



**Midweek Service  
Grace Lutheran Church  
Lincoln, Nebraska**

## Opening

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, **have mercy on us.**

## Introduction to Sunday

This Sunday Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather in hope instead of fear. Eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

## Prayer of the Day

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## Readings

Zephaniah 1:7

7Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests.

When and where do you fall silent before the Lord?

1 Thessalonians 5

9For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. 11Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

How do you encourage others?

Matthew 25:14

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

What talents has God give to you and how do you use them?

## Reflection

Awake to the Grace of God

Jesus' parable of the talents invites us to respond to God's gifts of faith and purpose. As God's people we should be engaged, alert, and ready to share what we have received from our gracious and generous God. While the parable has sometimes been interpreted in the context of judgment towards those who do not respond, a careful reading also spotlights the beauty of the faith-generated response to God's lavish grace. So, this week we ask, what does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

## 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.

#### **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.**

#### **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 me a clean heart, O God,  
**and sustain me 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.**