



Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026

6:30 p.m.

Liturgical worship with organ

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*
- *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, 515-276-6873.

Prelude Choral prelude on the hymn of the day “Now We Join In Celebration” (ELW 462) - J. Crüger arranged by G. Telemann

Welcome

Poetry Prayer - The Gospel According to Mrs. Farnell's Pre-K Class

In Pre-K the whole class gets an invite to Tommy's birthday. He places the paper invites in our cubbies. There's a helter-skelter sticker sealing each one, proof that tiny hands did the work. So we, the members of Mrs. Farnell's Pre-K class, arrive at the park on Saturday. We arrive whether or not we've ever built a sandcastle with Tommy. We arrive whether or not we've ever shared half of our PB&J at lunch. We arrive at the park on Saturday, with pigtails and balloons, because we were invited. And together we play tag, and we eat birthday cake, and we run barefoot in the grass. Together, we sing Happy birthday to youuuuuu, so excited we can barely stand still. Together, we momentarily forget that Chloe never gets picked for Red Rover and that Quinn cried in class last week, because the park is not the playground and everyone was invited. And when we load into our cars at the end of the day, with grass-stained knees, chocolate frosting on our faces, and the awareness of inclusion, we say to our parents, This was the best day of my life.

Please rise in body or in spirit

Call to Worship

L: If God threw a party,

C: all would be invited.

L: If God hosted a dinner,

C: there'd be a seat saved for each of us.

L: If God prepared a banquet,

C: a cheer would go up when you arrived.

L: This is the good news:

C: God is throwing a party. God is hosting a dinner. God is preparing a banquet, and all are invited.

L: Let us worship this invitational God.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Family of faith, if someone declines our invitations again and again, in our human ways, we tend to stop inviting them. We get the hint. We assume they'd rather be elsewhere. With God, however, things are different. No matter how many times we overlook or ignore God's outstretched hand, God will never stop reaching for us. So with that good news in mind, let us go to God in prayer.

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).

L: Gracious God,

C: you invite all of us to your table: the faithful and the doubting, the restless and the hopeless, the addicted and the lonely, the lost and the confused. You invite all of us, regardless of who we are or where we’ve been, but we fail to do the same. When given the opportunity, we are guilty of casting judgment on our neighbors. We draw lines, assume the worst, create cliques, and accept exclusion. Forgive our harmful ways. This Lent, show us how to love others the way you love us. With hope we pray, amen.

L: Friends, no matter how many times we mess up, no matter how many times we lose our way, no matter how many times we decline God’s invitation, God will never stop inviting us to the table. There is and always will be a seat saved for you. So join me in these good news words:

C: We are forgiven, again and again. We are invited, again and again. We are loved, from beginning to end. Thanks be to God, our Inviter. Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“All Are Welcome”

ELW #641

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: Table-setting God,

C: this Lent we do not want to miss your invitation. We do not want to be so caught up in our own business that we miss the holiness right in front of us. So settle our hearts, and open our spirits to hear your word anew. Help us hear your good news today. With hope we pray, amen.

Please be seated

Anthem

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

Chancel Choir

Reading: Luke 14:15-24

15One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, “Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” 16 Then Jesus[a] said to him, “Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. 17 At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is ready now.’ 18 But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.’ 19 Another said, ‘I have bought five

yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.’ 20 Another said, ‘I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.’ 21 So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ 22 And the slave said, ‘Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.’ 23 Then the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. 24 For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.’ ”

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Sermon

Please rise in body or in spirit

Hymn of the Day “Now We Join in Celebration” ELW #462

Affirmation of Faith

L: We believe in a table-setting God

C: who always has a seat saved for you.

L: We believe in an inviting God

C: who leaves the porch light on and a hand extended.

L: We believe in a radically welcoming God

C: who eats with the overlooked and the outcast, the hungry and the downtrodden.

L: We believe in the good news of the gospel, which reminds us

C: that all are welcomed, all are celebrated, all are loved, and all are claimed.

L: Pull up a seat at God’s table.

C: There is good news to be shared here. Amen.

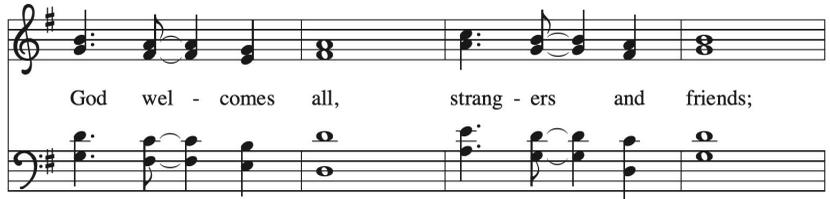
Prayers of the People

ple: 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.

Prayers of the People

L: Hear us, O God.

C:



God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;



God's love is strong and it nev - er ends.

L: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

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: O God, maker of heaven and earth,

C: **your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty.**

Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. 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.

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.



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: #616 (3x), #712, #779, #482

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 distrib-
ute to one side at a
time. A line will form
from the front pews
to the back.*

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, when you meet anger, speak with love. When you meet fear, speak with hope. When you meet pain, speak with gentleness. But no matter what, speak this good news. For the good news of the gospel is love and justice for all. It is joy that surprises, and nonviolence that transforms. The good news of the gospel is alive in the world, so go forth speaking. For if you won't, then who will? Thanks be to God for this good, good news.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" ELW #332

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Little prelude in E-minor

J. S. Bach

Welcome to Grace!

Ministers —the people of Grace

Pastor –

The Rev. Michael Schmidtmike@gracedm.org

Vicar –

Lotegeluaki Lengai.....lotegeluaki@gracedm.org
(Loh-tay-gay-loo-wahk-ee Lain-guy)

Organist –

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

Piano Accompanist, Music Ensemble Coordinator –

Kathy Bowermaster

Minister for Communications –

Michelle Voelkermichelle@gracedm.org

Bookkeeper –

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

Office Assistant for Worship –

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

Property Manager –

Nichole Aubert.....nichole@gracedm.org

Custodian – Todd Haugen

Usher – Carter Woodruff

Greeter – Lenny & Pam P.

Poetry Reader – Carol Woodruff

Lector – Jenny Rehder

Communion Assistants – Cathy Watson, Cherie Rissman.

Altar Guild – Rita Stackhouse & Carol Woodruff

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

Counters – Mark Stumme & Tom McCleary



GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

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Pastor Michael Schmidt

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