Lead us on, lead us on, to a morn-ing where the



prom-ise shines. Lead us on, lead us on,



to a morn - ing where the prom - ise shines.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993

Music: WHERE THE PROMISE SHINES, Bob Moore, b. 1962

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## **CREED**

**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,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**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 INTERCESSION**

**Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the  
church, creation, and all who are in need.**

*A brief silence.*

Repairer of the breach, you separate us from our sin and unite us with one another. Heal the animosity in our hearts, and bind us together in love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Author of life, you sent your spirit over the waters, your breath into your children, and guiding stars across the sky. Awaken us to the plight of the planet and send us to care for your creation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Light that leads the way, you make yourself known to the nations. Illuminate just paths and guide leaders in the church and the world in your holy will. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Voice of the silenced, you cast the mighty from their thrones and fill the hungry with good things. Grant those in need the courage to demand equality and those with abundance the wisdom to share. Respond to any who call out in need this day. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Proclaimer of promises, you raise up prophets and messengers in the places we least expect. Equip us to listen well to those who bring both good news and painful truths. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Redeemer of the saints, you gift us with many people throughout our lives who point the way to you. We give you thanks for the recently departed and all who have loved us. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## PEACE

*The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ.*

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.*

*The assembly is seated.*

**MEAL** God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

## OFFERING

(ELW 296)

**What Child Is This**

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898 Music: English ballad, 16th cent.

## OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray,

**God of glory,**

**great are your wonders among us**

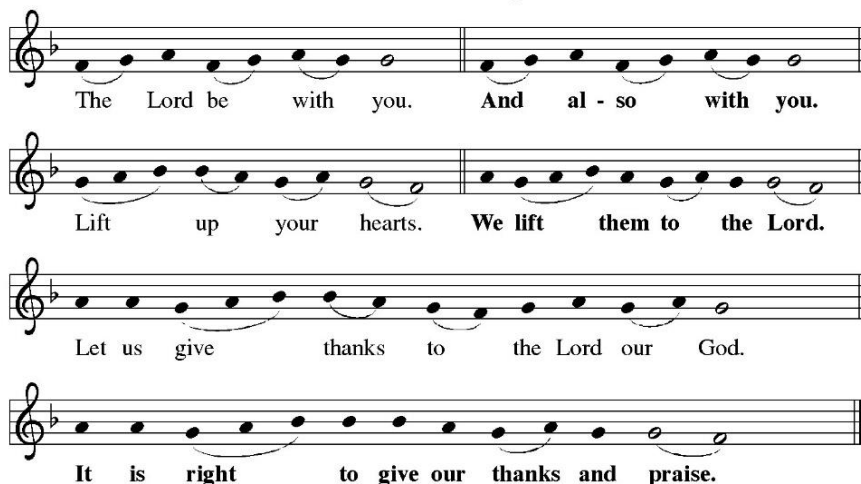
**and many are the blessings you bestow.**

**Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,**

**that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,**

**through Christ our Savior. Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE



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.

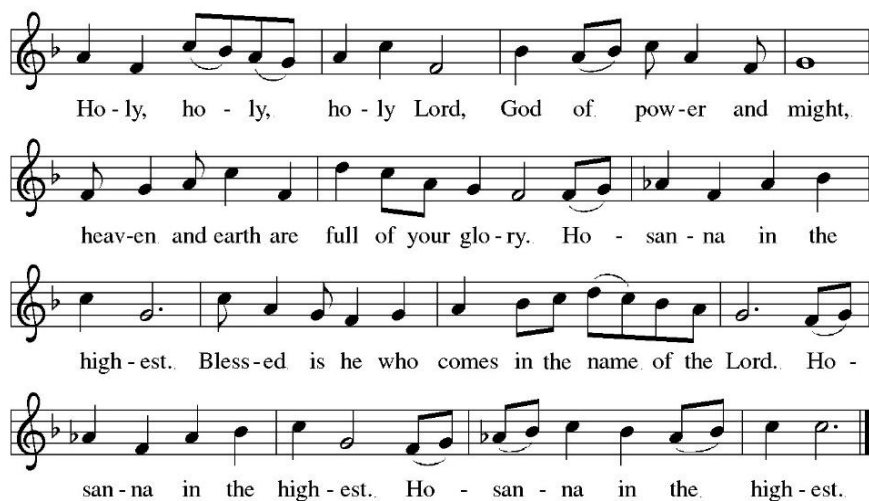
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## Preface

It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,  
al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.  
In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened  
the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vis - ion of your glo - ry,  
that be - holding the God made vis - i - ble,  
we may be drawn to love the God whom we can - not see.  
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,  
we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

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## Holy, Holy, Holy



## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,  
at the birth of time  
your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,

you sent your Word, born of Mary,  
to shine in our darkness  
and to make us your daughters and sons.

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.

Remembering, therefore,  
his birth and life among us,  
his death and resurrection,  
we await his coming again  
when all things will be restored in him.  
By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,  
that, held and nourished by you,  
we may live as your children,  
shining with the light of your Son.  
Through him all glory and honor is yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church,  
both now and forever.

**Amen**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Here is life. God is with us.  
Come, receive what God has promised.

## COMMUNION

*(Everyone is welcome to come to the communion table. If you have not received instruction in the Sacraments, come to the altar for a blessing. If you would like to receive communion where you are seated in the pews, please tell the usher and at the close of communion you will be served.)*

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

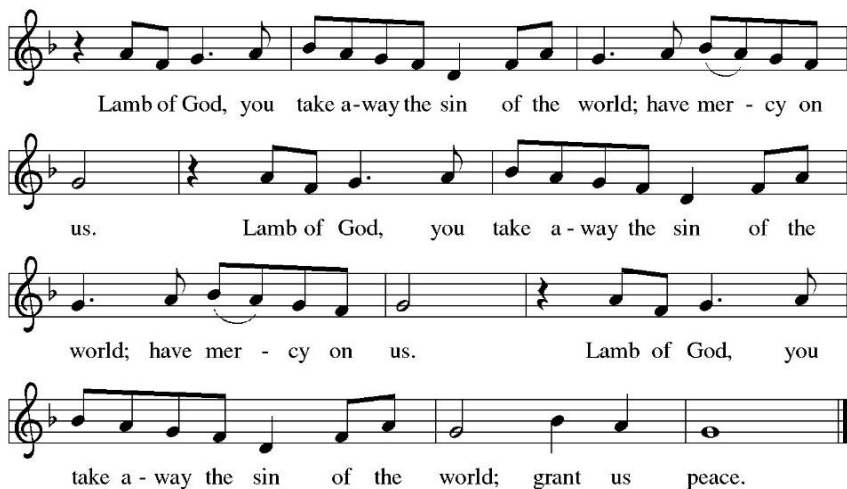
The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*and each person may respond* **Amen.**

*The ministers commune either after or before others commune.*

## COMMUNION SONG



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.

## SONG DURING COMMUNION

(ELW 294)

. **In the Bleak Midwinter**

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894 Music:  
Gustav Holst, 1874-1934

## **Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray:

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.

May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts  
the mystery of your presence.

Move us to discover the wonders of your love  
in the everyday moments of our lives,  
through Christ born in us.

**Amen.**

**Sending** *God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## **Blessing**

The triune God,

glorious Mystery,

holy Incarnate One,

abiding Comforter,

✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

**Amen.**

## **Sending Song**

**(ELW 300)**

.

### **The First Noel**

Text: English traditional Music: English traditional; arr.  
John Stainer, 1840-1901

## **DISMISSAL**

Glory to God in the highest!

**And peace to God's people on earth!**

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

**Thanks be to God.**

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## ANNOUNCEMENT

### BREAD LOAF OFFERING - JANUARY- Energy Assistance

- Please be advised that the Fellowship Hall (North and South sides) will be closed to all meetings from January 5th until January 16th. We do have other areas available for meetings, and you are more than welcome to use them. Kindly inform us of your intended meeting location so we can ensure the space is reserved and no one else uses that room during your scheduled time.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via email at [office.gracelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:office.gracelutheran@gmail.com) or call (260) 244-7118, ext. 1.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

- If you would like to submit a report for the congregational meeting, please send it to [Office.gracelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:Office.gracelutheran@gmail.com) by Jan 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Our annual congregational meeting will be held on January 25<sup>th</sup> right after church service. The church will be providing Fried Chicken and drinks. We will be passing around a sign up sheet for sides and desserts as we get closer to the date. Please put this on your calendar. Thank You
- Food Pantry needs, with the colder weather the need for Soup increases. While we still need Cereal and Peanut Butter, we could also use Soup as well.
- This month's Bread Loaf offering will go to the Whitley County Ministerial Association for energy assistance. This program has been in place for years and has helped many residents in our community that are struggling with energy bills. With the colder temperatures that we had earlier in November and December, their funds are running low. If you have any questions please reach out to Pastor Matt or Joe Freiburger

**Weekly Agenda at Grace Lutheran Church**

**Monday January 5, 2025**

**No school Winter Break**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

Helping hands 12:30 pm

AA 7:30 pm

**Tuesday January 6, 2025**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

T.O.P.S 9:30 am

WC quilters 6:30 pm

**Wednesday January 7, 2025**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

Men's Breakfast 8 am

**Thursday January 8, 2026**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

AA 7:30 pm

Al-non 7:30 pm

**Friday January 9, 2026**

**Pastor's Day Off**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

Food Pantry 12 pm

**Saturday January 10, 2026**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

**Sunday January 11, 2026**

**Fellowship Hall Closed**

Worship @ Hope 8:15 am

Worship @ Grace 10:00 am

Fellowship 11:15 am

**We have new sign-up sheets in the parish hall, for coffee hour.  
Coffee hour will be after church service, for anyone that would  
like to stay.**