



Grace Lutheran Church

Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania

Welcome to Worship

Palm Sunday

March 29, 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
- 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 Meditation on the sending hymn “Jesus Shall Reign” (ELW 434) - J. Hatton arranged by J. Behnke

Welcome

Poetry Prayer — For the Sake of Tiny Resurrections

L: We took the kids to the beach, a herd of children lathered in sunscreen. We spent most of the day building sandcastles, swimming in the shallows, wiping sand off their eyelashes and noses. Things changed when a small fish washed up on shore. The children saw it first—a little body gasping to survive. They cried out—Quick! We have to save it! We grabbed our buckets. We sprinted to the waterline. We scooped up the dying fish and returned it to the waves.

The kids sagged with relief as the fish jolted to life, a tiny resurrection in front of our very eyes. Full of pride, I said to them—You did something good. Today, you saved a life. A seven-year-old with sun-kissed cheeks took the bucket from my hands and said, I'd like to save some more.

He spent the afternoon patrolling the waves, hoping to dole out mercy to any shore-washed fish. He carried his bucket around all day, because love inspires love. Love will make you want to patrol the shoreline, sing Hosanna, witness a resurrection, save some more—one bucket of water at a time.

Please rise in body or in spirit

Processional Hymn “Blessed Is the One” ACS #929

(Choir & instruments only, repeat 4 times)
Blessed is the one who comes in the name,
who comes in the name of the Lord;
Blessed is the one who comes in the name,
who comes in the name of the Lord.

(Congregation joins choir, repeat 2 times)
C: Blessed is the one who comes in the name,
who comes in the name of the Lord;
Blessed is the one who comes in the name,
who comes in the name of the Lord.

Call to Worship

L: Will you follow? Will you lay down your coat? Will you lay down something important? Will you shout “Hosanna”? Will you join the parade? Will you sing, even if your throat is hoarse? Will you cut down a palm branch? Will you wave it in the air? Will you follow the one riding on a donkey? Will you let this good news inspire you to act?

C: We will. We will sing. We will pay close attention. We will

Processional Hymn

Palm Sunday is the day in Lent when we first begin to hear the story of the Passion of Jesus. That long ago day, Jesus entered Jerusalem riding a young horse or donkey, thus fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy. Crowds of pilgrims were gathered to celebrate Jesus' arrival, and they waved palm branches and threw them at his feet as he passed. They also chanted “Hosanna”, which can be literally translated as “deliver us.” The events of Holy Week and the Resurrection followed this triumphal procession. We remember and observe Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem by waving palm branches as the cross processions to the altar. Please remain in your pew, but wave your palm branch high in the air as we sing the processional hymn together.

worship. We will follow.

L: Hosanna in the highest!

C: Hosanna in the highest.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: The very first Palm Sunday was a day of action. It was a day of movement, of crowded city streets, and cries of "Hosanna!" It was a day of peaceful protest and dreams for a better world. The first Palm Sunday was a day of peaceful, hopeful action. So friends, on this Palm Sunday, let us join the saints before us in an act of faith. Let us begin with an act of prayer, an act of honesty, an act of transformation. Let us begin by drawing close to God and sharing the truth of our lives. Let us begin with confession. Join me in prayer:

C: Jesus of Nazareth, we know that you spent your days teaching and healing. You marched through the streets and walked on water. You laid hands on the sick and broke bread at crowded dinner tables. Your good news was not confined to conversation. It was not confined to the Temple. Your good news was an act of love, alive in the world. Holy God, we long for a faith like that. Forgive us for the times when we confine our faith to something we think about, as opposed to something we act upon. Inspire us to love as you loved. Inspire us to act. With hope for tomorrow we pray, amen.

L: Church family, whether or not you wave your palm branch, whether or not you live out your faith, whether or not you allow this good news to inspire your actions, God will never stop loving you. Jesus will never stop marching for you. The Spirit will never stop listening to you.

C: We are claimed, loved, and held in grace. What good, good news. Amen!

Hymn of Praise "Surely God is my Salvation"

ACS #926

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: Holy One, if we've heard this story before, the story of Jesus entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, then help us to hear it again. And if we've never heard this story before, if we've never heard the story of Palm Sunday or the cries of "Hosanna," then give us the wisdom to follow along. Give us the wisdom to

hear these words. Give us the wisdom to take them into our hearts. Give us the wisdom to act on their truth. We are listening. Amen.

Please be seated

Reading: Mark 11:1-11

¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ just say this: ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.’” ⁴They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵ some of the bystanders said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶They told them what Jesus had said, and they allowed them to take it. ⁷Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. ⁹Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” ¹¹Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple, and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Sermon

Please rise in body or in spirit

Hymn of the Day “Rejoice, For Christ is King” ELW #430

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.*

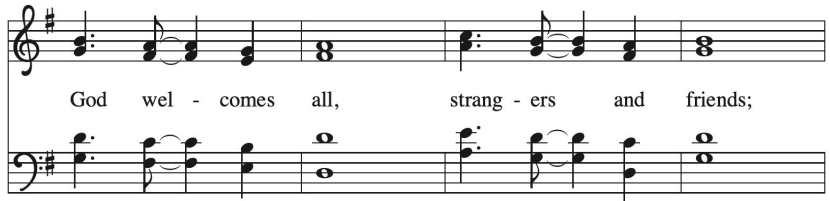
Offering: *As Lutherans, we believe that Christian giving is about worship AND action. As an option to the offering plate, scan this QR code to access our secure digital offering plate.*



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 this prayer, and the earnestness in our hearts, move us closer to you. With cries of "Hosanna!" on our tongues, we join our voices together. May we continue 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.

Blessing of Lutheran World Relief Quilts and Kits

L: Gracious and loving God, you call us to be a people of compassion, stitching love into the fabric of our lives and the lives of others.

C: Today, we ask you to bless the quilts and kits that we are making. May they bring warmth, comfort, dignity and hope to our neighbors in need.

L: We thank you for the fabric from which these quilts are made, chosen with care, bright with color, soft to the touch; may it remind those who receive them that they are seen, known, and loved.

C: We thank you for all the supplies to make kits of care. May they bring healing, peace and hope.

L: For the hands that labor to make these gifts, may they be strengthened to continue acts of mercy and justice in your name.

C: For the people who will receive these gifts, may they feel your presence with them in their time of need.

L: As these gifts go out into the world, may they carry not only warmth and comfort, but also the power of your Spirit, a visible sign of the Body of Christ at work.

All: Amen.

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.

L: 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

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

Centering Prayer

There will be two minutes of silence for centering prayer.

Communion:

Today we will receive Holy Communion through wafers and pouring chalice. Two lines will form from the front pews to the back. 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.

Please rise in body or in spirit

Prayer after Communion

L: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, 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

“Jesus Shall Reign”

ELW #434

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Improvisation on the hymn “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”
German melody arranged by M. Burkhardt

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 –

Poetry Reader – Jenny Rehder

Lector – Carol Woodruff

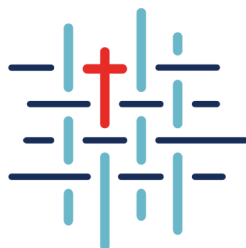
Communion Assistants – Cherie Rissman, Carol Woodruff, Kate Schaller

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 –



GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor Michael Schmidt

515-276-6873

www.gracedm.org