

Grace Lutheran Church
1300 Kishwaukee Valley Road
Woodstock, IL 60098
www.gracewoodstock.org



March 19, 2023; 9:00 A.M.
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Called to Attentiveness



GATHERING

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

Please stand as you are able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Lord is my Shepherd

I shall not want.

The Shepherd calls.

We hear the Shepherd's voice.

The Shepherd cares for our every need.

We are loved.

The Shepherd searches for us.

We are found.

The Shepherd leads us through the deepest valleys.

We will not be afraid.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

OPENING HYMN

"O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate"

ELW 722 (One License)

Please kneel as you are able or be seated.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Gracious God,

**We confess that we often invest our attention
in misguided places and in misguided ways.
We admit that where we focus our attention
can prevent us from recognizing you at work right in front of us.
Forgive us,
and help us to center our lives in you
so that cross-marked and Spirit-sealed
we may join in your creative and redeeming work for all the world.
Through Jesus Christ,
Our Savior and Lord, Amen.**

God who is rich in mercy, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love
has come to us in Jesus, who by his holy cross has redeemed the world.
Buried with Christ by baptism into death,
Your sins are forgiven in +Jesus' name.
Cross-marked and Spirit-sealed,
You are raised to new life.
Almighty God strengthen you in faith
To live each day renewed in God's call for your life. **Amen**

Please be seated.

WELCOME

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

When we are distracted by things that cause us to lose track of your call, O God,
turn our attention back to you. That we might recognize you at work in our lives.
Direct the ponderings of our hearts toward where you call us to pay attention.
Teach us to regard your work in all creation and to be attentive to what you are
doing. In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

WORD

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

FIRST READING:

1 Samuel 16:1-13

A reading from 1st Samuel.

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD." But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

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

PSALM:

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

SECOND READING:

Ephesians 5:8-14

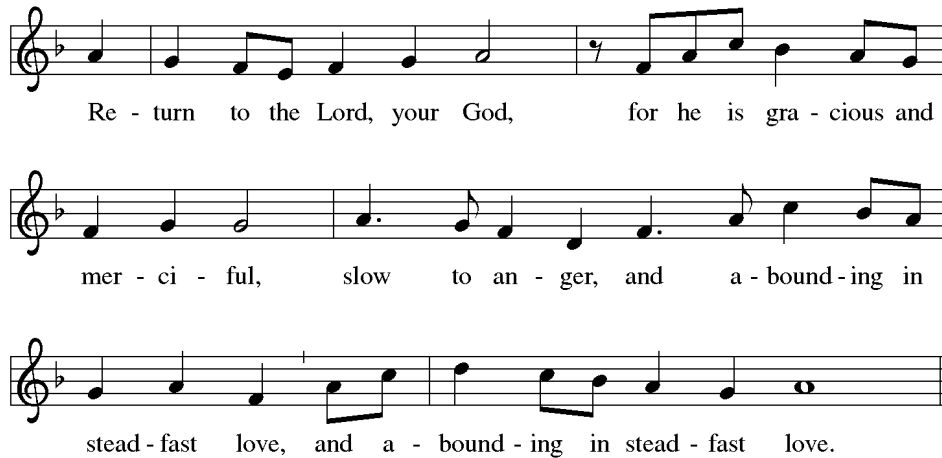
A reading from Ephesians.

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

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

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL

The holy gospel according to John.

John 9:1-41

Glory to you, O Lord.

As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I

washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

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

Please be seated.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Let My Spirit Always Sing"

ACS 1020 (One License)



1 Let my spir - it al - ways sing, though my heart be
2 Though my bod - y be con - fined, let your word en -
3 Let your wis - dom grace my years, choose my words and
4 Let my spir - it al - ways sing, to your Spir - it



win - ter - ing, though the sea - son of de - spair
gage my mind, let the in - ner eye dis - cern
chase my fears, give me wit to wel - come change,
an - swer - ing, through the si - lence, through the pain



give no sign that you are there, God to whom my
how much more there is to learn, see a world be -
to ac - cept, and not es - trange, let my joy be
know my hope is not in vain, like a feath - er



days be - long, let there al - ways be a song.
com - ing whole through the win - dow of the soul.
full and deep in the knowl - edge that I keep.
on your breath trust your love, through life and death.

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

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty of the breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain range to the smallest springtime bud. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Powerful God, you anoint kings and establish rulers. Guide the work of heads of state and elected officials. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Shepherding God, you lead us beside still waters and restore our souls. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve, especially those we now name aloud or in the silence of our hearts
_____ . Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Feed us with hunger for justice. Equip the feeding ministries of this congregation and community. Nourish us so we can nourish our neighbors. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of history, with thanksgiving we remember our ancestors in faith who cared for your people. We praise you for the ways they formed the faith of others and continue to inspire us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE

After praying for the whole world, we receive and extend to one another the gift of Christ's peace. We invite you to share a physically distant sign of God's peace with one another—wave a greeting of peace to people around you, and/or text a greeting of peace to someone.

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Please be seated.

OFFERING

Thank you for your generous offerings and commitment to Grace's mission and ministry. You are invited to place your financial offerings in the offering plate as you leave today. Additional 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 Vanco Mobile App, or online at Grace's website (Use the QR code provided). You are also invited to call the church office to learn more about the automatic withdrawal Electronic Giving Program.



OFFERING ANTHEM

"Give Me Oil In My Lamp"

Traditional (Public Domain)

Let us pray. God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. **Amen.**

Please stand as you are able.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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, . . . 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, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All are welcome at the Lord's table.

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

Please be seated. Beginning with the front pews, you are invited to come forward, extend your hands to receive the bread and grape juice from the pastor or communion assistant, and return to your seat to commune. Gluten free elements are available upon request. If you would like the communion elements to be brought to you, please notify an usher.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"

ELW 779 (Public Domain)

Please stand as you are able.

COMMUNION BLESSING

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

SENDING

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

BLESSING

God, the giver of love,
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN
"Be Thou My Vision"

ELW 793 (Public Domain)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love.
Thanks be to God.

CLOSING MUSIC

"Be Thou My Vision"

ELW 793 (Public Domain)



Worship Team

A/V Team: Bill Nattress, Andy Bellavia, Mark Miller
Acolyte: Grace Nellessen
Communion Assistants: Judy Rooney, Marylee Steinwehe
Greeters: Bill Kreznor, Nancy Kreznor
Reader: Tanya Thomas
Ushers: Wes Krueger, Cindy Rowe
Children Sermon: Elaine Burcham
Altar Guild: Barb Aavang, Joy Aavang
Musicians: Paul Rausch, Tammy Baier, Cherub Choir
Lead Pastor: Pastor Amanda Bergstrom
Guest Preacher: Pastor Gail Heidtke

Presence Light:

To the glory of God.

Bulletin Sponsors:

To the glory of God.

Worship Videos Online. A video recording of worship will be posted to Grace’s website later in the day.

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.



You are welcome to join Grace Lutheran Church’s Facebook group for news & ministry opportunities.

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Sundays in Lent

9:00 a.m. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Palm/Passion Sunday, April 2

9:00 a.m. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Maundy Thursday, April 6

12:00 p.m. (Sanctuary)

7:00 p.m. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Good Friday, April 7

12:00 p.m. (Sanctuary)

7:00 p.m. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Easter Sunday, April 9

7:00 a.m. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

9:00 a.m. (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Easter Flowers

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 \$16.00 in an envelope and mail to the office (1300 Kishwaukee Valley Road, Woodstock, IL 60098), drop it off at the church office, or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday.

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

Anyone donating is welcome to pick up a lily following the 9:00 a.m. Easter worship on Sunday. If any are left over, we are going to share them with our homebound members.

DEADLINE FOR DONATION FORMS & MONEY: March 27, 2023.



The coupon is titled "EASTER FLOWERS DONATION" in green capital letters. It features a light blue background with a green dashed border. On the left, there is a white lily flower and a green Easter egg with a white zigzag pattern. On the right, there is another white lily flower and a blue Easter egg with white polka dots. At the bottom, there is a pink Easter egg with white stars. The coupon includes the following fields:

Amount \$ _____

CHOOSE ONE PER COUPON

In Memory Of: _____

In Honor of: _____

To the Glory of God: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

A small scissors icon is located in the bottom right corner of the coupon.