



Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

Third Sunday in Lent

March 3, 2024

9:00 a.m.

Liturgical worship with piano

Setting 4

OUR STATEMENT OF MISSION

Grace Lutheran Church is a community of faith, centered in worship, held in grace, strengthened in love, sent forth in mission, in Jesus' name.

Welcome! *If this is your first time worshipping at Grace Lutheran, we're glad you are here!*

The following information pertains to how things normally work. Pandemic changes to worship and communion will be announced in worship, and/or in the margins of the bulletin. However our mission, the love we feel for all people, and the ways we care for each other will remain unchanged.

You can learn more about our congregation

- on our website at www.gracedm.org
- by asking a greeter or other members of the congregation
- picking up one of our brief brochures from the Visitor Center in the Gathering Hall, or newsletters in the Entryway.

Worship Online: During times when we are online-only, or when you cannot be with us in person, you can participate in worship on our website or Facebook page @gracelutherandm .

*We worship together in many ways: Standing, sitting, singing, speaking, listening. You are invited to worship in as many (or few) ways as you are comfortable and able. **When following along in the bulletin, the congregation is invited to read the items in bold (often marked with a C:) aloud.***

Large print bulletins are available from the ushers.

Children belong and are welcome in worship! *Children's bulletins are available from the ushers, and activity bags are available outside the doors to the sanctuary. If needed, the **Kids Corner** in the Gathering Hall has puzzles, books, coloring pages and Mega-blocks! This space is intended to offer a place for children to be and play if they need to step of out of worship and during fellowship times.*

Communion – We welcome all people to the Lord's table *to receive Holy Communion. Children ages 3 and above are welcome at the parents' discretion, after meeting for instruction with the pastor. Children not instructed are invited to come forward for a blessing. If you are not able to come forward to take communion, please notify an usher before the service. Then try to sit by the aisle and the pastor will commune you in your pew.*

If you are interested in finding out more about membership at Grace, please contact Pastor Mike at Mike@gracedm.org, 515-276-6873.

Prelude

“Canticle of the Turning”
setting by Anne Krentz Organ

Welcome

Poetry Prayer

Praise the Mount

I have stayed quiet before.

I have held my tongue

while passing mountains.

I have slipped my hands deep into pockets,

despite the music that invites me to dance.

I have glimpsed a new moon and a new love

and have acted as if it was something other than a complete,

God-given miracle.

But not today.

Not today.

Today I will dance.

Today I will tap my toes all the way to heaven's gates.

Today I will point out every shade of gold and periwinkle that
we pass.

Today I will talk about my faith like we talk about the weather—
early and unprompted, comfortable and unashamed.

Today I will tell you that God did such a good job with freckles,
willow trees,

and your entire being.

And I will not be embarrassed by my own conviction.

I will not swallow my praise.

I have stayed quiet before,

but not today.

Today I will sing.

Please rise in body or in spirit

Call to Worship

L: If you ask the sky who God is,

C: the sky will tell you of God's reach.

L: If you ask the day who God is,

C: the sun will tell you of God's warmth.

L: If you ask the night who God is,

C: the moon will tell you of God's comfort.

L: “The heavens are telling the glory of God.”

C: Are you listening?

L: We are listening!

C: We will sing of God's glory.

L: Let us worship Holy God.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: In our scripture for today, Jesus asks the disciples, “Who do

Gathering Hymn
We are a “singing church,” so we follow the advice of the apostle Paul to teach and admonish “one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16).

you say that I am?” Peter said, “You are the Messiah.” Have you ever wondered if his voice faltered when he answered? Did he respond loudly and with confidence, or with a tentative whisper? We’ll never know. The text doesn’t provide those details. But we can trust that, no matter how we speak to God, when we speak, God is listening. So friends, join me in the prayer of confession. Whether you whisper these words or speak them with conviction, may you trust that our gracious and merciful God is listening with love. Let us pray together:

L: Holy God, Some days, we are quick to declare your goodness. Like Peter, we see you in our midst and we are confident in our faith. Other days, we are distracted and uncertain, desperate for answers.

C: Forgive us for losing sight of you.

L: Some days we are quick to trust your blessings—

C: trusting that we are called, that we can make a difference.

L: Other days, our praise falls silent and doubt creeps in.

C: Forgive us for losing sight of ourselves.

L: We know that fear and doubt are part of the journey of faith. But for the days when we are far from you and far from ourselves, we ask for your tender grace.

C: Pull us closer toward you. Remind us of the mountaintop moments of our faith. Amen.

L: Friends, Whether you speak to God in a whisper or with clear conviction, with questions or with answers, with hope in your heart or with doubt in your throat—God will always listen with love and mercy. So rest in this good news: regardless of how loudly you live your faith—you belong to God. You are loved. You are claimed. You are forgiven. Speak that good news with confidence.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Built On A Rock”

#652

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

L: Holy Word,

C: For generations people have bowed their heads, have prayed the Psalms, have asked for your presence in their lives. For generations people have whispered, “May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable and pleasing to you, O God.” For generations we have gathered here, we have quieted our minds, we have prayed to feel your presence in our midst. So once again, just as the generations before, we turn our hearts to your Word. Still our busy minds

so that we might truly comprehend what you have to say to us today. With joy and hope we pray, amen.

Please be seated

First Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.”

¹⁵God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm 19

¹The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims its maker’s handiwork.

²**One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another.**

³Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard,

⁴**their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world, where God has pitched a tent for the sun.**

⁵It comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber; it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

⁶**It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**

⁷The teaching of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

⁸**The statutes of the LORD are just and rejoice the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light to the eyes.**

⁹The fear of the LORD is clean and endures forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

Reading Notes

After escaping from slavery, the Israelites come to Mount Sinai, where God teaches them how to live in community. The Ten Commandments proclaim that God alone is worthy of worship. Flowing from God, the life of the community flourishes when based on honesty, trust, fidelity, and respect for life, family, and property.

Reading Notes: *The word of the cross is pure foolishness and nonsense to the world because it claims that God is mostly revealed in weakness, humiliation, and death. But through such divine foolishness and weakness, God is working to save us. The center of Paul's preaching is Christ crucified.*

Gospel

The Gospel Lesson is a selection from the accounts of the life of our Lord recorded by the four evangelists, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John. Because Christ is with us in the Gospel reading, we

¹⁰**More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.**

¹¹By them also is your servant enlightened, and in keeping them there is great reward.

¹²**Who can detect one's own offenses? Cleanse me from my secret faults.**

¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offense.

¹⁴**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.**

Anthem

"Lenten Meditation"

by Jay Althouse

Chancel Choir

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." ²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Please rise in body or in spirit

Gospel Acclamation



L: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew the Sixteenth Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

L: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ

Please be seated
Sermon

Please rise in body or in spirit

Hymn of the Day "Holy God, Holy and Glorious"

#637

Affirmation of Faith

L: Jesus asked the disciples, "But what about you? Who do you say that I am?" Church, what do you say?

C: Jesus is a hand reaching out in the storm, the voice of truth spoken over us, and love without walls. Jesus is justice for the weary, healing for the hurt, and welcome for the stranger. Jesus is teacher, Messiah, and friend—with me on the mountain and beside me in the valley. Jesus is a star in the night, and the love that knows my name.

L: Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?"

C: Like Peter, we say, "Jesus, you are the Messiah, son of the Living God."

Prayers of the People

L: Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C: Amen.

stand to honor his presence. We also sing short verses before and after the reading of the Gospel.

Prayers of the People

This prayer in the service follows the directive of the Apostle Paul to young Timothy, a pastor: "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for Kings and all those in authority, that we may live in peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."

Offering

As Lutherans, we believe that Christian giving is about worship AND action. As an option to the offering plate, scan this QR code to access our secure digital offering plate.



The Table

In Holy Communion we share in a meal which breaks down barriers. Baptism is profoundly personal, as we are called by name. Holy Communion moves from personal into connecting us with one another. In this meal, we are all made one. There is no one higher or lower, worthy than another. We gather around The Table in worship and then as we gather in other places, at home, work, or other, the tables become extensions of the Table. The work of unity in this meal, initiated by

All: God of love, have mercy on us. Pour out your Spirit upon us. Center us in worship. Hold us in grace. Strengthen us in love. Send us forth in mission. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

L: The peace of the Lord be with you all,

C: And also with you!

Please be seated

Announcements

Please rise in body or in spirit

Offering Prayer

L: Let us pray,

C: Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. Amen.

Invitation to the Table

L: In the night in which he was betrayed...

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

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

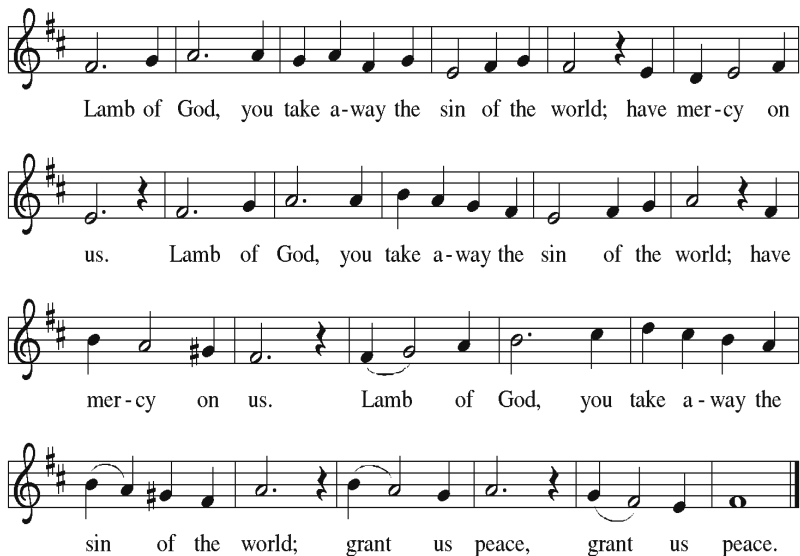
**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

L: Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

Please be seated

Lamb of God



Distribution Hymns: #472 (3x), #423, #464, #542

Centering Prayer

There will be two minutes of silence for centering prayer. Speak this invitation in the silence of your heart: I consent and surrender to your action and presence in my life.

Please rise in body or in spirit

Prayer after Communion

L: Generous God, at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

C: Amen.

Benediction

L: Beloved wanderer, as you leave this place, may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve. May you look for God in every face. May you find the courage to get out of the boat, to run to the tomb, and to speak of your faith. And when the world falls apart, may you hear God's voice deep within, saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid." You are called. You are blessed. In both your ups and your downs, you always belong to God. Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news.

C: Amen

Christ, is extended out into the world.

Communion Today
we will receive Holy Communion through wafers and pouring chalice. The line forms from the front pews to the back, with the ambo side of the aisle going first followed by the organ side. Please use the hand sanitizer provided before you receive the gluten free wafer. Then proceed to the tray of cups.

Both wine and grape juice will be available. Please place your cup in the basket by the side aisle as you return to the pew.

Sending Hymn “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” #771
To the tune of “God Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens”

Come, tho-u Fount of every ble-ssing,
tune my- heart to sing thy grace;
streams of- mercy, neve-r cea-si-ng,
call f-or songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endl-ess glo-ry
fills my heart with- joy and love,
teach me- ever to a-do-re the-e;
may I- still thy goodness prove.

☐
Here I- raise my Ebe-ne-zer:
"Hith-er by thy help I've come";
and I- hope, by thy go-od plea-sure,
safel-y to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a- stranger,
wand'ring from the- fold of- God;
he, to- rescue me fro-m da-ng-er,
inter-posed his precious blood.

☐
Oh, to- grace how great a- deb-tor
Dail-y I'm constrained to be;
let tha-t grace now like a- fe-tter
bind my- wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I- feel it;
prone to leave the- God I- love.
Here's my- heart, oh, take a-nd se-al it;
seal it- for thy courts above.

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Share your bread.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“On My Heart Imprint Your Image”

arrangement by Mark Sedio

*Liturgy adapted from Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC |
sanctifiedart.org*

How to do Centering Prayer

Find a quiet space where you are unlikely to be disturbed.

Sit in a way that allows you to be relaxed in body and alert in mind. Use a chair, meditation cushion or prayer rug, according to your own physical needs and preferences.

Gently close your eyes.

Allow your heart to open toward that invisible but always present Origin of all that exists.

Use a “sacred word.” This is a word that helps you to let go of thoughts. It is a reminder of your intention to remain open to the silence and return to God. Whenever you become aware of a thought, no matter what its nature, let it go, returning to God through the sacred word.

Continue this practice for 20 minutes. At the end of the time get up and go about your business, leaving the practice behind, in the same way you let go of your thoughts.

People who are just beginning, and are particularly restless in mind and body, may find it easier to start off with shorter prayer periods, perhaps only 5 minutes per sit to start. Then after a few days extend the time to 10 minutes and so on until you are able to sit for 20 minutes. Give the practice at least 2 weeks before you decide if it is right for you.

Two 20-30 minute sits per day are considered ideal. It is strongly recommended that no one meditate for more than 60 minutes a day unless you are attending a structured retreat with experienced leaders.

Welcome to Grace!

Ministers —the people of Grace

Pastor –

The Rev. Michael Schmidtmike@gracedm.org

Vicar

Adam Bardenadam@gracedm.org

Organist –

Rich Snyder.....rich@gracedm.org

Piano Accompanist, Music Ensemble Coordinator –

Kathy Bowermaster

Minister for Communications –

Michelle Voelkermichelle@gracedm.org

Administrative Assistant –

Kami Chicas.....kami@gracedm.org

Bookkeeper

Mike Hilsabeck.....mike.h@gracedm.org

Office Assistant for Worship

Jessica Flannery.....jessica@gracedm.org

Custodian – Todd Haugen

Usher – Carter Woodruff

Greeter –

Poem Reader – Pam Palmer

Lector – Roland Zimany

Communion Assistant – Carol Woodruff

Altar Guild – Sue Anderson & Jane Ridnour

Tech Crew – Greg Boeschen, Jamie Briggs, Chuck Denton, Paul Nelson,
Jon Rissman, & Amy Schmelzer

Counters – Tom McCleary & Aaron Brandsfield

Coffee & Donuts – Tammy Denton



Grace Lutheran Church

5201 Urbandale Avenue

Des Moines, Iowa 50310

Pastor Michael Schmidt

515-276-6873

mike@gracedm.org