



## **Grace Lutheran Church**

*Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania*

### **Welcome to Worship**

#### **Fifth Sunday in Lent**

March 17, 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](http://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](mailto:Mike@gracedm.org), 515-276-6873.**

## Prelude

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”  
J. Wyeth arranged by C. Marohnic

## Welcome

### Poetry Prayer

#### *Teach Me*

Teach me about the ways of the wind,  
about the ways of the world,  
about the ways of the heart.  
Teach me about the soft crook of my lover’s arm,  
and the way two souls can hold each other close.  
Teach me about forgiveness, about the language of I’m sorry  
and the softness of sincerity.  
Teach me about abundance, about seventy-times-seven  
and all the days of my life.  
Teach me about joy, about its contagious weaving  
and its soul-healing.  
Teach me about mercy, about open hands and deep breaths.  
Teach me about the dawn of time and the stars in the sky.  
Teach me what matters most.  
Teach me what is mine to do.  
Teach this achingly curious heart  
until I run out of questions  
or I run out of days.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
and I will have a life well-lived.

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### Call to Worship

L: Why are you here?

**C: I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind,  
with a fire burning in my bones.**

L: I see it! You’re in the right place! This is God’s house. The door  
is open to you.

**C: Why are you here?**

L: I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind,  
with a fire burning in my bones.

**C: We see that in you! You’re in the right place. This is God’s  
house. The door is open to you.**

L: Let us worship God.

**C: Let us learn from the Spirit. Amen!**

### Confession and Forgiveness

L: Friends, when you study Peter’s story in scripture it’s almost  
impossible to ignore how much he loved to ask questions. He  
asks Jesus: “What does the parable mean?” “Where are you go-  
ing?” “How many times should we forgive?” Like a tenacious

**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).*

toddler, Peter was full of questions, because Peter was eager to learn. I wish I was more like that. I still have so much to learn. So friends, let's be like Peter. Let's return to Christ with the humility of a student as we pray together the prayer of confession. Let this be a moment of learning. Let us pray:

L: Holy God,

**C: We long to be lifelong learners. We long to approach you with curiosity and an open mind. Instead, we often live as if we know best. We forget that the disciples called you "Rabbi, Teacher." Forgive us for the times when we fail to be curious. Forgive us for the times when we assume we know best. Forgive us for the moments when we imagine that our learning is done and that we have all the answers. Like Peter—who was brave enough to ask, "How many times should we forgive?"—make us brave. Spark a desire in us to learn, and may our curiosity carry our faith into deeper waters. With hope and humility we pray, amen.**

L: Family of faith, When Peter asked Jesus, "How many times should I forgive?" Jesus responded with abundance. That abundance exists for you as well. No matter what you have done or left undone, no matter what lessons you have learned or are still learning, God's abundant grace exists for you. God's love will never run out. So hear and rest in this good news: You are forgiven. You are loved. You are invited to serve. Thanks be to God!

**C: Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn** "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"  
*To the tune of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" #742*

Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,  
tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
call for songs of loudest praise.  
While the hope of endless glory  
fills my heart with joy and love,  
teach me ever to adore thee;  
may I still thy goodness prove.

Here I raise my Ebenezer:  
"Hither by thy help I've come";  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,  
safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
wand'ring from the fold of God;  
he, to rescue me from danger,  
interposed his precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
daily I'm constrained to be;  
let that grace now like a fetter  
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 and seal it;  
seal it for thy courts above.

L: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

### Prayer of the Day

L: Teaching God,

**C: We want to learn your ways. We want to learn the ways of forgiveness. We want to learn the ways of grace. We want to learn your ways of love. That is part of why we return to your text week after week, because we are hungry to be more like you. So as we prepare to listen to your good Word, calm the noise in our minds. Center our spirits to focus on you so that we might learn and hear what we have missed in this story before. God, we want to learn your ways. Meet us here. Speak your truth. Help us listen. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

### Special Music

"At the Cross"  
Grace Brass

arr. Ed Hogan

### First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### Reading Notes

*Here the prophet looks to a day when God will make a new covenant with the people. There will be no need to teach the law, because God will write it on their hearts.*

**Reading Notes:** Using priestly imagery and references to the Old Testament, the author explains how Christ lived in trusting obedience to God, and so God has made Christ the source of our eternal salvation.

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

### **Psalm 119:9-16**

<sup>9</sup>How can young people keep their way pure? By guarding it according to your word.

<sup>10</sup>**With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments.**

<sup>11</sup>I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you.

<sup>12</sup>**Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your statutes.**

<sup>13</sup>With my lips I declare all the ordinances of your mouth.

<sup>14</sup>**I delight in the way of your decrees as much as in all riches.**

<sup>15</sup>I will meditate on your precepts, and fix my eyes on your ways.

<sup>16</sup>**I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.**

### **Second Reading: Hebrews 5:5-10**

<sup>5</sup>Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; <sup>6</sup>as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

<sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, <sup>10</sup>having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### **Gospel Acclamation**



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

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

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **Gospel: Matthew 18:15-22**

<sup>15</sup>If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member

listens to you, you have regained that one. <sup>16</sup>But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." <sup>21</sup>Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

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** "There In God's Garden"

#342

### **Affirmation of Faith**

L: We believe that questions are a building block of faith.

**C: "How many times should I forgive?" "Jesus, where are you going?" "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"**

L: We believe that humble curiosity can open our eyes.

**C: "Where does it hurt?" "What do you need?" "How can I help?"**

L: We believe that God is a teacher.

**C: "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." "Here I am." "Send me."**

L: We believe that faith invites our whole being to engage,

**C: with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our strength.**

L: We believe. Help our unbelief.

**C: In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

### **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.**

*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.**

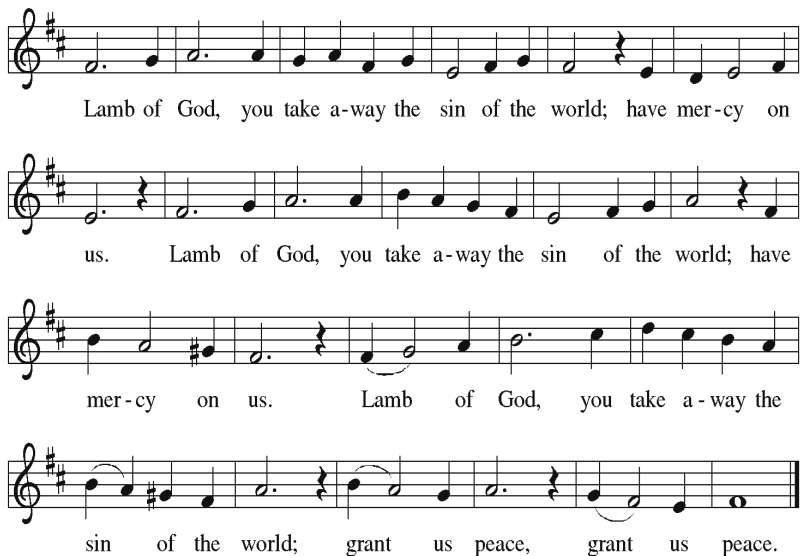
### **Invitation to Communion**

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

*Please be seated*



## Lamb of God



*Distribution Hymns: #473 (3x), #496, #484, #492*

## 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**

## Sending Hymn

"Lift High the Cross"

#660

*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.

**Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Share your bread.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

“Lift High the Cross”

S. Nicholson arranged by F. Bock

*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 Schmidt .....[mike@gracedm.org](mailto:mike@gracedm.org)

**Vicar**

Adam Barden .....[adam@gracedm.org](mailto:adam@gracedm.org)

**Organist** –

Rich Snyder.....[rich@gracedm.org](mailto:rich@gracedm.org)

**Piano Accompanist, Music Ensemble Coordinator** –

Kathy Bowermaster

**Minister for Communications** –

Michelle Voelker .....[michelle@gracedm.org](mailto:michelle@gracedm.org)

**Administrative Assistant** –

Kami Chicas.....[kami@gracedm.org](mailto:kami@gracedm.org)

**Bookkeeper**

Mike Hilsabeck.....[mike.h@gracedm.org](mailto:mike.h@gracedm.org)

**Office Assistant for Worship**

Jessica Flannery.....[jessica@gracedm.org](mailto:jessica@gracedm.org)

**Custodian** – Todd Haugen

**Usher** – Carter Woodruff

**Greeter** – Pam & Lenny Palmer

**Poem Reader** – Pam Palmer

**Lector** – Jenny Rehder

**Communion Assistant** – Tammy Denton

**Altar Guild** – Sue Anderson & Jane Ridnour

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

**Counters** – Jon Rissman & Carter Woodruff

**Coffee & Donuts** – Cheryl Weatherington



## Grace Lutheran Church

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**Pastor Michael Schmidt**

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