



the good news is...

great love for  
God & neighbor

## **Grace Lutheran Church**

*Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania*

### **Welcome to Worship**

**Second Sunday in Lent**

March 1, 2026

9:00 a.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.**

Grace Lutheran Church commits to welcoming and celebrating all people; those in the LGBTQIA+ community, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and their allies.

We commit to the work of anti-racism, liberation, social and environmental justice for all of God's creation. We affirm the sacredness of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

We affirm the sacredness of all those who have experienced exclusion because of race, ability, age, culture, or nationality. We affirm the sacredness of those who wrestle with addiction, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.

No matter the labels others may place upon you, or the labels you may place upon yourself, here at Grace you will find a home among friends in need of a Savior. You are welcome here.

**Welcome!** *If this is your first time worshiping 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**      Setting of “Standing In The Need Of Prayer”  
American spiritual arranged by C. Taylor

## Welcome

### Poetry Prayer — If God Lived Next Door

*If God lived next door, I'd drop off a loaf of bread. I'd use my mom's best recipe. I'd wrap it in parchment and ribbon and place it on the front stoop. If God lived next door, I'd leave a note with my phone number. Call anytime you need anything! I'm always happy to help! If God lived next door, I'd keep sugar on the shelf, just in case she needed a cup. I'd put a picnic table in the front yard and begin taking my coffee there. Whenever God passed by with their gaggle of rescue dogs, I could say, Want to sit for a moment? Want to rest your legs? I'd keep a jar of dog treats and water by the mailbox and change my doormat to one that says: All are welcome here. I'd invite God over for dinner. She'd bring bread and juice. I'd host a block party, so that everyone could meet her. I'd start a community garden so that the kids could run between rows of squash and tomatoes while we adults put our hands in the dirt. We'd share stories while we weeded, and eat harvest meals at the end of the season. If God lived next door, I'd want to build something beautiful. Then again, who says she doesn't?*

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### Call to Worship

L: Tell me something good!

**C: God loves you more than you could imagine.**

L: Tell me something good!

**C: God loves all of creation more than you could imagine.**

L: Tell me something good!

**C: God's love meets us in this service of worship. We are not alone.**

L: This is good news indeed!

**C: Let us worship our compassionate God.**

**Gathering Hymn**      “Spirit Open My Heart”      ACS #1043

### Confession and Forgiveness

L: Family of faith, we long to love others as God loves us, but that work is easier said than done. We lose our way. We become distracted. We grow fearful. We need God's grace. Fortunately for us, God's grace is freely and abundantly given. So join me in the Prayer of Confession. Join me in being transformed.

L: Merciful God,

**C: did we see you hungry and give you something to eat? Did**

### 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).*

**we see you thirsty and give you something to drink? Did we see you alone and offer you compassion? Or did we cross the street? Did we avert our eyes? Did we come up with every excuse in the book? God, we long to be people who love our neighbors with the same overwhelming love that you have for them. But we must admit, we have a long way to go. Forgive us for the times when we let bias, scarcity, or fear get in the way of love. Wash us clean and give us the courage to try again. With hope for a better tomorrow we pray, amen.**

L: Faith family, even when we act with judgment, even when we are guided by fear, even when we turn our back on a neighbor in need, God does not turn God's back on us. So join me in this good-news declaration:

**C: We are seen. We are forgiven. We are invited to try again. Thanks be to God for this unending love.**

### **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: Let us pray,

**C: Good news God, speak louder than the news updates. Speak louder than our mental distractions. Speak louder than our anger and louder than our fear. God, speak loudly to us today, because we long to hear your good news once more. With hope we pray, amen.**

*Please be seated*

### **Reading: Luke 7:36-50**

<sup>36</sup> One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and when he went into the Pharisee's house he reclined to dine. <sup>37</sup> And a woman in the city who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. <sup>38</sup> She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair, kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. <sup>39</sup> Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner." <sup>40</sup> Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "speak." <sup>41</sup> "A certain moneylender had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. <sup>42</sup> When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" <sup>43</sup> Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater

debt.” And Jesus said to him, “You have judged rightly.” <sup>44</sup> Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. <sup>45</sup> You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. <sup>46</sup> You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. <sup>47</sup> Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven loves little.” <sup>48</sup> Then he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” <sup>49</sup> But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” <sup>50</sup> But he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### **Reading: Matthew 25:35-40**

<sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup> And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup> And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ <sup>40</sup> And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### **Sermon**

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**Hymn of the Day** “Holy Woman, Graceful Giver” ACS #1001

### **Affirmation of Faith**

**C: I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ. It sounds like welcome and feels like home. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy. It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table, so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ. I have seen it alive in the world. And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage, even when mercy feels out of reach, I remember the one who welcomed the children and led with nonviolence. I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable and inspired those around him. I remember that the good news really is good news, for I have seen it alive in the world. Thanks be to God! 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.*

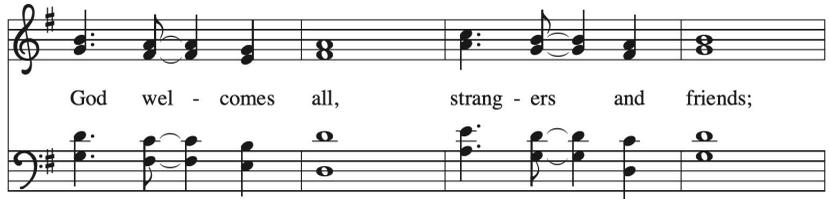
**Offering:** *As Lutherans, we believe that Christian giving is about worship AND action. As an option to the offering plate, scan this QR code to access our secure digital offering plate.*



### **Prayers of the People**

L: Hear us, O God,

**C:**



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



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

L: May we be the next ones to love boldly, to sing praise, to say thank you. With gratitude for the woman and her alabaster jar, may we never cease to come to you in prayer.

**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.**

### **Thanksgiving for the Word**

L: Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,

**C: we give you thanks and praise.**

L: By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God,

**C: we give you thanks and praise.**

L: Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,

**C: we give you thanks and praise.**

L: Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory 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.**

**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** "How Small Our Span of Life" ELW #636

**Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude** Suite on the sending hymn “How Small Our Span Of Life” (ELW 636)  
English folk tune arranged by D. Dahl

**Welcome to Grace!**

**Ministers** —the people of Grace

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

**Vicar** –  
Lotegeluaki Lengai.....[lotegeluaki@gracedm.org](mailto:lotegeluaki@gracedm.org)  
(Loh-tay-gay-loo-wahk-ee Lain-guy)

**Organist** –  
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**Piano Accompanist, Music Ensemble Coordinator** –  
Kathy Bowermaster

**Minister for Communications** –  
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**Custodian** – Todd Haugen

**Usher** – Carter Woodruff

**Greeter** – Lenny and Pam Palmer

**Poetry Reader** – Pam Palmer

**Lector** – Ro Zimany

**Altar Guild** –

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

**Counters** – Tom McCleary and Eric Weber

**Coffee & Donuts** – Tammy Denton



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**Pastor Michael Schmidt**

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