



**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

Generous God, your Son gave his life that we might come to peace with you. Give us a share of your Spirit, and in all we do empower us to bear the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## Readings

Numbers 11

<sup>4</sup>The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, “If only we had meat to eat! <sup>5</sup>We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; <sup>6</sup>but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.” ...

When has your hope for the past hidden the vision of your future?

Psalms 19

<sup>7</sup>The teaching of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

What is God teaching you these days? What testimony is God giving you today?

Mark 9

<sup>50</sup>Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

What are you doing to “season” or enhance the world you live in every day? How are you building peace with others around you?

## **Reflection**

### **Don't Try to Stop God**

In Mark 9:38-50 the disciples—at least John—are upset because they saw somebody, not a disciple, “casting out demons” in Jesus’ name. Here John sounds strikingly like the Pharisees, who became upset when someone out of their control, Jesus, healed a person on the sabbath (Mark 3:1-6). A common tendency among religious folk seems to be uneasiness with God acting in ways that are outside of the expected channels and outside of their control.

Throughout Mark’s gospel we are reminded that God’s activity and power are not controlled by or limited to established religious institutions or members of those institutions. This point is made clear in the opening verses of the gospel. Mark doesn’t begin the story of the “good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark 1:1) in Jerusalem, where one might expect the story of a holy person to start. Instead, the beginning of Mark’s gospel takes us to the wilderness, a place often associated with the absence of God’s presence. But it is precisely in the wilderness where we find John, proclaiming that “the kingdom of God has come near” (Mark 1:15).

There was a sense in Jesus’ time that God could or would only be present in the temple, and that God’s activity was determined by the actions of the religious leaders in the temple. Not outside the temple.

We have the same temptation today. We often think of what happens in the church building as God’s activity, but forget that God is also present and acting in the world outside the church. We often think of Christians doing God’s work, but neglect to notice the ways in which non-Christians are also active in doing things that help to bring God’s kingdom near to us. Jesus’ response to his disciple’s reminds us that we shouldn’t stop someone who is doing God’s will and bringing God’s kingdom near, just because they aren’t a part of our group. In fact, we may even want to learn more about what they are doing, and join them!

**Music Offering:** *Lord Whose Love in Humble Service – Kyle Pederson (piano arrangement)*

### **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.**