



**Midweek Service of Word, Song 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

Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Readings

Isaiah 25

<sup>7</sup>And God will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; <sup>8</sup>God will swallow up death forever.

How has this promise of old shaped your life today?

Psalms 24

<sup>1</sup>The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who dwell therein.

What does it mean that the earth belongs to God and not to us?

Revelation 21

<sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. God will dwell with them; they will be God's peoples, and God will be with them;

What does it mean that the home of God is among us and not somewhere else?

John 11

<sup>44</sup>The dead man Lazarus came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

What does this command of Jesus mean for us today?

## **Reflection**

### **Unbinding the Living**

On All Saints Sunday we remember loved ones who have been laid to rest. We know the reality of death that lies so close. We know that at any moment the phone call could come with news we dread. We live forever in the shadow of death.

At the same time, we also know the little deaths that take place every day. We know the daily disappointments, the betrayal of a friend, a failure at work, a difficult and tumultuous marriage, the loneliness and pain of one longing for something more from life.

Beyond that there are the near-constant reminders that much of this world is far from God's kingdom. How easy it is to look and see poverty and injustice, disease and despair all around. Like Lazarus, we are bound tightly in death's clothes: grief, disappointment, hopelessness.

Yet Jesus speaks the last word for us: "Unbind him, and let him go" (John 11:44). This promise is bursting with resurrecting life. This word is spoken by the one who became human and was put in a tomb, but broke through the pervasive stench of death. The last word is not death, but life as a beloved child of God.

Clothed in the righteousness of Christ, God's people are called forth from the grave. Together the people of God celebrate the hope and promise of resurrection, rising each new day to joyfully serve in the name of the one who is beyond death, Jesus our Savior.

**Music Offering:** Shall We Gather at the River - Selah

### **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.**