



Pentecost 23  
November 8, 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 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.

### INTRODUCTION to worship

Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the lamb.

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## GATHERING

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

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**PRELUDE** Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God - Music by Karen Lafferty (b. 1948)

### WELCOME

*STAND*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity,  $\text{†}$  one God, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved.

**Amen.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy One,

**we confess that we are not awake for you. We are not faithful in using your gifts. We forget the least of our siblings. We do not see your beautiful image in one another. We are infected by sin that divides your beloved community. Open our hearts to your coming, open our eyes to see you in our neighbor, open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.**

Beloved, we are God's children, and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us. Through † Jesus you are forgiven, by Jesus you are welcome, in Jesus you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world. **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**

O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

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### **WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

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*SIT*

### **First Reading: Amos 5:22-24**

A reading from Amos:

- <sup>21</sup>I hate, I despise your festivals,  
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.  
<sup>22</sup>Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,  
I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals  
I will not look upon.  
<sup>23</sup>Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.  
<sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

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

### **Psalm: Psalm 70**

Let us read responsively Psalm 70:

- <sup>1</sup>Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;  
O LORD, make haste to help me.  
<sup>2</sup>**Let those who seek my life be put to shame and confounded;  
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and be disgraced.**  
<sup>3</sup>Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over me  
turn back because of their shame.  
<sup>4</sup>**Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;  
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great is the LORD!"**  
<sup>5</sup>But as for me, I am poor and needy; come to me quickly, O God.  
You are my helper and my deliverer; O LORD, do not tarry.

## Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15

A reading from 1 Thessalonians:

<sup>13</sup>We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died.

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

*STAND*

**Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13**

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. <sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' <sup>7</sup>Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' <sup>9</sup>But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup>And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' <sup>12</sup>But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' <sup>13</sup>Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*SIT*

**SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** (please remain seated and listen, hum or sing the hymn to yourself or reflect on the following:)

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past" is a hymn written by Isaac Watts and paraphrases the 90th Psalm of the Book of Psalms. This hymn is frequently sung as a portion of the Remembrance Day service in Canada and festive occasions in England.

The hymn was originally part of The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament, published by Watts in 1719. In this book, he rephrased in Christian verse the entire psalter with the exclusion of twelve Psalms which he thought were inappropriate for Christian practice.

How does verse six speak to us during our current pandemic?

## O God, Our Help in Ages Past



- 1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
- 2 Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
- 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
- 4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.  
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
bears all our years away;  
they fly forgotten, as a dream  
dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,  
our hope for years to come,  
still be our guard while troubles last  
and our eternal home.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.  
Music: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1678–1727

### 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 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

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.*

Holy God, rouse us to deep praise as we gather for worship. Enliven our worship with sincere and heartfelt song. Sustain the work of all church musicians and artists who lead us in praise and prayer (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Creator, surprise and delight us with the beauty of the world you have made. Bless the work of landscapers, architects, and artists whose work invites us into harmonious living with your creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Judge, let justice roll down like waters over this world. Reign over the courtrooms of every land, in the hearts of those who guard the law and those who stand accused of crimes. Be present in cases where we long for both justice and mercy to prevail (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Companion, console those who feel lonely or abandoned. Share the hours of those who live and eat alone. Comfort those who have few friends or who struggle with their identity and place in this world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy Protector, be with all observing Veterans Day. Guard the lives of active duty and retired military personnel. Comfort all who mourn those who have died in the line of duty. Heal the wounds, both physical and mental, experienced by service members. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Holy and Immortal One, we pray in thanksgiving for the lives of all who have died. Remind us of the frailty and shortness of our own lives and inspire us to use them for the building up of your kingdom. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

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## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Christ.*

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*SIT*

**MUSIC OFFERING:** "Be Thou My Vision", arr. Dan Forrest (sung by the Virtual Choir)

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart,  
naught be all else to me, save that Thou art,  
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word,  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son,  
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor men's empty praise,  
Thou mine inheritance, now and always,  
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of Heaven, my treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun,  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my Vision, O Ruler of all. Be my Vision, Lord.

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. **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. 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.**

**COMMUNION** (remove the silver tab and then peel back each seal to access the wafer and grape juice)  
(pull back top seal) The Body of Christ  
(pull back bottom seal) The Blood of Christ

## STAND

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. **Amen.**

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## SENDING

*God sends us in mission to the world.*

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## BLESSING

May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, Sovereign, ✠ Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE Glory to God, We Give You Thanks - Music by Walter Greated (1877-1949)

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### WORSHIP SERVANTS:

Worship leader:	Rev. Eric Leshner
Organist/Pianist:	Anne Melang-Thoren Jennifer Aliwarga-Carlson
Music Offering:	Virtual Choir

### WORSHIP SPACE:

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

### 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. 12 feet is recommended.
- 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**

### **Thanksgiving Box Donations for Grace Members**

It's time to gather food items for this year's Thanksgiving Boxes. We have approximately 6 households in need of boxes this year. Please donate the following items:

- canned vegetables
- canned fruits
- canned cranberries (jellied or whole)
- boxes of Jell-O
- boxes of stuffing mix
- boxes of instant potatoes
- envelopes/jars of gravy
- cardboard boxes
- cash donations to purchase the perishable items (turkeys, hams, pumpkin pies, rolls, and butter)

Donations can be dropped off at the North doors on Sunday morning or in the main entrance during the week. We will assemble and deliver the boxes on November 24<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you,  
Lori Drake

### **Help!**

The Grace Council needs four candidates for the 2021 Nominating Committee. This year's Nominating Committee has two. This is a one-time commitment, usually during the month of October 2021. Their task is to find candidates for the 2022 openings in the Council and a new Nominating Committee. (next page)

Please prayerfully consider volunteering to be on the 2021 Nominating Committee. Contact the church office, 402.474.1505, by Monday, November 10.

Thank you,  
Fran Gade, Pat Lickei, Dave Ripa, Peter Schnake

### **Semi-Annual Meeting**

November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 am in the nave. We will elect new council members, approve 2021 budget and amend our 2017 constitution.

### **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!

## CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

### November 9:

Lincoln Literacy	9 am
Boy Scouts	7 pm

### November 10:

Al-Anon	9:30 am
Cub Scouts	6:30 pm
Wildlife Rescue	7:00 pm
Council	7:00 pm

### November 11:

Confirmation	7 pm
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### November 12:

Men's Bible study	6:30 am
Quilting	9 pm
Lincoln Literacy	9-11am
Narcotics Anonymous	7 pm
Bell Quartet B	7 pm

### November 13:

YWCA Respite	5:45 pm
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### November 15:

Worship	9 pm
Bell Quartet A	9:45 am