



## **Grace Lutheran Church**

*Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania*

### **Welcome to Worship**

**First Sunday in Lent**

March 9, 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** Choral prelude on the hymn "When We Are in Deepest Need and Do Not Know Where to Turn" - arranged by J. S. Bach

## Welcome

### Poetry Prayer— Never Met a Stranger

*When we talk about God, we say  
she's never met a stranger.  
She makes friends at the airport.  
She waves to babies in the check-out line.  
When we talk about God, we say  
she'll leave the porch light on.  
She'll have warm bread in the oven.  
She'll have all the time in the world.  
When we talk about God, we say  
she'll look you in the eye.  
She'll love you as you are.  
She'll call you by your name.  
When we talk about God,  
we never have to talk about  
which side of the road she might walk down.  
Wherever you are,  
that's where she'll be.*

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### Call to Worship

L: Here in this place, we can ask big questions.

**C: Who is my neighbor? How can I help? What do I have to learn? Where is God in it all?**

L: Here in this place, we can ask big questions.

**C: So may we listen. May we learn. May we stay curious, and may we look for God.**

L: This is our invitation to lean in. Let us worship our holy God.

### Confession and Forgiveness

L: Our faith tells us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, but you and I know that is often easier said than done. Fortunately for us, prayer can be a tool for transformation. When we are honest before God and each other, we open the door to growth and change. So join me in the prayer of confession. Join me now, so that tomorrow, we will be even better at loving our neighbors as ourselves. Let us pray:

**C: Holy God, you have told us to love our neighbors as ourselves, but we get tripped up on logistics. We want to know: who is our neighbor? Do we have to love the stranger? Must we have compassion for our enemy? Forgive our human tendency to create exceptions in the face of love. Rewire our**

hearts so that we might see the face of a neighbor in every stranger we pass. With hope we pray, amen.

L: Family of faith, When we set limits on love,

**C: God loves extravagantly.**

L: When we forget that we are neighbors,

**C: God claims us as God's own.**

L: When we judge, hold back, or harm,

**C: God surrounds us with grace.**

L: There is nothing we can do or leave undone that could separate us from the love of God.

**C: This is the good news of the gospel. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### 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).

### Gathering Hymn "O God of Mercy, God of Light"

#714

#### 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.**

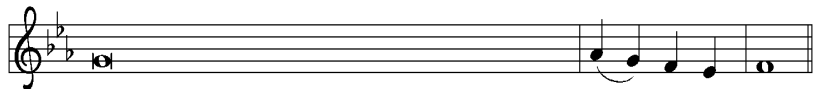
#### Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



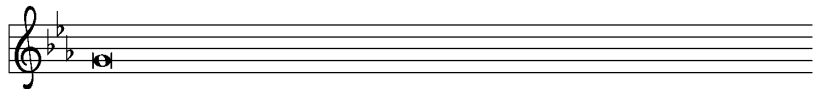
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



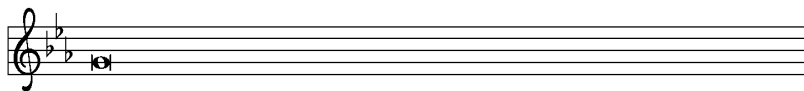
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

### Prayer of the Day

L: Gracious God,

**C: We love to ask you questions. We love to throw our wonderings at the sky, to bring our curiosity to your feet, to examine, beseech, and imagine all day long. But when the answers come, we don't always like what we hear. Awaken a curiosity in us. Awaken a penchant for listening, and make room in our spirits for your Word to land. With hope we question, we wonder, we dream, we listen. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

### **Reading Notes:**

*Jesus presses the scribe to see what it means to be a neighbor differently. A neighbor is not a special category of person; it is the way of living with one another that the grace and love of God work in us.*

## **Anthem**

“Here, O My Lord”  
*Chancel Choir*

### **Reading: Luke 10:25-37**

<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” <sup>27</sup>He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” <sup>29</sup>But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” <sup>30</sup>Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup>Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ <sup>36</sup>Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” <sup>37</sup>He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

## **Sermon**

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**Hymn of the Day** “Light Dawns on a Weary World” #726

## **Affirmation of Faith**

L: Church, if God asked you, “Who is your neighbor?” what would you say?

**C: We would say, every child, every person, every weeping willow, and every morning lark. Every freckled face, every wrinkled pair of hands, every tail-wagging dog, and every crisp ripe apple. We would say, we are connected— to one another, to all of God’s creation. There are no strangers in God’s house. We are all family here.**

L: I think God would delight in that answer. For it is said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

**C: with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind,**

L: and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

**C: We believe. Help our unbelief. Amen.**

### Prayers of the People

L: Merciful God,

**C:**

Christ, our peace, you break down the walls that di - vide us;

Christ, our peace, come, make us one bod-y in you.

The musical score is written for two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in a key of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first line of music corresponds to the first line of lyrics, and the second line corresponds to the second line of lyrics. The score ends with a double bar line.

L: We entrust all these prayers and those of our hearts to you, O God. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

**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.**

### 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.*



### **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.

### **Thanksgiving at the Table**

L: God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way.

L: In times of bitterness you did not abandon us,  
but guided us into the path of love and light.  
In every age you sent prophets  
to make known your loving will for all humanity.  
The cry of the poor has become your own cry;  
our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.  
In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant  
to preach good news to the afflicted,  
to break bread with the outcast and despised,  
and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin.

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 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.

**C: Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

L: Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death.

Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen.

**C: Amen.**

L: Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world.

Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen.

**C: Amen.**

Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

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: 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*

### **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 and take a cup from the tray. Then proceed to receive the gluten-free wafer. 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.*

*Distribution Hymns: #616 (3x), #712, #779, #482*

### **Centering Prayer**

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

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### **Prayer after Communion**

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**      “As the Winter Days Grow Longer”      #924

### **Dismissal**

L: Go in Peace, Serve in Love

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**      Little Prelude and Fugue in G Major      Bach

*Poetry and Liturgy by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*

*Graphic Design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)*



## Welcome to Grace!

**Ministers** —the people of Grace

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**Organist** –

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**Piano Accompanist, Music Ensemble Coordinator** –

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**Minister for Communications** –

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**Usher** – Carter Woodruff

**Greeter** – Lenny Palmer

**Liturgist** – Jenny Rehder

**Lector** – Ro Zimany

**Communion Assistant** – Carol Woodruff

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

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

**Counters** – Mark Stumme & Carter Woodruff

**Coffee & Donuts** – Cherie Rissman



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