



**Midweek Service of Word and Prayer
Grace Lutheran Church
Lincoln, Nebraska**

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

God is our light and our salvation,
our refuge and our stronghold.

From the rising of the sun to its setting,
we praise your name, O God.

For with you is the fountain of life,
and in your light we see our salvation.

Prayer of the Day

O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings

Isaiah 50:8

“Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me.”

Who are your allies and why? Who are your adversaries and why?

Psalm 116

“⁹I will walk in the presence of the Lord, in the land of the living.”

How does God’s presence bring life to you each day?

James 3:5a

⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits...

How has your tongue exploited others?

Mark 8

³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

What is the difference between divine things and human things? Which one takes up most of your time and why?

Reflection

An Unexpected Messiah

Today we hear from three teachers. The prophet Isaiah calls himself a teacher, one whose words sustain weary people. James warns about foolish and hurtful use of our tongues, which should be used to “bless the Lord and Father,” but often are used to “curse those who are made in the likeness of God.” The final voice in the trio is Jesus, the teacher, who keeps the disciples quiet about any Messiah identity but speaks openly about his own suffering, death, and resurrection. Peter tries to tell Jesus that no one willingly chooses to go along with that kind of plan. Nobody likes a loser. But Jesus responds that Peter has lost sight of what is most important in life. Jesus teaches the disciples that they will lose their life for the sake of the gospel.

Then and now, Jesus invites followers on the way of the cross—a path of daily learning, dying, and new life. The German-language poet and novelist Rainer Maria Rilke once wrote: “Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are written in a foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, but instead, live the questions. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live into the answer.”

Music Offering: *Take my Life and Let it Be* by Vineyard Music

Lord’s Prayer (together)

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.

Apostle’s Creed (together)

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.

Responsive Prayer

Show us your mercy, O God,

and grant us your salvation.

Give us the joy of your saving help again,

and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.

Give peace in all the world;

for only in you can we live in safety.

Keep the nations under your care,

and guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let your way be known upon earth;

your saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy be forgotten,

nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us a clean heart, O God,

and sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

Lord, hear my prayer,

and let my cry come before you.

Closing Prayer

O God, in you we live and move and have our being. Guide and govern us every day by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but remember that always we are walking in your promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Blessing

Almighty God (+) bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**