



Ash Wednesday  
February 17, 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 are 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 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

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that "now is the day of salvation." Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

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### GATHERING

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

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*GATHER IN SILENCE*

**WELCOME**

*SIT*

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most holy and merciful God, **we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us. **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

## **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May the sign of the cross, remind us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Make the sign of the cross and recite *“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

### **STAND**

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.  
**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.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty and ever-living God, you have made all things, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, through 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*

### **First Reading: Joel 2:1, 12-13**

A reading from Joel 2:

<sup>1</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
    sound the alarm on my holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,  
    for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—  
<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,  
    return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>rend your hearts and not your clothing.  
Return to the LORD, your God,  
    for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
    and relents from punishing.

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

Psalm: Psalm 51:1-4, 16

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>4</sup>**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**

<sup>16</sup>For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.  
You are not pleased with burnt offering.

<sup>17</sup>**The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.**

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:2

A reading from 2 Corinthians:

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

<sup>2</sup>For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!

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

STAND

**Gospel: Matthew 6:1-4**

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

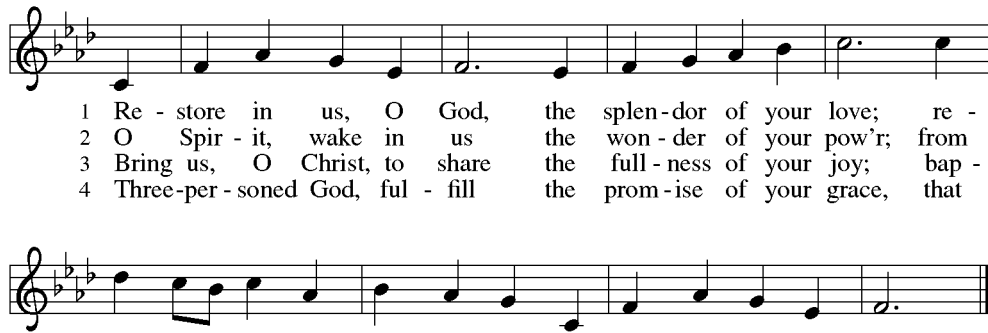
[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“Beware of practicing your piety before others to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>“So whenever you give alms, (or pray or fast), do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, (pray or fast) do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms, (prayer and fast) may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

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:)

**Restore in Us, O God**



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -  
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from  
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -  
4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that

new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.  
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.  
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.  
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944  
Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933  
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**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.*

O God, you call your church to be ministers of reconciliation throughout the world. Inspire your church in its proclamation of the gospel and guide its ministries to build up the body of Christ. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, you created the earth and all its inhabitants and you declared that it is good. Protect mountains and valleys, animals and plants, and direct us to be good stewards of all you have made. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, you desire peace. Direct governments and leaders to work for the well-being of all people and raise up advocates to speak and serve on behalf of the downtrodden. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, you are our hope amid despair, our help amid sorrow, and our consolation amid affliction. Grant comfort to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit and support caregivers who attend to all in need. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, you are love, and you call us to love one another. Accompany with your grace those journeying toward baptism and call us all to repentance as we prepare to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, you are our life and our salvation. We give you thanks for the righteous who have died in faith. Inspire us by their example to proclaim your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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:** "The Lord's My Shepherd", Evan, William H. Havergal, 1846, arr. Albert Zabel.

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, 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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. 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**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

**COMMUNION** (Cup with 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

Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of 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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### SENDING

*God sends us in mission to the world.*

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### BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

### DISMISSAL

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Thanks be to God.**

*LEAVE IN SILENCE.*

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### WORSHIP SERVANTS:

Worship leader:	Rev. Eric Lesher
Organist/Pianist:	Anne Melang-Thoren Jennifer Aliwarga-Carlson
Virtual Cantor:	Wendy Apple
Bells Choir:	Chris and Wendy Apple, Bev Madison and Dave Ripa

### WORSHIP SPACE:

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

## **UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS**

**Martin Luther, renewer of the church, died 1546**

**Thursday, February 18, 2021**

Though he began his adult church life as a simple Augustinian monk, Luther challenged the abuses he saw in the church, and his work eventually led to the Protestant Reformation.

Luther's accomplishments included liturgical reform, translation of the Bible, and creation of the Small and Large Catechisms.

**Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, died 156**

**Tuesday, February 23, 2021**

Because he is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, as well as the important early church fathers Irenaeus and Ignatius, Polycarp serves as a vital link in church history. He was burned at the stake at age 86 for refusing to renounce his faith.

**Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, died 1921**

**Thursday, February 25, 2021**

Born in Norway and trained there as a deaconess, Fedde was asked to come and minister to the poor and to seamen in New York City. She established the Deaconess House in Brooklyn as well as Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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

All victims of the Covid-19 virus, sick and suffering, refugees, natural disaster victims, climate change, social injustice, our nation and all of creation.

## 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**. 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.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**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. Only a few left!

### **Masks**

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!

## **THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**

### **A Public Faith**

In today's gospel Jesus cautions us against public acts of piety. Of course Jesus does not tell us to refrain from all acts of public piety. What Jesus seems concerned with is the *why*, not the *what*. Why do you pray in public? Why do you give alms? Why do you fast? If appearing faithful is a way to build yourself up before others, then it is not faithfulness but hypocrisy. On the other hand, if praying over a meal in a restaurant is something you do because praying at meals is part of your faith, bow your head and pray!

As the season of Lent begins each year, God's people are invited to take on three great disciplines: prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. You hear the invitation to prayer, fasting, and alms-giving in the reading from Joel. Jesus' words in the gospel remind us that our acts of faithfulness always come as a response to God's gifts. Remembering this gives a note of humility to all we do. Piety is not something to brag about. Piety is not something to be proud of. Piety is but acknowledgment of the one who first gave us everything.

Finally, Paul makes it clear, as if there were ever any question: we only become righteous in Jesus. We know grace only because Jesus becomes our sin. This is the grounding for everything we do throughout the holy days of Lent.