

Reformation Sunday

Grace Lutheran Church
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Jesus said, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

John 8:31-32

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

gordongrace.org & facebook.com/gracelutherangordon

Rev. Travis Sherman
office@gordongrace.org
Bible Classes: 9:00 A.M.
Worship 10:00 A.M.



Date: Oct. 25th, 2020
Office: 308-282-0584
Home: 308-282-0254
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WELCOME! We welcome our guests and visitors this morning and pray that your worship with us will be meaningful, blessed, and especially Christ-centered. We hope that you will worship with us again soon! If you do not have a church home, we invite you to consider making Grace Lutheran your church home.

IN THE INTEREST of good pastoral care, Grace Lutheran Church practices close communion. We believe, teach and confess that the one Holy Apostolic Christian Church throughout history and Holy Scripture teach that those who commune together should be one in faith and doctrine. For this reason, we reserve Holy Communion for those who are confirmed members of Grace Lutheran Church, and for confirmed members in good standing of sister LC-MS congregations. We respectfully ask those who are members of other church bodies to commune at the altar of their church, in accordance with their public confessions and under the care of their pastor.

THOSE who serve us:

Elder.....
Altar..... Piano/Organ...Sherry Rhoadarmer
Flowers Courtesy.....
Greeters.....
Ushers
Church CleanerLisa Johnson
Church Secretary.....Leah Sherman
Little Lambs Preschool TeacherDeb Evans

REMEMBER in your prayers: Jan Flueckinger, DeOnna Anderson, Bob Mills, Jim Kamerzell, Edna Schaer, Kristy Winter, Wynn Coon, Bonnie and Leonard Harris, Korbin Sommerville, Allison Judy, Joanie Burleigh, Sherry Rhoadarmer

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We rejoice to be back in the house of the LORD! What a blessing to be able to gather under the same roof, hear God's Word, receive His gifts, pray and sing His praises together.

At the same time, we will still take a few common sense precautions in an attempt to keep one another and our community healthy. Here at church, those precautions include the following things: 1) there will be no passing of the offering plate; 2) distribution of the Sacrament will be done individually; 3) when lining up for communion, we ask you to line up one family group at a time; 4) the communion vessels have been prepared in a sanitized environment, and arranged in a way that seeks to avoid cross-contamination.

This is something we are dealing with in our community and our congregation. We need to watch out for each other, help one another to care for our bodies and lives, encourage one another with the hope we have in Jesus' victory over death, and pray for ourselves and others that God would continue to lead and guide us.

NEXT SUNDAY IS OUR VOTERS' MEETING AND REFORMATION STEW!

We still need people willing to serve as an elder, or on the board of trustees, and the board of education. We also need to elect a delegate to the Wyoming District Convention next May.

Reformation Stew will go on as in years past, with a few minor changes due to the new directed health measures.

Our October mission project: the Lutheran Women's Missionary League

STEWARDSHIP:

Matt. 21:43 – "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits." The Pharisees were not bearing fruit. They were faithful to the letter of the Law in keeping the Sabbath, tithing, and all the rest, but they neglected the heart of God's will. The grace of God belongs at the center. Our giving and all our other good works flow forth from receiving God's grace and living in that grace on a daily basis.

Budget for 2020: \$123,485

As of October 17th, we have received \$90,617.12

Special Offerings: Little Lambs \$38; LWML \$55; Odessa Elwood Memorial \$725



Hymn of Invocation: 768 To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray



1 To God the Ho - ly Spir - it let us pray
 2 O sweet - est Love, Your grace on us be - stow;
 3 Tran - scen - dent Com - fort in our ev - 'ry need,
 4 Shine in our hearts, O Spir - it, pre - cious light;



For the true faith need - ed on our way
 Set our hearts with sa - cred fire a - glow
 Help us nei - ther scorn nor death to heed
 Teach us Je - sus Christ to know a - right



That He may de - fend us when life is end - ing And from
 That with hearts u - nit - ed we love each oth - er, Ev - 'ry
 That we may not fal - ter nor cour - age fail us When the
 That we may a - bide in the Lord who bought us, Till to



ex - ile home we are wend - ing. Lord, have mer - cy!
 strang - er, sis - ter, and broth - er. Lord, have mer - cy!
 foe shall taunt and as - sail us. Lord, have mer - cy!
 our true home He has brought us. Lord, have mer - cy!

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Please stand, as you are able

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

[Matthew 28:19]

Come, O children, lis- | ten to me;*

I will teach you the fear | of the LORD.

The LORD redeems the life of his | servants;*

none of those who take refuge in him will | be condemned.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*

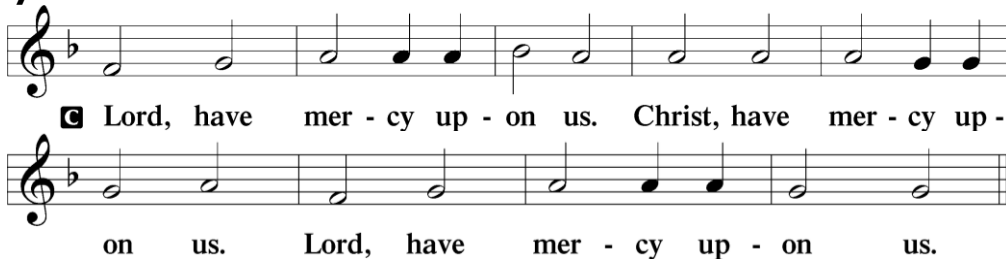
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

I will speak of your testimonies before kings, | [O Lord,]*

and shall not be | put to shame.

Kyrie

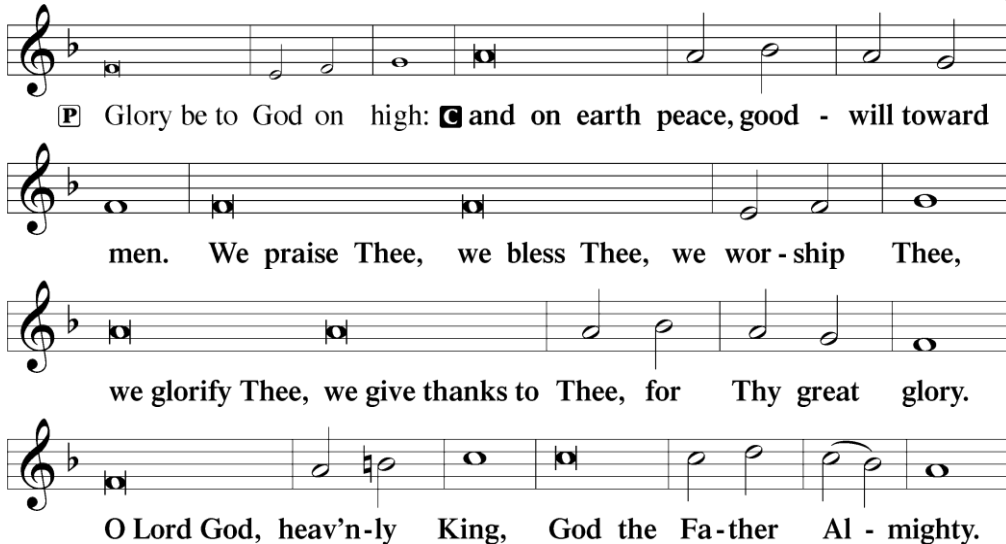
Mark 10:47



C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Gloria in Excelsis

Luke 2:14; John 1:29



P Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward
men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,
we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.



O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;



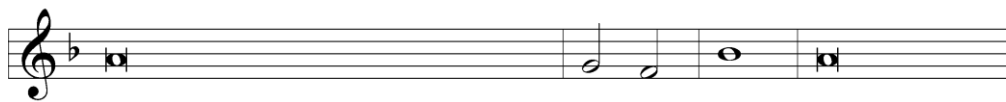
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,



that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.



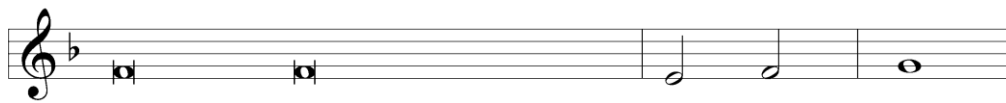
Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re - ceive our prayer.



Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up -



on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on - ly art the Lord.



Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,



art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22



G And with thy spir - it.

P Let us pray. Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Sit

First Reading

Revelation 14:6–7

The Messages of the Three Angels

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

A This is the Word of the Lord. **C** Thanks be to God.

Gradual *Psalm 48:1a, 12–14a*

Great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised*
in the city | of our God!

Walk about Zion, go around her, number her | towers,*
consider well her ramparts, go through her | citadels,
that you may tell the next gener- | ation*
that this is God, our God forever and | ever.

Epistle

Romans 3:19–28

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

The Righteousness of God Through Faith

²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

A This is the Word of the Lord. **C** Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse

C Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Holy Gospel

John 8:31–36

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.

C Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

The Truth Will Set You Free

³¹So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’”

³⁴Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord. **C** Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and
invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all
worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the
Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our
salvation came down from
heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy
Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us
under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again
according to the Scriptures

and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the
Father.

And He will come again with
glory to judge both the living
and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no
end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father
and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
together is worshiped and
glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy
Christian and apostolic
Church,

I acknowledge one Baptism for
the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of
the dead
and the life \dagger of the world to
come. Amen.

657 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

sts. 1-4



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, A sword and shield vic -
2 No strength of ours can match his might. We would be lost, re -
3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land All threat'ning to de -
4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, No thanks to foes, who



to - rious; He breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod And wins sal -
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, Whom God Him -
 your us, We trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; They can - not
 fear it; For God Him - self fights by our side With weap - ons



va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe Has sworn to
 self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be? The Lord of
 o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage; In bat - tle
 of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house, Goods, hon - or,



work us woe. With craft and dread - ful might He
 hosts is He, Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord, God's
 we'll en - gage. His might is doomed to fail; God's
 child, or spouse, Though life be wrenched a - way, They



arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
 on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
 judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
 can - not win the day. The King - dom's ours for - ev - er!

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Sermon

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and
 minds in Christ Jesus. **C** Amen.

Philippians 4:7

Offertory

Psalm 51:10-12



C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -

new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
 way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
 tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

[Offering at the back of church] *[1 Cor. 9:14; Gal. 6:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:17-18]*

Prayer of the Church

P Having confidence in our justification by grace through faith and having access to the Father in Jesus’ name, let us turn our hearts in prayer on behalf of ourselves, the Church and all people according to their needs.

O almighty God, You have shown Your faithfulness by raising up those in every generation who call Your Church to repentance and renewal. Continue to raise up voices in our own day who herald the truth of Your Word and proclaim the faith in purity and truth against all enemies. Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**

P Everlasting Father, You do not desire the death of the sinner but want all to come to faith and life in Christ. Raise up faithful pastors who will preach Your Word without fail and teach the doctrine delivered to the saints, that many may hear and believe. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

- P** Merciful Lord, Your Word has been the light and salvation throughout the ages. Help us to bring Your grace to those in darkness, and grant them freedom through the forgiveness of their sins. Bless the missionaries serving far and near and the new congregations they establish in Your name. Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** God of power and might, You have established governments and the order of law for the protection of all people and to preserve the freedom to worship You in spirit and in truth. Grant to Donald, our president; _____, our governor; the Congress of these United States; and the legislature of our state wisdom, humility and integrity, that all may enjoy true justice and the protection of life from its conception to its natural end. Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Holy and gracious God, Your power is revealed chiefly in showing mercy to those in need. Give to the sick healing, to the troubled peace, to the grieving comfort and to the dying peace. Hear us first on behalf of _____ and those we name in our hearts before You. According to Your gracious promise, grant patience to those in tribulation and trial. Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Heavenly Father, You have given great gifts to Your people and provided resources to provide for their own needs and for the poor. Bless the agencies and programs of Your Church by which Your people give aid and support to those in need. Help us to provide gainful employment to all people, that they may enjoy the fruits of their labors and honor You with the works of their hands. Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Gracious God and Father, Your own Son has set His table among us and gives His own flesh and blood to be the bread of heaven that feeds us everlasting life and the cup of salvation in which our thirst is satisfied forever. Give us Your Holy Spirit, that we may commune worthily and in repentance and faith feast upon His Holy Sacrament. Bring us at last

to that day when all earthly divisions will cease and we will be one people before the altar of the Lord. Until that day, preserve among us Your Word and Sacraments. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O faithful Lord, throughout the ages You spoke hope through the prophets until that day when You delivered up Your own Son to be our Savior and Redeemer. Bless those who are just learning the Gospel, and bless us with the desire to know and keep Your Word. Encourage Your people to avail themselves of the grace of confession and absolution so that they may forgive one another and live in the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Lord, in Your mercy, **C** **hear our prayer.**

P Almighty God and Father, we pray You to grant us all good things that will benefit us in body and soul and to prevent anything harmful to us or to our salvation. Teach us to live in contentment with Your will and purpose and in the freedom You alone supply to serve You with all our heart, mind, body and soul; all these things we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C** **Amen.**

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C **And with thy spirit.**

P Lift up your hearts.

[Colossians 3:1]

C **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

[Psalm 136]

C **It is meet and right so to do.**

[Meet means 'fitting, proper.']

P It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this day overcame death and the

grave and by His glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



bles - ed is He, bles - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

C 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.

The Words of Our Lord

Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20;

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

P In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

John 20:19

P The peace of the Lord be with you always. **C** Amen.

Agnus Dei

John 1:29

C O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.

Sit

Distribution

The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first and then distribute them to those who come to receive, saying:

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins. **Amen.**

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins. **Amen.**

We ask all who desire to receive communion to please read the communion statement at the front of the bulletin. For those approaching the Lord's Table this day, we ask you to come individually or by family group.

Following Communion, the following is said:

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart † in peace.

C Amen.

Distribution Hymn: 556 Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice



1 Dear Chris-tians, one and all, re-joice, With ex-ul-ta-tion
2 Fast bound in Sa-tan's chains I lay; Death brood-ed dark-ly
3 My own good works all came to naught, No grace or mer-it
4 But God had seen my wretch-ed state Be-fore the world's foun-



spring-ing, And with u-nit-ed heart and voice And ho-ly
o'er me. Sin was my tor-ment night and day; In sin my
gain-ing; Free will a-against God's judg-ment fought, Dead to all
da-tion, And mind-ful of His mer-cies great, He planned for



rap-ture sing-ing, Pro-claim the won-ders God has done, How
moth-er bore me. But dai-ly deep-er still I fell; My
good re-main-ing. My fears in-creased till sheer de-spair Left
my sal-va-tion. He turned to me a fa-ther's heart; He



His right arm the vic-t'ry won. What price our ran-som cost Him!
life be-came a liv-ing hell, So firm-ly sin pos-sessed me.
on-ly death to be my share; The pangs of hell I suf-fered.
did not choose the eas-y part But gave His dear-est trea-sure.

5 God said to His belovèd Son:
“It’s time to have compassion.
Then go, bright jewel of My crown,
And bring to all salvation.
From sin and sorrow set them free;
Slay bitter death for them that they
May live with You forever.”

6 The Son obeyed His Father’s will,
Was born of virgin mother;
And God’s good pleasure to fulfill,
He came to be my brother.
His royal pow’r disguised He bore;
A servant’s form, like mine, He wore
To lead the devil captive.

7 To me He said: “Stay close to Me,
 I am your rock and castle.
 Your ransom I Myself will be;
 For you I strive and wrestle.
 For I am yours, and you are Mine,
 And where I am you may remain;
 The foe shall not divide us.

9 “Now to My Father I depart,
 From earth to heav’n ascending,
 And, heav’nly wisdom to impart,
 The Holy Spirit sending;
 In trouble He will comfort you
 And teach you always to be true
 And into truth shall guide you.

8 “Though he will shed My precious
 blood,
 Me of My life bereaving,
 All this I suffer for your good;
 Be steadfast and believing.
 Life will from death the vict’ry win;
 My innocence shall bear your sin,
 And you are blest forever.

10 “What I on earth have done and
 taught
 Guide all your life and teaching;
 So shall the kingdom’s work be
 wrought
 And honored in your preaching.
 But watch lest foes with base alloy
 The heav’nly treasure should destroy;
 This final word I leave you.”

Distribution Hymn: 617 O Lord, We Praise Thee



1 O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and a - dore Thee,
 2 Thy ho - ly bod - y in - to death was giv - en,
 3 May God be - stow on us His grace and fa - vor



In thanks - giv - ing bow be - fore Thee. Thou with Thy
 Life to win for us in heav - en. No great - er
 That we fol - low Christ our Sav - ior And live to -



bod - y and Thy blood didst nour - ish Our weak souls that
 love than this to Thee could bind us; May this feast there -
 geth - er here in love and u - nion Nor de - spise this



they may flour - ish: O Lord, have mer - cy!
of re - mind us! O Lord, have mer - cy!
blest Com - mu - nion! O Lord, have mer - cy!



May Thy bod - y, Lord, born of Mar - y, That our
Lord, Thy kind - ness did so con - strain Thee That Thy
Let not Thy good Spir - it for - sake us; Grant that



sins and sor - rows did car - ry, And Thy blood for us plead
blood should bless and sus - tain me. All our debt Thou hast paid;
heav'n - ly - mind - ed He make us; Give Thy Church, Lord, to see



In all tri - al, fear, and need: O Lord, have mer - cy!
Peace with God once more is made: O Lord, have mer - cy!
Days of peace and u - ni - ty: O Lord, have mer - cy!

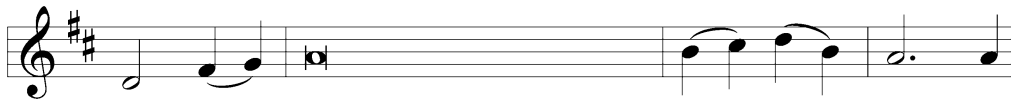
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Stand

Nunc Dimittis

Luke 2:29-32



Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -



cord - ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,



which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,



a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy

peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and
to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

Thanksgiving

Psalm 107:1

A O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
C and His mercy endureth forever.

A Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C Amen.**

P The Lord be with you. **C And with thy spirit.** *2 Timothy 4:22*

Benedicamus

[Psalm 103:1]

A Bless we the Lord. **C Thanks be to God.**

Benediction

Numbers 6:24-26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and **✠** give you peace.
C Amen, amen, amen.

Hymn to Depart: 655 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word



1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in Your Word; Curb those who
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For You are
3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, Send peace and



by de - ceit or sword Would wrest the king - dom from Your
Lord of lords a - lone; De - fend Your ho - ly Church that
u - ni - ty on earth; Sup - port us in our fi - nal



Son And bring to naught all He has done.
we May sing Your praise e - ter - nal - ly.
strife And lead us out of death to life.

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Acknowledgments

Divine Service III from Lutheran Service Book

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The Lutheran Church Extension Fund also has an app available for online giving, called *GivePlus*. You can find it in the App Store or the Google Play store.

Mites for Missions

Next Sunday we will be collecting the LWML mite boxes. Please join us in making these offerings of thanksgiving to the Lord! Based on the Bible account of the widow's mite (Mark 12:41-43), the Mite Boxes are intended for the regular contribution of our "mites"—offerings above and beyond what we normally give to support our congregation and synod. Since 1942, the LWM has collected over **127 million dollars**. These coins continue to make a difference around the world. Thank you for contributing to the Mite Box and providing the opportunity for us to spread the Gospel to the world.

Loving God with all our heart, mind, strength and life, and our neighbor as ourself.

As we consider whom to choose for our leaders at all levels of our government, we would be wise to take into account the Word of the God and the wisdom of our forefathers in the faith. In Psalm 82 we find several important truths: 1) that God gives men authority to rule for the good of their community, even calling them gods; 2) that the authority of leaders is “under God” and that He holds them to His standards; 3) God judges those who rule unjustly and wickedly; and 4) God is the ultimate authority and judge of the earth.

- [1] God has taken his place in the divine council;
in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:
- [2] “How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? Selah
- [3] Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.
- [4] Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”
- [5] They have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they walk about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
- [6] I said, “You are gods,
sons of the Most High, all of you;
- [7] nevertheless, like men you shall die,
and fall like any prince.”
- [8] Arise, O God, judge the earth;
for you shall inherit all the nations! (ESV)

In a commentary on this Psalm, Martin Luther speaks to the three virtues that God demands of the leaders that He appoints. He writes, “**the first [virtue]** is that they can secure justice for those who fear God and repress those who are godless” because Psalm 82:2 demands that leaders “shall honor God’s Word above all things and further the teaching of it.” The **second virtue** “includes all the works of righteousness: as when a prince or lord of a city has good laws or customs; when everything is regulated in an orderly way; and when order is kept by people in all ranks, occupations, [and] trades.” Psalm 82:3 teaches this. Leaders “are to make and administer just laws so that the wretched, the widows, the orphans are not oppressed, but have their rights and keep them. “The **third virtue** is that they protect and guard against violence and force. This is called peacemaking.” Psalm 82:4 teaches this virtue. Leaders “are to protect against force and harm and prevent violence, punish the knaves, and wield the sword against the wicked, that peace may be kept in the land.” (*Luther’s Works*, AE, Vol 13: 52-58)

Thinking about these three virtues can help us make wise decisions when we cast our votes. As we consider that slate of candidates, we should ask ourselves these questions:

- 1) **Does this candidate honor God's Word**, and will he work to promote Christian teaching so that people in his jurisdiction may be blessed by God's Word and be redeemed from sin and death, and attain salvation?
- 2) **Will this candidate work to make and administer just laws** that support all citizens? Will the poor and needy have their rights protected against those who stand to gain by their oppression? Will the weak, especially the unborn and the aged be protected from those who seek gain or ease by harming them?
- 3) **Will this candidate work to suppress violence and punish the wicked?** God usually provides for our daily need through gainful employment and the working together of the family. Will private property be protected against those who seek to appropriate it for themselves or others? Will those who seek to get their way through rioting, looting, theft, or other violence be stopped and punished, so that all people may enjoy God's blessings in peace and quietness?



King Solomon, by Simeon Solomon, 1872.

Are justified
by his grace as a gift



Surrounded by
HIS Grace



through the redemption
that is in Christ Jesus

Romans 3:24



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