



**Grace Lutheran Church**  
1300 Kishwaukee Valley Road  
Woodstock, IL 60098  
[www.gracewoodstock.org](http://www.gracewoodstock.org)



**February 21, 2021; 9:00 a.m.**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent**

**Livestream!** Worship service at 9:00 a.m.  
**Grace Lutheran Church YouTube Channel**  
and video posted on Grace's website.

### **GATHERING**

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

*In preparation for worship at home, you may wish to light a candle. It can be a symbol of the presence of Christ, the light of the world. If you wish to commune, please prepare wine (or grape juice) and bread to be at hand when that part of the service arrives. This service includes the option of imposing ashes in the sign of a cross on your forehead. Pre-packaged ashes are available for pick-up outside Grace's main entrance.*

*God of grace, you have given us minds to know you, hearts to love you, and voices to sing your praise. Fill us with your Spirit, that we may celebrate your glory and worship you in spirit and truth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen (ELW pg. 72)*

### **OPENING MUSIC**

Improvisation on "Light Dawns on a Weary World"

Neskirderf

### **WELCOME**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

God meets us in the night—

**Before the sun rises,  
Before the wound heals,  
Before there are answers,  
Before there is closure.**

God meets us in the light—

**Where joy is effervescent,  
Where laughter is contagious,  
Where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,  
And where people gather around the table.**

God meets us at the threshold—  
**At the edge of the water,  
At the beginning of the wilderness,  
At the start of something new,  
On the edge of faith.**

And if God meets us in all those places,  
Then surely God meets us in between—  
**Staying with us through the wilderness.**

We are not alone. God is all around.  
**Let us worship the God of the here and now.**

### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

Again and again, God meets us where we are.  
God's love knows no bounds, which is hard for us to understand and easy for us to forget.

Therefore, in confession we remember together that we are not alone.  
And in a unified voice, we once again ask for God's grace in that holy reminder.

Family of faith, please pray with me.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God who meets us where we are—  
There is nowhere we can go that you are not.  
**You were with Jesus at his baptism.  
You were with him in the wilderness,  
And even in between, you were there,  
Saying aloud, "This is my beloved."**

We know that you are with us too—  
In the good, the bad, and everything in between—  
But so often we act like we are alone.  
**Instead of coming to you with our hurt,  
We hold it in or cast it onto others.  
Instead of coming to you with our joy,  
We credit ourselves and offer you nothing.**

How can we long for a deeper relationship with you  
While living like you are nowhere to be found?  
**Forgive our self-centered ways.  
Remind us that in every breath, in every step, you are there.**

You are the God who meets us where we are.

**Before and behind, above and below, within and around. Amen.**

### **WORDS OF FORGIVENESS**

Family of faith, if you hear nothing else today, hear this:

God is here. God sees you. God knows you.

God meets you at the edge of every new beginning,

And God calls you beloved.

**We are washed by the water.**

**We are called beloved.**

**Thanks be to God for a love like that.**

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Holy God,

If I am honest, faith often feels like water in my hands.

No matter how hard I try to hold onto it, some of it always slips through—

Like droplets of truth running down my wrists, back toward my heart.

This human inability to hold onto you leaves me thirsty for more.

So as we prepare to read scripture,

I pray that once again, you would meet us here.

Meet us in our hope and our heartache.

Meet us in our fear and our joy,

Meet us in our cupped hands and clenched fists.

And even if the water keeps running,

And we do not have a sky-parting moment of clarity,

Or a tangible sense that you are near;

Even if we do not hear the words, "This is my beloved,"

Ringing in our ears,

We will trust that you are near,

Always and forever meeting us here,

Running toward our hearts.

Gratefully we pray, **Amen.**

## WORD

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

### FIRST READING:

**Genesis 9:8-17**

A reading from Genesis.

God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM:

**Psalms 25:1-10**

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous. Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long. Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting. Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD. You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way. You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way. All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.

### SECOND READING:

**1 Peter 3:18-22**

A reading from 1<sup>st</sup> Peter.

Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL

**The holy gospel according to Mark.**

**Mark 1:9-15**

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

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

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY

#### "Light Dawns on a Weary World"

ELW 726 (One License)



1 Light dawns on a wea - ry world when eyes be - gin to  
2 Love grows in a wea - ry world when hun - gry hearts find  
3 Hope blooms in a wea - ry world when crea-tures, once for -

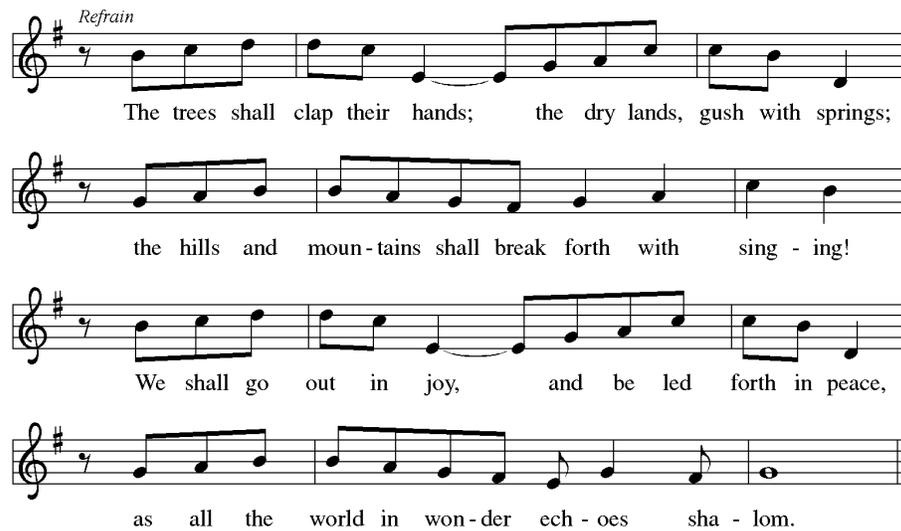


see all peo - ple's dig - ni - ty. Light dawns on a  
bread and chil - dren's dreams are fed. Love grows in a  
lorn, find wil - der - ness re - born. Hope blooms in a



wea - ry world: the prom-ised day of jus - tice comes.  
wea - ry world: the prom-ised feast of plen - ty comes.  
wea - ry world: the prom-ised green of E - den comes.

*Refrain*



The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;  
the hills and moun-tains shall break forth with sing - ing!  
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace,  
as all the world in won - der ech - oes sha - lom.

## CREED

Let us confess our faith with 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**

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

In Jesus your realm has come near to us in every place and time. Give your church throughout the world a spirit of humility and repentance; teach us to trust always in the good news of your salvation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You have made a covenant of mercy with every living creature. Protect all the earth's creatures from destruction. Empower the work of biologists, conservationists, and science educators. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

All your paths are steadfast love and faithfulness. Direct the words and actions of leaders in our community and throughout the world, that they may maintain justice for the lowly. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, we praise you for each day of health and well-being, and we pray for all who are sick or suffering. Comfort those with mental illness or emotional distress, those institutionalized, or living on the streets, or residing in our homes. We praise you for the development of COVID-19 vaccines, and we pray for their fair and prompt distribution. Increase in our land a commitment to limit contagion to others. Visit all who have contracted the coronavirus and all who are experiencing the long-term effects of COVID-19. Strengthen medical workers and home health aides. Receive our prayers for those we name before you: \_\_\_\_\_. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the covenant of baptism you claim us as beloved children. Nurture us in our baptismal identity and teach us to live within it for the sake of others. Strengthen this congregation's ministries of care and concern. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In baptism you join us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We praise you for all those who have died trusting in your faithfulness. Bring us with them to the fullness of your reign. 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.**

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We believe in an inviting God  
Who invites the poor and the sick,  
The outcast and the lonely,  
The immigrant and the refugee,  
The awkward and the abrasive,  
The young and the innocent.**

**We believe God invites the best and the worst—  
In all of us.**

**We believe God invites us to:  
A life of faith,  
A crowded table,  
A messy church,  
A deeper truth,  
A resilient joy,  
A place to belong,  
A family among strangers,  
A world that is just,  
And a love that knows no bounds.**

**We believe this invitation exists for all people.  
We believe this invitation exists for us.**

**And when we miss the call or ignore the invite,  
We believe that God invites us again.  
Thanks be to God for that invitational Spirit. Amen.**

## **PEACE**

*After praying for the whole world, we receive and extend to one another the gift of Christ's peace. In addition to sharing God's peace in a safe way with anyone who is with you, such as a wave or a peace sign, we invite you to share with others using a text of greeting of peace.*

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## **MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

## **OFFERING**

*Thank you for your generous offerings and commitment to Grace's mission and ministry. Ways to give include mailing your offering to the church office, or by giving online: by texting the amount you would like to give to 877-698-3604, through the Give+ Mobile App, or online at Grace's website. You are also invited to call the church office to learn more about the automatic withdrawal Electronic Giving Program.*

Let us pray. 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.**

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

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**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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

*To receive communion at home: As the pastor announces, "the body of Christ, given for you", participate in eating a piece of the bread. As the pastor announces, "the blood of Christ, shed for you", participate by drinking the wine (or grape juice).*

The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

## COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

### "Bless Now, O God, the Journey"

ELW 326 (One License)



1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,  
2 Bless so - journ - ers and pil - grims who share this wind - ing way;  
3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.  
your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus - tains the day.  
We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,



The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun - tain round,  
We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;  
but wait - ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.



then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.  
to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.  
Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

## SENDING

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

## BLESSING

As you leave this space,  
May your mouth speak of God's goodness.  
May your arms hold those in need.  
May your feet walk toward justice.  
May your heart trust its worth.  
May your soul dance in God's grace.  
And may this be your rhythm—  
Again and again and again,  
Until God's promised day.  
In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,  
Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## CLOSING MUSIC

"Chorale Prelude on 'Bless Now, O God, the Journey'"

Aaron David Miller (Augsburg Fortress)



## Worship Team

A/V Team: Bill Nattress & Andy Bellavia

Reader: Paul Lockwood

Children's Sermon: Elaine Burcham

Musicians: Cindy Meyer, Jan Burns, Ron Fredriksen

Pastors: Pastor Amanda Bergstrom, Pastor John Cunningham

**Worship Videos Online.** A video recording of Sunday morning worship will be posted to Grace's website later on Sunday.

Thank you for sharing time to hear God's word and pray together. Peace be with you as you go forth to share God's grace.

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### **Again & Again, A Lenten Refrain**

Lent 2021, Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

### **Midweek Gatherings – Lent 2021**

Holden Evening Prayer and 'Claimed Gathered Sent'

Conversation Wednesdays,

February 24 through March 24, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

### **Passion Sunday**

March 28

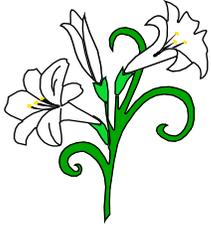
### **Holy Week Worship Schedule**

Maundy Thursday, April 1

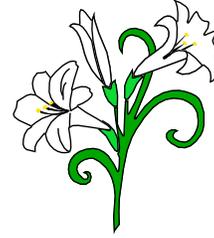
Good Friday, April 2

Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 3

Easter Sunday, April 4



## *Easter Flowers At Grace*



Help provide flowers for our sanctuary on Easter. Give a gift in “honor of someone” or “in memory of a loved one” or “to the glory of God.”

Place the coupon below, along with your \$15.00 in an envelope and mail to the office (1300 Kishwaukee Valley Road, Woodstock, IL 60098) or drop it off at the church office.

Please **print clearly**, as you want it to appear in the newsletter.

Anyone donating is welcome to pick up a lily outside following Easter worship on Sunday and if any are left over, we are going to share them with our homebound members.

**DEADLINE FOR DONATION FORMS & MONEY: March 19, 2021.**

Amount: _____	
CHOOSE ONE PER COUPON:	
In Memory Of: _____	
In Honor Of: _____	
To the Glory of God: _____	
GIVEN BY : _____	