



# Grace Lutheran Church

*Companion Congregation: Msindo Parish in Tanzania*

## Welcome to Worship

**Third Sunday in Lent**

March 8, 2026

9:00 a.m.

Liturgical worship with piano

## 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

“God Is Here Today” (ACS #993)

Arr. Tom Witt

## Welcome

### Poetry Prayer — Surely, This Must Be It

*Everyone has a job. I wash the potatoes, filling the sink with slivers of potato peel. You brine the turkey, hovering by the oven all afternoon. Someone sets the table, taking care to fill a vase with asters and marigolds, sprigs of holly and shoots of evergreen. We play music while we prepare. “What The World Needs Now is Love”<sup>1</sup> comes on. We can’t get it out of our heads. We whistle along to Dionne all afternoon. And eventually, the doorbell rings. You’ve invited the neighbors, the grad student who sits on the second row at church, the widower in the choir. We add seats to the table. We go around the room and share one thing we’re grateful for. Eyes well as we create a laundry list of beauty. The kids get squirmy, but we’re grateful for that too. And then we eat! We scoop whipped potatoes and crisp green beans with fresh garlic. We pass the bread basket, leaving crumbs all over the table. They are tiny reminders of communion in our midst. And at the end of the night, when we walk our guests to the car and carry sleeping children to their car seats, our neighbors say, What a holy moment it all was. Surely this must be what heaven feels like. Surely we can create it together.*

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

### Call to Worship

L: If you need good news,

**C: settle into this space. We have good news to share.**

L: If you need a word of hope,

**C: then trust us when we say, there is hope enough to go around.**

L: If you need a glimmer of joy,

**C: then you’re in luck! We have resilient joy abounding.**

L: If you need to feel God’s presence in your midst,

**C: then know that this is God’s house.**

L: This is the good news of the gospel.

**C: God is here. Love is real. Joy is on the move. Let us worship our with-us God!**

**Gathering Hymn** “Lord, You Give the Great Commission”

ELW #579

### Confession and Forgiveness

L: Friends, we are like the disciples. The day that Jesus fed 5,000, his disciples could not imagine a solution to the crowd’s hunger. They told Jesus to send the crowds away. We often do

### 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).*

the same. Like the disciples, we try to follow Jesus around, but when we run into issues, we often cannot imagine how we could play a part. That is why we need the Prayer of Confession. For in this prayer, we remember that we can make a difference. So friends, join me in this moment of truth telling. Join me in prayer:

L: Holy God,

**C: with you the impossible is possible. 5,000 can be fed. The blind can see. The hopeless can find hope. With you the impossible is possible, but we are quick to forget that. We look at our hurting world and tell ourselves that nothing can be done. We forget that you empowered the disciples to feed the crowd. We forget that you are always with us. Forgive our small-minded ways. Forgive us for doubting that change could ever come. But even more so, forgive us when we refuse to be a part of it. With hope for a better tomorrow we pray, amen.**

L: Family of faith, no matter how many mistakes the disciples made, Jesus still washed their feet. Jesus still fed them. Jesus still called them beloved. The same is true for you and me, so hear and believe this good news:

**C: today is a new day, and once again, we belong to God. We are forgiven. We are called. We are not alone. What good, good news. Amen!**

### **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 God, we could press our ear to the page, hoping to hear you more clearly. We could silence all the alarms and notifications, hoping to catch a murmur of your voice. We could still our beating hearts, and still we might miss your voice. So today we pray, open up space in our hearts, in our spirits, in our minds, to feel your presence among us. With you, anything is possible. We believe. Help our unbelief. Amen.**

*Please be seated*

### **Reading: Mark 6:32-44**

<sup>32</sup> And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. <sup>33</sup> Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. <sup>34</sup> As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things. <sup>35</sup> When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted

place, and the hour is now very late; <sup>36</sup> send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat.” <sup>37</sup> But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.” They said to him, “Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, “How many loaves have you? Go and see.” When they had found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.” <sup>39</sup> Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup> So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. <sup>41</sup> Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to his disciples to set before the people, and he divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> And all ate and were filled, <sup>43</sup> and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. <sup>44</sup> Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### **Reading: Ephesians 3:20-21**

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

### **Sermon**

*Please rise in body or in spirit*

**Hymn of the Day**     “Baptized and Set Free”     ELW #453

### **Affirmation of Faith**

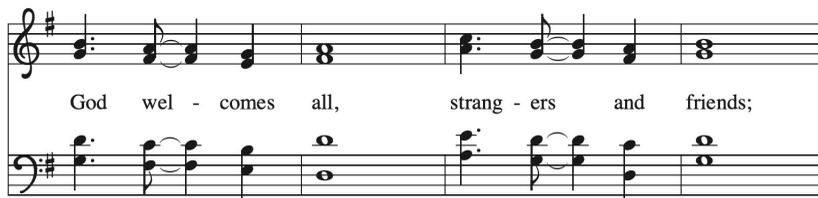
**C: I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ. It sounds like welcome and feels like home. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy. It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table, so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ. I have seen it alive in the world. And even when my heart aches, 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:** 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: So call us again, loving God. Say our names. Hand us the baskets of bread and fish. Tell us it's our turn. Help us see ourselves the way you see us, for we know that together the impossible is possible. Until your promised day when all are fed, all are healed, and hunger is no more, we will continue to pray.

**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

### Mission Moment - MOSAIC

*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 at the Table

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

**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: 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: #751 (3x), #474, #515, #488*

### **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, 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** "Although I Speak with Angel's Tongue"

ELW #644

### **Dismissal**

L: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Postlude**

" 'Tis the Gift To Be Simple"

Arr. Larry Shackley

### **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.*