



Ascension Sunday  
May 23/24, 2020

## **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)

### **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 are deeply committed to 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 are excited about 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!

### **INTRODUCTION to worship**

In today's readings the risen Christ ascends into heaven and his followers are assured that the Spirit will empower them to be witnesses throughout the earth. The disciples were told to not gaze up into heaven to look for Jesus (Acts 1:11); we find his presence among us as we proclaim the word and share the Easter feast. We too long for the Spirit to enliven our faith and invigorate our mission.

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## **GATHERING**

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

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**PRELUDE** "In Babilone", arr. Mark Sedio

### **WELCOME**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Let us confess our sins in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence*

Gracious God,

**C: we confess that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. Forgive us and give us strength to turn from sin and to serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

**C: Amen.**

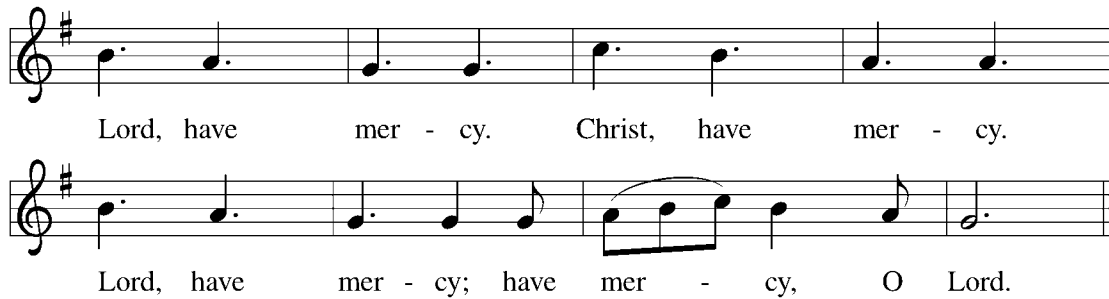
### **GREETING**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

## KYRIE

### Kyrie



Music: *Mass No. 1*, Avon Gillespie  
Music © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638 [www.giamusic.com](http://www.giamusic.com)  
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### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign 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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### READINGS

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

*Before he is lifted into heaven, Jesus promises that the missionary work of the disciples will spread out from Jerusalem to all the world. His words provide an outline of the book of Acts.*

[Luke writes:] <sup>1</sup>In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning <sup>2</sup>until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; <sup>5</sup>for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

<sup>6</sup>So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup>He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." <sup>9</sup>When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup>They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

*The risen and exalted Christ reigns over the entire universe. The author of Ephesians prays that we are given the wisdom to know the power of the risen Christ and the empowering hope that the knowledge of this inheritance provides.*

<sup>15</sup>I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, <sup>18</sup>so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. <sup>20</sup>God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. <sup>22</sup>And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Gospel: Luke 24:44-53

*On the day of his ascension, Jesus leaves his disciples with a commission, a blessing, and a promise of the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>44</sup>[Jesus said to the eleven and those with them,] “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”<sup>45</sup>Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, <sup>46</sup>and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup>and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

<sup>50</sup>Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. <sup>51</sup>While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup>And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; <sup>53</sup>and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

**SERMON**

## Son of God, Eternal Savior



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,  
 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.  
 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;  
 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,  
 Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.  
 hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.  
 Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:  
 Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;  
 By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,  
 by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.  
 we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.  
 quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.  
 grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

Text: Somerset C. Lowry, 1855–1932

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen*, 1710

## 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 into heaven,  
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

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

Living God, you chose us to be your witnesses in the world. We pray for the church in every place and the congregations in our community. Focus our hearts and minds on the ministry we share in your name. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, all creation sings praise to you. You delight in the oceans, and the mountains are your throne. Teach us humility and respect for our home. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sovereign God, you rule the heavens, the earth, and time itself. Make this a time of justice, peace, and solidarity among all nations and peoples, so that oppression and violence rule no more. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Tender God, we wait with hope for your presence to heal us, bless us, restore us, and give us peace. You know all the names of those suffering for whom we pray this day, especially those we name before you now... Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gentle God, you guide us as we seek wisdom. We pray for teachers, professors, theologians, day care workers, and all those charged with teaching the young and old. Give them endurance and persistence in their valuable work. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Infinite God, your inheritance given to all your saints is your presence in our life and in our death. We remember with thanksgiving the faithful departed, especially those we name before you now... Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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## THANKSGIVING

*We give thanks for who God is for us.*

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### OFFERING "Blest Be the Tie that Binds", arr. Carlson

You can mail in your offering, drop it off at church (please call ahead) or use our online giving page on our website: [www.egrace.org](http://www.egrace.org)

### HYMN OF THANKSGIVING ELW 838

#### Beautiful Savior



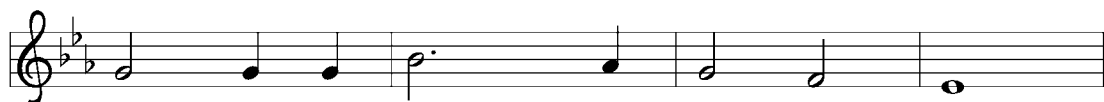
1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion,  
2 Fair are the mead - ows, fair are the wood - lands,  
3 Fair is the sun - shine, fair is the moon - light,  
4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions,



Son of God and Son of Man!  
robed in flow'rs of bloom - ing spring;  
bright the spar - kling stars on high;  
Son of God and Son of Man!



Tru - ly I'd love thee, tru - ly I'd serve thee,  
Je - sus is fair - er, Je - sus is pur - er,  
Je - sus shines bright - er, Je - sus shines pur - er,  
Glo - ry and hon - or, praise, ad - o - ra - tion,



light of my soul, my joy, my crown.  
he makes our sor - rowing spir - it sing.  
than all the an - gels in the sky.  
now and for - ev - er - more be thine!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Münster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823–1904  
Music: SCHÖNSTER HERR JESU, Silesian folk tune, 19th cent.

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

O God of all power and majesty, you created the heavens and stretched them out. You formed the earth and all that comes from it. You give the breath of life to all who walk on the face of the earth. Jesus, you conquered sin and death and now reign victorious. You are Lord; glory is due your name. The former things have come to pass; we now await the new things you will bring through the Holy Spirit. We rejoice to be gathered in your name. Alleluia! Accept our praise and thanksgiving.

**Amen.**

## **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.**

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## **SENDING**

*God sends us in mission to the world.*

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## **BLESSING**

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

**POSTLUDE** "Schonster Herr Jesu", setting by James Engel

## **DISMISSAL**

Christ is risen. Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

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

All victims of the Covid-19 virus

Refugees

Art Hillman (healing), Bob Anderson (healing), Steve and Tricia Rosno (hope), Robert Stimbert (healing), family of Gladys Badberg upon her death.

## **WORSHIP LEADERS:**

Worship leader: Rev. Eric Leshner

Organist/Pianist: Ms. Anne Melang-Thoren

## **HOME COMMUNION SERVICE**

*We will not be celebrating Holy Communion online. It's a real time event. So here is a short service you can use to commune yourself or others in your home at this time. This is a "blessed" event because Pr. Eric is giving you permission to celebrate the meal during an abnormal time. But remember there have been Christian communities who existed for decades without the Eucharistic for reasons beyond their control. In other words, we've been through this before.*



**Opening Prayer**

Merciful God, we do not trust in our own righteousness, but in your abundant mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, the presence of your Son Jesus Christ, that we may live in him and he in us, now and forever. Amen.

**Reading**

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 (NEB)

23 For I, Paul, received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, 24 and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

**Distribution of each element** (bread and wine preferred but not necessary)

Say "The body of Christ" and then distribute the element

Say "The blood of Christ" and then distribute the element

**Closing Prayer**

Almighty God, you provide the true life from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. May we abide in him and he in us, so that we may be filled with the power of his endless life, now and forever. Amen.