



**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 and ever-living God, increase in us your gift of faith, that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to what lies ahead, we may follow the way of your commandments and receive the crown of everlasting joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## Readings

Amos 5

<sup>7</sup>Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood, and bring righteousness to the ground

Where do you see injustice and unrighteousness in the world today? Can you change what you see? If so, how?

Psalms 90

<sup>13</sup>Return, O Lord; how long will you tarry? Be gracious to your servants.

When has God seemed far away? How did you know God was near again?

Hebrews 4

<sup>13</sup>And before God no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

Why is being vulnerable so difficult? What are the benefits of being vulnerable to others?

Mark 10

<sup>22</sup>When the rich man heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Why do our possessions so easily possess us? How can we prevent this?

## **Reflection**

### **Fat Camels and Narrow Needles**

A rich man approaches Jesus and asks how to inherit eternal life. Jesus tells him to sell what he owns, give the money to the poor, and follow him. Jesus will accept nothing less than our very selves. Like the rich man, we too are left defenseless and grieving by Jesus' radical call to leave behind and give away what we count on for our own security.

He wants us, and therefore also wants the things that keep us from him; he gazes upon us in love, even as he calls us to leave behind our false sources of security. How hard it is for us camels to pass through the eye of the needle! We too grieve at the impossibility. And this might be the point of the teaching.

It is in fact impossible for us to go through the needle on our own, yet more than possible for God to make it so. For we have a "great high priest who has passed through the heavens, the Son of God," who is both able to sympathize with our weakness and to provide the grace we need to follow Jesus.

While eternal life on the other side of the needle is a gift that only God can give, it is a gift that claims the entirety of our lives and therefore reshapes our stewardship of whatever earthly goods we do have. Our culture bombards us with the message that we will find life by consuming. The Gospel invites us to find life by divesting for the sake of the other.

**Music Offering:** *Gather Us In* by Marty Haugen

### **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.**