



Take^{UP}
your
CROSS
And
Follow
me
MT. 16:24

The Second Sunday in Lent

Grace Lutheran Church ~ ELCA

February 28, 2021

Service of Holy Communion

Good morning & Welcome to Grace!

*Our mission is to invite and welcome all
to the fellowship of Christ in service to our community.*

***We are glad you are with us for worship today, on this second Sunday in Lent,
as we gather to confess and repent, to hear scripture and proclamation,
and to share the Meal – the body and blood of Christ.***

***We offer a special welcome to our guests, and to all those
who are joining us remotely through Facebook Live or on YouTube.***

THIS IS A HOUSE OF PRAISE AND PRAYER, OF WORSHIP AND REJOICING. If you have a prayer request or a thanksgiving, you may send it to the Church Office, and it will be added to the published list (if you desire) and also forwarded to our Prayer Team. Contact info for the office is at the back of the bulletin. Thanks!

CHILDREN ARE WELCOME IN WORSHIP AT GRACE! Each week, prior to the reading of scripture, a special Children's Message is offered for our young ones. While we are not having the children come forward at this time, we will still include it in the service.

YOUR BULLETIN contains the worship service in its entirety. You will notice that we currently do not have any hymns included in the service. There is still a Prelude and Postlude, as well as instrumental music. For the time being, we will not be singing as a congregation. However, as much as possible, we will try to have at least one pre-recorded vocal performance each week. We kindly ask that, if you know the song, you refrain from singing along. We realize many among you love music, and it is something you miss from worship. However, we ask this for the health and safety of everyone in attendance. Thank you.

ONCE AGAIN TODAY, WE ARE PLEASED TO CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION. For those with us in person, you will see that each chair has a small, plastic container of wine or juice (as you selected when you registered) and there is a plastic bag on one of the seats with a wafer inside for each person in your group. If you asked for a gluten free wafer, it will be in its own bag and will be marked as "GF". **For those participating from home, please have a small glass of wine or juice and a small piece of bread available for all who are planning to commune.** When we come to the Meal portion of the service, please follow along on the screen or in the bulletin. We will go through the Great Thanksgiving and the prayers and, after the Lord's Prayer, all will be invited to commune in unison – at Grace, and at home. We are grateful that we can celebrate together this very important part of our Christian worship service.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS about our worship service - generally or specifically in this time of pandemic - about Baptism or Communion, about what Lutherans believe, or even about Grace Lutheran Church, please do not hesitate to reach out to our pastor.

Again, welcome to worship!

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

Bold type = Assembly

PRELUDE

“God Loved the World”

ELW 323

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer. **Amen**

God hears us when we cry, and draws us close in Jesus Christ. Let us return to the one who is full of compassion. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Fountain of living water, **pour out your mercy over us. Our sin is heavy, and we long to be free. Rebuild what we have ruined and mend what we have torn. Wash us in your cleansing flood. Make us alive in the Spirit to follow in the way of Jesus, as healers and restorers of the world you so love. Amen**

Beloved, God’s word never fails. The promise rests on grace: by the saving love of Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, your sins are ✚ forgiven, and God remembers them no more. Journey in the way of Jesus. **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

Let us pray,

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake 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.

MUSICAL OFFERING

“Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus”

ELW 802

WORD ~ God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

As with Noah, God makes an everlasting covenant with Abraham and Sarah. God promises this old couple that they will be the ancestors of nations, though they have no child together. God will miraculously bring forth new life from Sarah's womb. The name changes emphasize the firmness of God's promise.

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, ⁴"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."

¹⁵God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

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

PSALM 22: 23-31 (Read responsively: Plain Font: Women, **Bold Font: Men**)

²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's line, give glory.
Stand in awe of the LORD, all you offspring of Israel.

²⁴**For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty;
neither is the LORD's face hidden from them;
but when they cry out, the LORD hears them.**

²⁵From you comes my praise in the great assembly;
I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the LORD.

²⁶**The poor shall eat and be satisfied,
Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your hearts live forever!**

²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD;
all the families of nations shall bow before God.

²⁸**For dominion belongs to the LORD, who rules over the nations.**

²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;
all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the LORD.

³⁰**Their descendants shall serve the LORD,
whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.**

³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying to them, "The LORD has acted!"

Paul presents Abraham as the example for how a person comes into a right relationship with God not through works of the law but through faith. Though Abraham and Sarah were far too old for bearing children, Abraham trusted that God would accomplish what God had promised to accomplish.

¹³The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all Abraham's descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸Hoping against hope, Abraham believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹being fully convinced that God was able to do what God had promised. ²²Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." ²³Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in God, who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, ²⁵who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION* (Spoken in unison) *Those moved to do so may stand.*

**May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.**

(Gal. 6:14)

GOSPEL

MARK 8:31-38

The holy gospel according to Saint Mark, the eighth chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.

³¹[Jesus] began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise

again.³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, Jesus rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

³⁴ Jesus called the crowd, with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

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

SERMON ~

“*Promises, Promises*”
(A brief silence follows the sermon)

Pastor Jenn

CREED

Let us affirm our faith using the words of the Apostles’ 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 ~ *We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.*

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

Your gift of grace is for all people. Give confident faith to all the baptized, that they may follow you wholeheartedly. Give new believers joy in your promises; comfort those who are struggling with doubts; and give hope and courage to those who suffer for their faith. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

All the ends of the earth worship you. From galaxies to microorganisms, preserve your creation. Teach humanity to wonder at your works and to join you in tending to creation’s well-being. Bless the lands, waterways, plants and animals with which we share this planet, and inspire us to protect them. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You rule over the nations. Raise up advocates for peace and justice within and between nations. Give life where hope seems dead; call into existence new realities we cannot even imagine; inspire us to dream boldly about what our world could look like; stir up in us the belief that we can make these things into a reality; and move us to action, that we might be the change we wish to see in the world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In Jesus, you joined humanity in suffering and death. Reveal to all the depth of your love shown on the cross. Bring vindication for victims of injustice, exploitation, and oppression. Accompany all who suffer in body, mind, and spirit, and restoration to all who are sick or grieving, *especially* those on our church prayer list, all those in need, and everyone we lift up to you in our hearts (silence for reflection). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You made Abraham and Sarah the ancestors of a multitude of nations. Bless grandparents, parents, and foster parents, and the children who look to them for care and guidance. Console those who deal with infertility, parents who have entrusted their children to adoption, and children longing to be adopted. Equip ministries and services to families, and those who dedicate their lives to this work. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Inspire doctors, scientists, clergy, counselors, and others, as they tend to those with COVID-19, walk with their loved ones, and comfort the families of those who have died. In particular today, we lift up the memories of the more than 500,000 people in our country who have died of this disease. We cannot list them all, but we lift up the names of those we loved in our hearts, giving thanks for their lives, and for the way they impacted us (silence for reflection). We also pray for those who are suffering long-term effects of the disease, and those who are most vulnerable and waiting for a vaccine. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We await the day of Christ's coming in glory. Lead us by the example of all the saints whom you have called to take up their cross and follow you, that together we may find our lives in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

MEAL ~ God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

This is normally the place in the service where we would collect the offering. We give thanks for your spirit of generosity during these trying times. We humbly and prayerfully ask that – if at all possible – you continue to be faithful to your financial commitment to Grace. Thank you again.

MUSICAL OFFERING

“Venetian Boat Song in G Minor”

F. Mendelssohn

OFFERING PRAYER

Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (*Those moved to do so may stand.*)

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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star, he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan, you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine, he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Amen

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE & THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we bless and magnify you. You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joined us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world. Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on all the baptized gathered for this feast: wash away our sin, that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus draws the whole world to himself. Come to this meal and be fed. **Amen**

COMMUNION

At this time, all are invited to partake of the Bread and Cup in place. Please hang on to your cup and the bag – there will be a bin for you to dispose of these items as you leave the service.

MUSICAL OFFERING

“One Bread, One Body”

Arr. Mark Hayes

During this short musical offering, you are invited to observe a moment of silent reflection on the gift of the Sacrament. Please remain in your seats. Thank you.

Once all have received the meal:

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

SENDING ~ God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you ✝ that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. **Amen**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

We will. Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow”

ELW 327



2919 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, FL 32308
www.gracelutheran.faith

MINISTERS: All the people of God

PASTOR: The Rev. Jennifer M. Kopacz ~ pastorjenn@rocketmail.com **PASTOR'S CELL PHONE:** 850-800-7197

CHURCH OFFICE PHONE: 850-877-5423

CHURCH OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR: Lisa D. Rubin ~ graceluthch@earthlink.net

READER: Mary Grant

MUSIC PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Leslie Heffner – heffnerl@gmail.com

ORGANIST / PIANIST: Johnny Shaw, IV

USHERS: Bob Becker, George Ohlin, Frank Piepmeier

A/V TEAM: Joy Becker, Nick Gandy, Mary Grant, Leslie Heffner, Denise Wetzel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DON'T FORGET – WE STILL NEED YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR WORSHIP! We realize it is an extra step, but it is so helpful to us to have some indication of how many people to expect, to be able to put out the Communion elements in advance, and to know that – if we were ever to have someone from our congregation test positive – we would have a list of who to contact about the possible need for testing.

WE ASK THAT YOU MAKE YOUR RESERVATION BY 5PM ON THURSDAYS. The reservation link is on our website at <https://www.gracelutheran.faith>, or, if you need assistance making your reservation, you may call the church office at 877-5423 by the Thursday deadline and we'll be happy to help. **Masks are required as is the 6-foot social distancing guideline.**

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO ATTEND WORSHIP IN-PERSON, it will also be streamed online. You can view it by going to www.gracelutheran.faith and clicking the link in the gold box in the center of the homepage. A link to the bulletin is also provided each week.

CHURCH OFFICE UPDATE. Out of an abundance of caution, we continue to ask that you not come to the church office in person. We encourage you to contact us by phone or email if you need assistance or have a question – 850-877-5423 or graceluthch@earthlink.net – and in the case of a pastoral care emergency, we ask that you contact Pastor Jenn on her cell at 850-800-7197. Thank you!

DEADLINE FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS - Please email announcements to Lisa Rubin in the church office at graceluthch@earthlink.net by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday morning.

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS this week are given by Lisa Rubin, our Church Office Administrator, in honor of all with February birthdays or anniversaries.

LENTEN MIDWEEK ZOOM GATHERINGS. Our Midweek Lenten gatherings are from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. each Wednesday during Lent, through March 24. The link to join us will be the same each week: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81645489379>. If you are new to Zoom and would like assistance getting set up, please contact Pastor Jenn at the church office.

ZOOM TEXTALK WITH PASTOR JENN has started up again and is being held on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. An email will be forwarded each week with that week's link for joining the Zoom call. We hope you'll join us. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Jenn at pastorjenn@rocketmail.com or 850-877-5423.

MANNA ON MERIDIAN - Until we resume normal activities, you can support Manna through your prayers and monetary donations. We are also the "tuna church" for Manna and you can leave your tuna in the bin outside the office door. To make a monetary donation, please make check payable to Grace Lutheran Church and indicate "for Manna on Meridian" on the memo line. Thank you for your faithful support of this ministry.

GRACE NOTES NEWSLETTER DEADLINE is the 20th of the month prior to the publication month. Please send submissions to Grace Notes Editor, Nick Gandy at ngandyman@yahoo.com

GRACE'S SHUTTERFLY FOR UNIQUE AND PERSONAL GIFTS - Check out *Gift Guide 2020* at Shutterfly <http://gracelutheran32308.shutterflystorefront.com/>. Shutterfly will donate 8% of the proceeds of sales to Grace. If you have any questions, contact Mary Grant, (609) 602-0155 or grantmlcic@hotmail.com.

FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES - Dates and times of future calls/activities will be announced. If you are interested in participating, please contact Mary Grant at grantmlcic@hotmail.com or (609) 602-0155. We hope you'll join us.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

This week at Grace, please remember in prayer:

Buddy Jacobs, Brent Kallestad, The McMillan family, as they welcome another son, Calvin Peter; Gordon Evans and family, Emily Noel, Susan Mayo, Jennifer Taylor, Joe Aubert, Molly Mojher, Kathy Bolling, Nancy Adams, Linda Gessner, Merritt King, Grant Gandy, Bill Owen, Bill Halpine, Nick Pleskovich, Daryl Nall, Rochelle Steinlauf, Gwen Carriere, Sallie Robinson, Kevin Robinson, Jackie Barksdale, Benny Dawkins, Jane (Joe) McRory, Maria Eckard, Beatriz Fernandez, Trevor Rogers, Jessica, Bridget, Jaxson; the family of Larry Lee; Anita and Ralph Braun; Jim and Wendy Akin; Ginny and Pete Nervina; Ronald and Ann Robinson; Jim and Nancy Banks; John and Theresa Fenimore; Pastor Jenn and Rob; Rachel and Laura; Deonne and John; Dan and Irene Poole, and family; Lindsey and family; Suzanne and family; Adrie Belcher, her daughters, Bailey & Paisley, and Adrie's half-brother, Jacob; the Chick family; the people of Grace Lutheran Church and our Congregational Council, especially our Nominating Committee; St. Stephen Lutheran Church and Pastor Tom Holdcraft; the Florida-Bahamas Synod and our Bishop, Pedro Suarez; the ELCA and our Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton.

Please also lift up:

All the nations of the world and their leaders, that your wisdom, justice and peace may guide their actions.

The families in mourning for loved ones lost to COVID-19, in the United States and worldwide; all those currently dealing with this disease; medical professionals and first responders who risk their safety for the sake of others; all those involved in creating and distributing the vaccines; all those working on a cure.

The homeless and the hungry; military personnel and their families; those who are incarcerated, and are unable to have visitors, go to chapel, or participate in healthy social interaction; healing and answers for all those with chronic pain, disease process or illness; all those whose needs are known only to God.

If you would like to have someone included on the prayer list, please contact Lisa in the Church Office (graceluthch@earthlink.net or 850-877-5423) or our Prayer Team Leaders, Tina Frese: (freset@comcast.net) or Erik Robinson (robinsoe@flcourts.org).

**If you have a need, or if you know someone who does, please let the church office know!
We are a community in Christ, and we are here to support, love and serve one another.**