



## **Grace Lutheran Church**

*Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania*

### **Welcome to Worship**

**Ash Wednesday**

March 5, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Liturgical worship with organ

Setting 1

## 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!*

*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 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 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** Chorale prelude on the hymn "Lamb of God, Pure and Sinless" (ELW 357) - N. Decius arranged by G. Telemann

## **Welcome**

### **Poetry Pray — Both, Please**

It's one thing to speak of love. It's another  
to hold a newborn in your arms,  
to sing someone to sleep,  
to lean down and listen for their breathing.  
It's one thing to speak of faith. It's another  
to press your forehead to the floor,  
to cry out in prayer,  
to ask the hard questions and still  
thank God for the meal.  
It's one thing to speak of the Divine. It's another  
to walk under a tunnel of wisteria,  
to stand barefoot at the edge of the sea,  
to hear the birds sing as the sun returns  
and whisper, Thank you, thank you, thank you.  
It's one thing and another, so I pray,  
Give me both, please. Show me both, please.

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### **Call to Worship**

L: If you have days when you feel a little bit lost and a little bit found,

**C: then you are in the right place.**

L: If you have days when you are desperate for rest and eager to grow,

**C: then you are in the right place.**

L: If you have days when your prayers could be both shouts and silence,

**C: then you are in the right place.**

L: God meets us here, in the messy middle of our lives.

**C: So may we bring our full selves into this service and into this season.**

L: With God's help, may it be so.

**C: Let us worship our all-loving God.**

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

L: Lent is a season that invites us to be intentional. Lent asks us, how will you go deeper these next six weeks? How will you grow closer to God and your neighbor? What will you do to strengthen your faith? Much like Christ, Lent invites us to go deeper. Despite our best efforts, that soul-tending work is often easier said than done. However, instead of entering this season already feeling behind, let us enter this season with honesty. Let us enter this

### **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).*

season aware of our hopes, and aware of the challenges. Let us enter this season wrapped in God’s grace. Friends, join me in speaking honestly to God. Join me in receiving mercy. Let us pray:

L: Jesus said, “Follow me.”

**C: And I said, *let me get ready.***

L: Jesus said, “follow me.”

**C: And I said, *just one minute!***

L: Jesus said, “Follow me.”

**C: And I said, *I’ll be there soon!***

L: The invitation is simple, but the work is hard.

**C: Jesus, forgive my delay. I want to follow you. Turn my intentions into actions. Show me the way. Amen.**

L: Lent asks,

**C: “How will you go deeper? How will you follow Christ?”**

L: Regardless of what that journey looks like for us,

**C: regardless of what today, tomorrow, or the next day brings,**

L: we are not alone.

**C: We are seen and loved by God.**

L: We are held in grace.

**C: Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

**Gathering Hymn** “Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days”

#319

### **Greeting**

L: 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**

L: Holy God,

**C: Your invitation is simple. You lean in close. You say our name.**

**With joy in your voice, you invite us to follow. But the noise of this world is distracting, and we are afraid, so we get stuck somewhere between our head and our heart. We get stuck somewhere between our intent and our action. So today we pray, speak to us again. Tell us the story. Invite us to follow. Speak once more, of good news that will not leave us alone. Speak to us again, for we are listening. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

**Reading: Luke 9:51-62**

<sup>51</sup>When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup>And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to

make ready for him; <sup>53</sup>but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup>When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" <sup>55</sup>But he turned and rebuked them. <sup>56</sup>Then they went on to another village. <sup>57</sup>As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." <sup>58</sup>And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." <sup>59</sup>To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." <sup>60</sup>But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." <sup>61</sup>Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." <sup>62</sup>Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### **Sermon**

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**Hymn of the Day**

"When We Are Tested"

ACS #922

### **Affirmation of Faith**

**C: We believe in Jesus Christ, who said to ordinary people, "Follow me," and with his love, changed the world. We believe in the Holy Spirit who tethers us to all of creation, nudging us toward deeper and more intentional faith. And we believe in the Creator who brings the sun over the horizon each morning, allowing every day to be a new beginning. So with this new day, with Jesus' invitation ringing in our ears, and the Holy Spirit's tethering love, we realign our hopes with our words, our dreams with our prayers, our intentions with our actions. Jesus, we believe. Guide our feet. Amen.**

## 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."*

## Offering

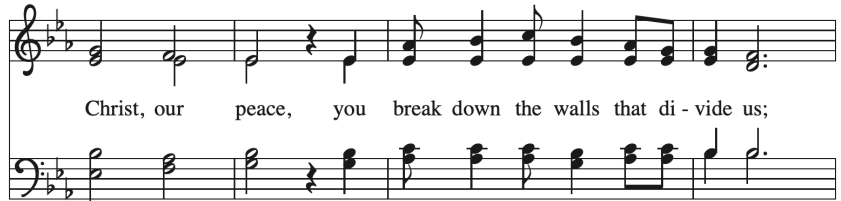
*As Lutherans, we believe that Christian giving is about worship AND action. As an option to the offering plate, scan this QR code to access our secure digital offering plate.*



## Prayers of the People

L: God, in your mercy,

C:



L: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

C: Amen.

**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: Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## Invitation to Lent

L: Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

L: We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

L: As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

### **Lamenting Injustice**

L: The sin of racism and prejudice hurts communities, fractures human relationships, and denies God's good creation. Lament is a way for us to recognize the harm caused by racism, sexism, prejudice, homophobia, transphobia, and all other forms of discrimination.

L: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:35-39). God's grace in Christ frees us for the difficult work of recognizing and lamenting racism and prejudice.

L: We are all part of one body in Christ, called to act with equity, fairness, and justice. God's saving love creates grace-filled spaces within us and within our relationships. God's saving love calls and leads us toward rooting out the racism and prejudice that continues to infect the body.

L: Within the whole human family, people of color have experienced both interpersonal aggression and structural oppression instead of abundant life. We recognize and lament the harm racism has caused to African Descent communities; American Indian and Alaskan Native communities; Indigenous Peoples within Canada; Arab and Middle Eastern communities; Asian and Pacific Islander communities; and Latina communities. We cry out to you, **C: hear our lament, O God.**

L: We have assigned the notion of race to human beings created in God's own divine image. We have judged God's beautiful diversity by our flawed and artificial standards. We cry out to you, **C: hear our lament, O God.**

L: We have accepted practices in our churches and in our society

that privilege whiteness over diversity and equity. We have been complicit in how racism continues to exclude and harm people of color. We cry out to you,

**C: hear our lament, O God.**

L: We have accepted practices in our churches and in our society that privilege males and have limited the rights of women and all people within the LGBTQIA+ community. We have been complicit in how sexism, homophobia, and transphobia continue to harm women and people within the LGBTQIA+ community. We cry out to you. **C: hear our lament, O God.**

L: When one part of the body of Christ hurts, the whole-body hurts. As we listen to people who are harmed by racism and discrimination, we call to you,

**C: open our hearts, O God.**

L: As we reflect on our daily interactions with people and communities of color and LGBTQIA+, we call to you,

**C: open our hearts, O God.**

L: As we reconsider what we have been taught about race and racism, we call to you,

**C: open our hearts, O God.**

L: As we reconsider what we have been taught about gender and sexism, we call to you.

**C: open our hearts, O God.**

L: As we contemplate what we have done and what we have left undone, we call to you,

**C: open our hearts, O God.**

L: As we labor to create a loving and safe community for all of our siblings, we call to you,

**C: open our hearts, O God.**

L: Holy and merciful God, as your people we recommit ourselves to loving one another as you have loved us. Prepare us for this time of listening and discovery. We pray in the name of the one who has made us one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

### **Thanksgiving at the Table**

L: 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.

L: 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.

L: For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,  
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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 and Imposition of Ashes**

L: Jesus, our neighbor, invites us and all of his neighbors  
throughout the world to come together at this table and feast in  
his presence. Be nourished by this holy meal that you might go  
forth with joy and love your neighbors as yourselves.  
*Please be seated*

*Distribution Hymns: #752 (3x), #466, #479, #471*

### **Centering Prayer**

*There will be two minutes of silence for centering prayer.*

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### **Prayers after Communion and Imposition of Ashes**

L: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

**C: that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

L: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

**C: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

### **Instructions for Communion and Imposition of Ashes**

*We will take part in  
the Imposition of  
Ashes and distribu-  
tion of Holy Com-  
munion at the same  
time today. Please  
come forward, and if  
you would like to  
receive ashes,  
please stop at the  
first station. After  
receiving ashes,  
please continue for-  
ward to the other  
stations to receive  
gluten free bread  
and wine or grape  
juice. Please place  
your cup in the bas-  
ket by the side aisle  
as you return to the  
pew. We will begin  
with the ambo side  
of the sanctuary and  
continue with the  
organ side.*

L: Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

**C: Amen.**

L: Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

### **Benediction**

L: As you leave this place, may you find God in every messy middle. May you know that the world is bigger than two sides. May you trust that you are made in the image of God, and therefore, you contain multitudes. So may you move through this world with an open heart, with a curious mind, and with the confidence that you do not go alone. God is with you in the mountains, in the valleys, and everywhere in between. Believe that good news, and go in peace.

**C: Amen**

**Sending Hymn**      “Bless Now, O God, the Journey”      #326

### **Dismissal**

L: Go in Peace, Serve in Love

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Postlude**

Little Prelude in E-minor

Bach



## Welcome to Grace!

**Ministers** —the people of Grace

**Pastor** –

The Rev. Michael Schmidt .....[mike@gracedm.org](mailto:mike@gracedm.org)

**Vicar**

Jesse Hershberger.....[jesse@gracedm.org](mailto:jesse@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)

**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** –

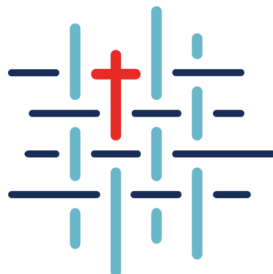
**Greeter** –

**Communion Assistants** – Jenny Rehder, 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



GRACE  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

## Grace Lutheran Church

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Des Moines, Iowa 50310

**Pastor Michael Schmidt**

515-276-6873

[www.gracedm.org](http://www.gracedm.org)