



Lent 5  
March 21, 2021

## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Making Christ Known to all Through Grace*

2225 Washington Street, Lincoln NE 68502 + 402-474-1505 + [www.egrace.org](http://www.egrace.org)

Network: GLC-Balcony

Password: AlphaOmega

### WELCOME to worship

Grace Lutheran Church, a church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, has been at the heart of the faith community in Lincoln since 1889.

- We follow our mission: "Making Christ known to all through Grace."
- We celebrate our purpose: "That by God's grace we have been gathered to worship, called to witness, and sent to serve."
- We seek our vision: "To become a church with a passion for fostering a welcoming community that strives for peace and a sense of belonging."

Thank you for worshipping with us today and join our community at any time!

### WORSHIP notes

Remember your response is marked in **BOLD** font.

**Hearing enhancement devices** are available in the entry space. Ask an usher to assist you.

**Restrooms** are located next to our chapel on the other side of the courtyard.

**Masks** should be worn over both the **nose and mouth**.

Physically **distance** yourself from others.

**Sit** only with members of your household.

**Sanitize** your hands

Take your **bulletin** home with you.

### INTRODUCTION to worship

God promises Jeremiah that a "new covenant" will be made in the future: a covenant that will allow all the people to know God by heart. The church sees this promise fulfilled in Christ, who draws all people to himself when he is lifted on the cross. Our baptismal covenant draws us to God's heart through Christ and draws God's love and truth into our hearts. We join in worship, sharing in word, song, and meal, and leave strengthened to share God's love with all the world.

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## GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

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### WELCOME

**PRELUDE:** "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling", Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887, arr. A. Melang-Thoren, 2019

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

STAND

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer. **Amen.**

God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Fountain of living water,

**pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen.**

Beloved, God's word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are † forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus. **Amen.**

### GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

### OPENING DIALOG

Behold, now is the acceptable time;

**now is the day of salvation.**

Turn us again, O God of our salvation,

**that the light of your face may shine on us.**

May your justice shine like the sun;

**and may the poor be lifted up.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, with steadfast love you draw us to yourself, and in mercy you receive our prayers. Strengthen us to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, that through life and death we may live in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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### WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.*

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SIT

## READINGS

### First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

A reading from Jeremiah:

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm: Psalm 51:1-3, 12

Let us read responsively from Psalm 51:

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

<sup>2</sup>**Wash me through and through from my wickedness,  
and cleanse me from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup>For I know my offenses,  
and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

God of mercy, you know us better than we know ourselves, and still you love us. Wash us from all our sins, create in us clean hearts, and strengthen us by your Holy Spirit that we may proclaim your praise; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

### Second Reading: Hebrews 5:5-7-9

A reading from Hebrews:

<sup>7</sup>In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup>Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; <sup>9</sup>and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

STAND

**Gospel: John 12:20-26**

The Holy Gospel according to St. John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>20</sup>Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. <sup>21</sup>They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." <sup>22</sup>Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*SIT*

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** (please remain seated and hum or sing the hymn to yourself)

Hymnologist Erik Routley notes, early Christians were concerned with issues surrounding their daily lives. For these early Latin worshipers, the morning suggests challenge, the evening, death. There are all manner of devices of the devil peculiar to the successive times of day against which the Christian prays to be defended. Indeed the whole business looks to a modern Protestant Christian as somewhat gloomy, and introverted. (Routley, 1979)

What does this hymn teach us about waiting?

## As the Sun with Longer Journey



1 As the sun with long-er jour-ney melts the win-ter's snow and ice,  
2 Through the days of wait-ing, watch-ing, in the des-ert of our sin,  
3 Praise be giv-en to the mak-er of the sea-sons' year-ly round:



with its slow-ly grow-ing ra-diance warms the seed be-neath the earth,  
search-ing on the far ho-ri-zon for a sign of cloud or wind,  
Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Spir-it—Source, Sus-tain-er, Lord of life,



may the sun of Christ's up-ris-ing gent-ly bring our hearts to life.  
we a-wait the heal-ing wa-ters of our Sav-ior's vic-to-ry.  
as the ev-er turn-ing a-ges roll to their e-ter-nal rest.

Text: John Patrick Earls, OSB, b. 1935

Music: NAGEL, Carl F. Schalk, b. 1929

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Music © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

### STAND

#### APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended to the living,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need. A *brief silence*.

You wash us through and through and remember our sin no more. Make your church a community of forgiveness throughout the world. Give your people courage to forgive; through them show the world new possibilities. Bless ministries of repentance and reconciliation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You fill the earth—from tiny grains of wheat to the mighty thunder—with your presence, and you call us to attend to your will for all creation. Grant weather that prepares the soil for seeds; protect all from violent storms, flooding, and wildfires. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You promise to write your law on our hearts. Guide citizens throughout the world to shape communities that reflect your mercy, justice, and peace, and give them creativity to work for the welfare of all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You sustain us with your bountiful Spirit. Restore the joy of all who need to know your presence: those who are lonely or feel unforgivable, those who need healing of mind or body, those who are dying, and all who grieve. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Jesus calls us to follow him in life and death. Empower this congregation in discipleship. Equip children and teachers in Sunday school, confirmation, and learning ministries. Give us your truth and wisdom and teach us to follow Jesus. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the cross of Christ, your name is glorified. We praise you for those who have given us words to worship you. With all those who have died in Christ, bring us into life everlasting. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Christ.*

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*SIT*

**MUSIC OFFERING:** “Let Us Break Bread Together”, African American Spiritual, arr. Sandra Eithun, 2017.

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## **DIALOG**

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## **PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should always and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Amen.

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

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.

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.

## **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**

Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed.

## **COMMUNION**

(Cup with round wafer is NOT gluten-free. Cup with square bread IS gluten-free)

(pull back top seal) The Body of Christ

(pull back bottom seal) The Blood of Christ



*STAND*

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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### **SENDING**

*God sends us in mission to the world.*

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### **BLESSING**

You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you ☩ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. **Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE:** Leave in silence during Lent

### **WORSHIP SPACE:**

After worship we will need four volunteers to sanitize the nave. Remain up front for further instructions.

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### **WORSHIP SERVANTS:**

Worship leader: Rev. Eric Lesher

Organist/Pianist: Anne Melang-Thoren

Jennifer Aliwarga-Carlson

Bell Quartet: Jillian Jensen, Lisa Holmstrom, Peter Schnake, Julene Lesher

Virtual Choir: Hymn of the Day

## **UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS**

**Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, died 1556**

**Sunday, March 21, 2021**

Cranmer's lasting achievement is contributing to and overseeing the creation of the Book of Common Prayer, which remains (in revised form) the worship book of the Anglican Communion. He was burned at the stake under Queen Mary for his support of the Protestant Reformation.

**Jonathan Edwards, teacher, missionary to American Indians, died 1758**

**Monday, March 22, 2021**

A Puritan minister in Connecticut, Edwards is remembered as being a great preacher. Though his most famous sermon talks at length about hell, he was more concerned with God's love. He served both as missionary to the Housatonic people in Massachusetts, and as president of the future Princeton University.

**Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, died 1980**

**Wednesday, March 24, 2021**

Romero was deeply concerned with injustices evident toward the poor and powerless in El Salvador, and worked forthrightly against political repression. He was assassinated while presiding at the eucharist in a chapel near the cathedral in San Salvador.

**Annunciation of Our Lord**

**Thursday, March 25, 2021**

Nine months before Christmas we celebrate the annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Son of God. The ancient church believed that this was also the date of the world's creation and of Jesus' death on the cross.

## **PRAYER CONCERN(S):**

Pray for all the members of our church, who respond to God's call to serve, accept invitations to share their gifts and skills, and give of themselves to grow the church, serve neighbors in need, nurture the faith of others and equip disciples of all ages.

Pray for God's mercy and love every day. Ask that God will instill in us joy and hope, create in us a faithful spirit, teach us truth and wisdom, and stir gratitude in our hearts for all that God has done and continues to do for us and all humanity.

Pray for young adults who are eager to serve and share their faith, and for the enduring relationships we have with our companion churches and partner organizations around the world.

Pray for all those who grieve and suffer the loss of a loved one, friend, co-worker or neighbor, especially those impacted by the death of someone from COVID-19.

Pray that the Spirit will make us humble, loving servants willing to sacrifice convenience, reward and emotional comfort for the sake of sharing the gospel and caring for our neighbors in need.

Pray for ELCA missionaries serving alongside companion churches and organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

## **WORSHIP RESTRICTIONS**

The following *temporary* changes will occur for the foreseeable future:

- As always, if you are ill or at risk, **please stay at home** and watch the service online.
- Wearing a **face covering that covers the mouth and nose is required** while you are in the building. A disposable mask will be provided if you do not have one.
- We will enter the building through the **North doors**. The doors will be locked at 9:10. All other doors will be locked.
- At the north door you will be given a **bulletin**. You will **take this home with you** after worship. Do not leave it in the building.
- There will hand sanitizers at the entrance door to the sanctuary. **Sanitize your hands** prior to entering the worship space.
- **Sit** only with persons from **your own household**.
- During worship we ask you to **refrain from physical contact** especially as you greet one another. Practice good “physical distancing”. Use a wave in place of a hand shake. 6 feet is the minimum.
- There will be **no offering**. There will be an offering basket located at the entrance door to the sanctuary.
- There will be **no sharing** of the peace.
- There will be **no singing out loud**. You can hum or sing quietly to yourself.
- The presiding minister will **not greet** you after worship.
- There will be **no** assisting minister, reader, or acolyte
- There will be **no nursery** available.

## **Masks** in the building

If you need to be in the church building please contact the office ahead of time so we know you are in the building and/or need access to the building. When you are here and within six feet of others then please wear a mask. Thanks!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Lenten Midweek** service for both online and in-person congregations begins on Wednesday at 6:30 PM in the nave.

**Easter flower** order forms are in the narthex. Complete the form. Leave the form and payment in the basket.

**Palm branches** will be available to pick up on Friday, March 26, from 9-3 pm in the main entrance for you to use at home. Instructions for creating a palm branch cross will be included as well.

**2021 Offering Envelope boxes** are available in the atrium after worship today or during the week.

**The Lutheran** magazine and **Daily Devotionals** are available in the narthex after worship or in the main entrance during the week.

**2019 Constitutions** and “cross-out” version of the 2017 Constitution are available for your review in the narthex and main entrance. If you have any questions please contact our Synod Attorney, Mr. Bill Biggs, at 402-679-5758 or contact Pr. Eric.

## CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

### March 22:

Boy Scouts	7:00 pm
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### March 23:

Al-Anon	9:30 am
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Cub Scouts	6:30 pm
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### March 24:

Worship	7:00 pm
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### March 25:

Quilting	9:00 am
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Bell Quartet B	7:00 pm
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### March 26:

Respite Care	5:45 pm
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### March 28:

Worship	9:00 am
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Bell Quartet A	9:45 am
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Eagle Scouts	7:00 pm
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