

Fourth Sunday in Lent



March 14, 2021

9:30 a.m.

Grace Lutheran Church

Grace Lutheran's Purpose Statement

"We share God's love by welcoming all and making a Christ-like difference in our community and world."

GATHERING

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

WELCOME

PRELUDE

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the keeper of the covenant, the source of steadfast love, our rock and our redeemer.

C: **Amen**

P: 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 for reflection and self-examination.

P: Fountain of living water,

C: **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.**

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

C: **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN "Amazing Grace"

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GREETING

P: The grace of Jesus Christ our Savior, the reconciling love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

P: **And also with you.**

KYRIE *Unison*

**Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.
We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.**

**Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.**

**Have mercy on us Lord; make sin and shame depart.
Renew us with your saving pow'r, create in us new hearts!**

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HYMN OF PRAISE *Unison*

**O Lord, throughout these forty days you prayed and kept the fast;
Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past.**

**Be with us through this season, Lord, and all our earthly days,
That when the final Easter dawns, we join in heaven's praise.**

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P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY *Unison*

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Numbers 21:4-9

Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.

⁴From Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

You deliver your people from their distress. (Ps. 107:19)

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good,
for God’s mercy endures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim
that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

³gathering them in from the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

¹⁷**Some were fools and took rebellious paths;
through their sins they were afflicted.**

¹⁸They loathed all manner of food
and drew near to death’s door.

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD
and you delivered them from their distress.**

²⁰You sent forth your word and healed them
and rescued them from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love
and your wonderful works for all people.**

²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving
and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

Ephesians 2:1-10

While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God's grace at work in our lives.

¹You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

John 3:14-21

To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.

[Jesus said:] ¹⁴“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ¹⁷“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who

do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

P: The Gospel of Our Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HOMILY

HYMN OF THE DAY “God Loved the World”

Text: Bollhagen/Crull; Music: E. Miller. This selection is in the public domain..

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 power of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.**

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again;

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.**

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

(Response after each petition)

P: Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

P: Let us pray...Faithful God,

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

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

P: O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

C: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

SENDING

BLESSING

P: 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.

C: Amen.

SENDING HYMN “Drawn to the Light”

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Share the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

PRAYERS

Scott Lancaster, Betty Dulebohn, Paul Denstaedt, Gerald Lancaster, Charlotte Werth, Hannelore Duenkel & Family (Charlotte Werth's niece), Dorothy Hansen, Don, Verna & Tammy Furze, Larry Nelson, Vicki Piontkowski, Michele Amelotte, Joanne Nicholls, Deb Nitchman's Family, Diane Prevost, Harold Kissau, Jim Malaski, Emma Nelson, Allison, Bishop Craig Satterlee and Synod staff, Amanda Lema (Betty Dulebohn's granddaughter), Lyn Marshall, Joanne Coughlin, Sylvia Rouech, Jimmy Lappan, Herb Schiller, Donna Hatch, Jordyn, Maggie, Ann McMullen, Genie Diamond, Ann, Laura Bleau, Sharon Anderson, Becky, Jodi Kennedy Dinnan, Stephanie Bradford, Charlotte Barnard, Jamie Shipman, Betty Kelly, Maria Shelton, Emily Cross, Liz, Lucas David, David Delano (David's Dad), Edna Delano, Joseph Hansen, Scott Coddington, and Cody Gustin. We also remember the family of Grace Gagnon (Dawn Gentry's Aunt), who passed away March 3rd.

Our prayer list is redone each month. If you, or a family member, would like to continue on the prayer list, please call the office (354-2640).

PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayer concerns received by the church office by Tuesday each week will be included in the coming weekends bulletin. Please do have the person's permission for inclusion and realize it is published online, so more than our congregation will know about it.

IN OUR PRAYERS

In observance of our covenant with the LARCC (Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Congregational UCC) parishes of Alpena, we pray each week for a specific ministry of one of the 5 LARCC parishes. This weekend we pray for the Catholic Women of Alpena at All Saints Catholic Parish. We also pray for this week's Synod Prayer Partner: Messiah Lutheran Church/Bay City, Rev. Andreas Teich.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS THIS WEEKEND

Daylight Saving Time begins this weekend. Don't forget to set clocks ahead one hour Sunday morning at 2 a.m.

COMMUNION IN THE HOME FOR HOLY WEEK - *DRIVE THRU PICKUP*

Packages for Home communion will be distributed by Pastor Tom from the front drive of the church on **Wednesday March 31 from 12:30 - 2:30 pm** and **Maundy Thursday April 1 from 11 - 1:30 pm**. Pastor Tom will bring the package out to you in your car. There will be a short reading for use as you take communion. The communion itself is individually sealed cups with the wafer sealed on top of that. **Please call the office, 354.2640, if you would like a package made up for you and your family, the number of people who will be together and which time you wish to pick it up.** (If you cannot make those times, please let us know so we can arrange another time.)

LENTEN SERIES

This year Grace Lutheran will be doing a Lenten Series on Facebook live. Tune in on Wednesday evenings at 7 PM for a time of scripture, prayer and meditation. Join us at our Facebook page to participate. You can link to our Facebook page from our website.

IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES REMAIN SUSPENDED

Along with most of our ecumenical partners in Alpena, our in-person worship services remain suspended for the time being.

VIEW SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE AT 9:30 AM ONLINE

Sunday morning worship service will be livestreamed. The worship will be conducted with a very limited number of worship leaders in the sanctuary and can be viewed as it is happening. Go to www.gracelutheran-alpena.org for the link to the YouTube livestream. A recording of the service will be available for viewing anytime afterwards.

WATCHING GRACE'S WORSHIP ON THE INTERNET

Several people have mentioned that using their smart TVs that are connected to the internet for viewing the worship services have offered them the bigger picture of course and as importantly for some, better sound. Hope you are enjoying the worship livestreamed. Any questions or comments let Pastor Tom know.

EASTER FLOWERS

Contributions toward Easter flowers in memory/honor of someone or in thanksgiving may be sent to the church office. We are not purchasing individual plants this year. ***Please include with your donation the dedication information that you would like listed in the bulletin.*** Bulletin information needs to be received in the church office by March 29th.

ENJOYING YOUR CARDS

Betty Dulebohn is still at Medilodge recovering from pneumonia and will probably be there until the end of March. She is not able to have visitors due to COVID. She is enjoying your cards very much. If you would like to send a card to cheer her up, here is her address:

Betty Dulebohn
Room E8, Bed 2
MediLodge of Alpena
301 Long Rapids Rd.
Alpena, MI 49707

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please call (354-2640) or email (officemanager@gracelutheran-alpena.org) the Church Office.

CHRIST IN OUR HOMES DEVOTIONAL FOR APRIL-JUNE

Christ in Our Homes Devotional for April-June is available in the Office Lobby. Pick one up during office hours of Tuesday - Thursday 8 am to noon or call the office and we will mail one to you.

LIVING LUTHERAN MAGAZINE FOR MARCH

The new Living Lutheran from the ELCA for March is also available in the Office Lobby. Several back issues are there too.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

The Church Office is open Tuesday-Thursday, from 8 a.m. - noon. We ask that you please wear a mask when in the building. Please log in on the sheets as you enter the Office Lobby. Please also log out as you exit the building, noting the areas of the building that you were in.

GENERAL FUND GIVING

Average needed each week to meet budget	\$ 4,489.00
Weekly giving - March 7	4,977.00

We received:

13 envelopes, 26 Simply Giving recurring payments and
3 Give+ payments made from our website, 7 Thrivent Choice donations



**Anniversaries
of
Baptism**



March 3
Arnold Jahnke

March 23
Robert Greene

March 5
Amy Townsend

March 24
Mark Suszek

March 11
Hadleigh Suszek

March 26
John Kuligowski

March 13
Sharlene Kennedy

March 27
Eleanor Coddington

March 17
Patricia Schultz
Adam Urlaub
Brody Yuchasz

March 28
Allison Urlaub

March 29
Stephanie Ihnat

March 19
Joel Suszek



Birthdays



March 1
Gene Domrase
Anna Greene

March 17
Joan Brennan
Patrick Daly

March 2
Alisha Poirier

March 18
Kayla Bertrand
Vicki Cripps

March 3
Mark Suszek

March 19
Bonnie Cross
Kelly Poirier
Tyler Suszek

March 4
Alexis Crittenden

March 6
Tiffany LaFave
Patrick McCourt

March 21
Anna Lewis

March 8
Dorene Schultz

March 22
Gerald Lancaster
Karen Spigelmyre
Erica Wilson

March 9
Matthew Gillard

March 23
Brent Barrow

March 10
Lois Westergard

March 24
Tracie Granata

March 11
Norm Timm

March 25
Kristin Rich
Sheri Smith

March 12
Donice Ziberna

March 29
Jeanette Chroninger

March 14
Barbara Mudge

March 30
Charles Snyder

March 15
Kathy Piontkowski

March 31
Emma Barber

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH **119 W. Dunbar St., Alpena, MI 49707**
Church Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
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