

The Means of **Grace**



MAY 24, 2020

In the summer of 2012, six Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary classmates went backpacking through Europe, from Sweden to Italy. Being seminarians, they hadn't really prebooked any lodging. They simply would find a place to stay once they arrived in a city they liked. Amazingly, this usually worked.

However, when they stopped in a seaside Italian town called Levanto, everything in the city was booked except for one beautiful house at the top of a hill that overlooked Levanto—only a three-mile hike away. They had to hurry, because the man who would let them in was leaving soon.



So, they sprint-hiked up the mountain. When they were about halfway, a man drove up on a scooter, excitedly speaking Italian. They did not understand a word. He continued with exasperated gesturing. Finally, one of the students hopped on the back of the scooter and, with a backwards glance and a “here goes nothing” expression, rode off with this stranger.

Of course the others were thinking as the scooter drove away, “Will we ever see him again? What do we do now? Who’s going to tell his mom?”

Don’t worry. The driver dropped their friend off at the house and returned for each of them. But they never forget the fearful uncertainty of that moment.

What do we do now?

I imagine Jesus’ disciples had similar thoughts as Jesus was “taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight” (Acts 1:9). For the better part of three years, the disciples knew the blessing of being at Jesus’ side as he taught, proclaimed himself as Savior, and performed miracles. They knew the guilt of fleeing from Jesus in fear as he was arrested, abandoning him as he innocently suffered and died on a cross reserved for the worst criminals. They knew the life-changing joy of Easter, as the risen Christ showed them the marks in his hands and side, shattering their grief over the thought of their Lord in the grave. For 40 days after Easter, Jesus continued appearing to his disciples, his visible presence giving them peace, comfort, and hope because they knew Jesus was still with them.

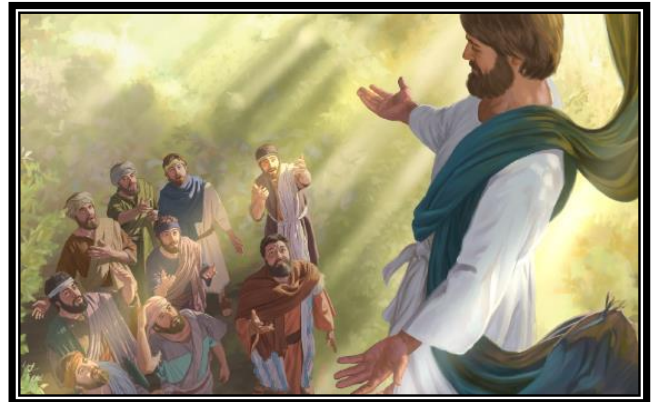
Then Jesus disappeared from their sight in the clouds. Straining their eyes, craning their necks, hoping to catch a glimpse of Jesus, did they wonder, “Will we ever see him again? What do we do now?”

A catechism student once asked me, “Why didn’t Jesus just stay here so all the bad stuff in the world wouldn’t happen?” She assumed that since Jesus disappeared at the Ascension, he’s not with us anymore, that he ascended to a heavenly hammock with a good book and a lemonade and retired from caring for the world. That’s exactly what Satan wants us to think. He wants us to look at our lives and the world around us. As war continues, diseases attack bodies, and sin ravages relationships, the devil wants us to fearfully think, “Jesus isn’t in control. He left us.”

Four reassurances

If Jesus left us to fend for ourselves, we should be afraid, because we’d have no hope! Fortunately, that’s not what the Ascension means. Jesus’ ascension gives us four joyful reassurances: Jesus is still with us. Jesus is in control. Jesus will come again. Jesus gave us an important task.

Jesus is no longer with us like he was with those first disciples. But Jesus assured his followers before he ascended, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). He did not say, “I’ll try my hardest to always be here for you, but sometimes things happen,” like a dad promising to attend his son’s soccer game. When Jesus ascended, he once again made full use of his power as true God. Jesus could promise to be with us always, and we can trust that he will never fail to keep that promise. Jesus is with us now. We are not abandoned.



As Jesus was “taken up into heaven and sat at the right hand of God” (Mark 16:19), he did so not as an unobservant bystander. Jesus ascended to a position of authority and power over everything in the world. We know what his sitting at the Father’s right hand means. It assures us that he is ruling over everything for the good of the church. So we can trust that even in and through troubling times, Christ is working for the good of us, his church. Jesus is in complete control.

The Ascension marks Jesus as our conquering hero, the one who perfectly completed the plan of salvation with his perfect life, the cross, and an empty tomb, to give us eternal life. He returned to his heavenly home, not to leave us on our own, but because his work is complete. Therefore, God’s children by faith can look forward to rejoicing with our Savior in heaven for eternity.

As the disciples stared up into the sky, wondering if they’d ever see Jesus again, two angels appeared to reassure them that Jesus would come back, echoing Jesus’ own promise, “I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:3).

Although we do not see him as the disciple did, Jesus promises that one day, he will come back. At judgment day, every eye will see Jesus return. Believers staring into the sky as the disciples did at the Ascension will not fear or wonder, “What now?” They will shout with joy, for the Savior has returned to take them to be with him forever, just as he promised. Jesus is coming back.

However, as we await Jesus’ return, God doesn’t want us to spend our lives staring aimlessly into the sky. Just as the angels snapped the disciples out of their cloud gazing, Jesus reveals the important task he has for us. “You will be my witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

We are Jesus’ witnesses, joyful messengers with good news to share to the ends of the earth. As the disciples evangelized, “the Lord worked with them” (Mark 16:20). He wasn’t physically at their side, but Jesus was with them. The work of the church is not just done for God, but also by God. As we carry out the work of evangelism, he goes with us too.

As we stand with the disciples this Ascension Day, we do so with comforted hearts. Our Savior is with us. He’s in control. He’s coming back. He’s given us an important task, and he’s with us as we carry it out. His presence gives us peace, comfort, hope, and reassurance, because we know Jesus is still with us.

THIS WEEK AT GRACE CHURCH AND SCHOOL



Sunday May 24, 2020

8:30 AM Bible Class Jonah Bible Study

9:30 AM Worship Service grace-wels.net/worship or facebook.com/GraceWELS

OFFERINGS CAN BE MAILED TO THE CHURCH-

7610 NE FREMONT

PORTLAND, OREGON 97213 OR online at: bit.ly/GracePortland

Monday May 25, 2020 – MEMORIAL DAY

Pastor in Office

GRACE SCHOOL ONLINE CLASSES

Tuesday May 26, 2020

Pastor in office

Oregon Circuit Meeting

GRACE SCHOOL ONLINE CLASSES

Wednesday May 27, 2020

Pastor in office

GRACE SCHOOL –ONLINE CLASSES

6 PM Bible Class (Google Meet)

Thursday May 28, 2020

Pastor in office

1 – 2 PM Confirmation Class (Google Meet)

GRACE SCHOOL ONLINE CLASSES

Friday May 29, 2020

Pastor in office

GRACE SCHOOL ONLINE CLASSES

Member Visits / Shut in/hospital visits

Saturday May 30, 2020

Pastor in Office-Sermon Preparation

20/30 Group POSTPONED

Sunday May 31, 2020

8:30 AM Bible Class-ONLINE

9:30 AM Worship Service –ONLINE grace-wels.net/worship or facebook.com/GraceWELS



The Corrigan Family. Please continue to prayer for the Corrigan's. Paul's wife and mother of 4 daughters, Maribeth, was suddenly called to heaven in an industrial accident. Christian funeral was held this past week.

Lora Muehe was admitted to the hospital with a severe kidney infection and sepsis.

Trevor & Lauren Cooper who God blessed this past week with the gift of a healthy son, Levi.

Mark Buntrock, John Kilzer who both experienced a TIA this past week and both are recovering at home.

Gethsemane Lutheran Church who God has blessed with the gift of a graduate **Paul Bourman (his wife, Charis and son Theo)** as their next pastor. Charis is also due with their second child this week!

Jasmin Villalta & baby Halicia who finally have arrived safely in Oregon to join Victor in their home in Gresham. We look forward to welcoming this new family to Grace!

Hunter Godish who is entering his third week of basic training in the Air Force Reserves.

THANK YOU! to Juan & Sue Garcia, George & Barb Dahl, Larry Glasheen who did an enormous amount of work cleaning & prepping the building and landscape to reopen!

5/22/20

Gethsemane Lutheran Church
9640 SW Greenburg Rd
Tigard, OR 97223

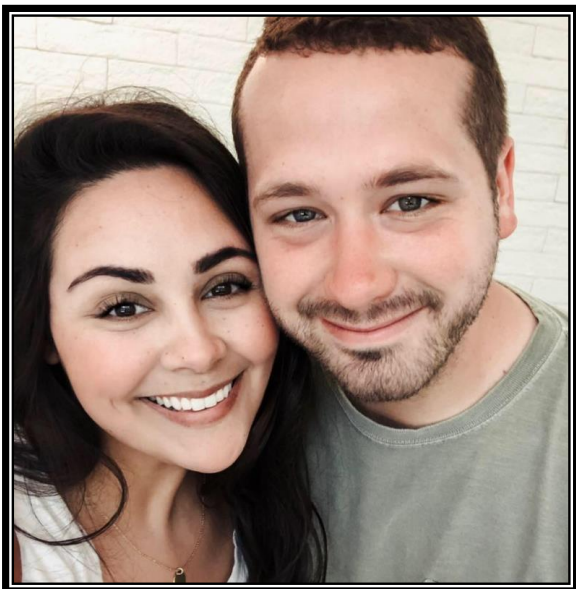
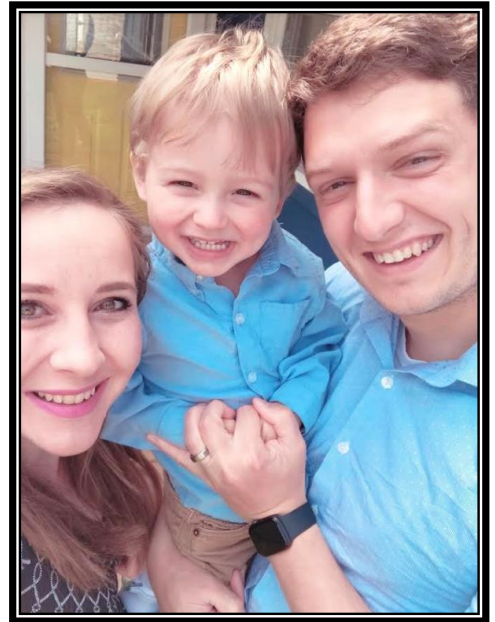
Dear Members of Gethsemane Lutheran Church,
On May 21, 2020 I received the solemn call that you have extended to me through the Assignment Committee. With this letter I wish to announce my acceptance of this call. Looking to the Lord, who has called me, for strength and wisdom through his Word, I look forward with joy to serving Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

My wife Charis, my son Theo, and I are thrilled to come and be among you, to be encouraged by you, and to fight for God's kingdom together with you.

Installation plans will be made in consultation with Pastor Thad Bitter and with Lukas Dahlberg. I would like to suggest July 19 as the tentative Sunday for the ordination and installation service, if this date is agreeable to you and if moving arrangements can be made on schedule.

May our mutual prayer be that the Lord bring us safely into your midst and bless our labors together in his vineyard.

In His Service with You,
Paul Bourman



Update from the Eternicks

Our new principal, Justin Eternick, is finishing up his school year in Jenera, OH. He and his wife, Sara, plan to begin their trek to the Pacific Northwest in the middle June and arrive at month's end.

Justin & Sara will be moving with a Uhaul, so please look for opportunities to help unload and greet them in late June.

Initially, Eternicks will be staying with the Garcia's while they continue to search for housing options.

Please pray for Justin & Sara as they make these monumental changes, pack up their home, move west, look for housing and prepare to serve the Lord with us as our new principal!



ONLINE GROUP STUDY

6:00 – 7:00 PM

WEDNESDAYS

An invitation and link will be sent to your email.
If you don't get an email with an invite and link please call
Pastor Bitter at 503-290-6316.



Worship @ Grace – Phase 1 Soft Restart

May 18th, 2020

"Let us also consider carefully how to spur each other on to love and good works. Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have the habit of doing. Rather, let us encourage each other, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24-25 EHV)

After much prayer and careful consideration, the Council has formed an initial, limited first step towards in-person worship at Grace. We are thankful for the LORD provided the gift of health and safety of Grace members during this COVID-19 pandemic. The priority in this plan is to continue to be wise stewards of this gift by, as the Lord charges us in the first verse above, opening in-person worship "carefully". Please review this letter carefully and in detail before determining if you would like to worship in person or continue worshipping online. We encourage everyone to continue personal worship daily, being in the Word daily, and in prayer constantly.

Should I consider attending worship in person?

- Anyone who is considered "at risk" per CDC guidelines is encouraged to continue worshipping online. This includes those age 65 and over, those with underlying medical conditions, residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities. [Please review CDC guidelines here.](#)
- Restroom facilities will be very limited and for "emergency" needs only (details below).
- Worshippers are requested to wear face coverings while inside the church.

What will worship be like at Grace during Phase 1 Soft Restart?

- All who wish to attend Worship are asked to RSVP (below). Quantity of RSVPs may be limited, and we may suggest additional, alternate service times if RSVPs exceed appropriate limits.
- Maintain a minimum of 6' Social Distance between non-immediate family members AT ALL TIMES on church property, both inside and outside the church building.
- There will be signs, guides, markings and taped-off areas throughout the church. Please follow ALL such guidelines. A general depiction is found on the attached map.
- Worshippers are requested to wear face coverings while inside the church. Due to practicality, Pastor will not be wearing a face covering and will also remain an additional distance from worshippers when preaching.
- Please enter the church by the front main entrance only. Please enter one family at a time. Maintain Social Distancing.
- Upon entry, each family checks in at the Usher Station (see diagram attached). The Usher will assign your family to a seating position. Proceed directly to your assigned seat via the indicated pathways.
 - o Seating areas will include Sanctuary Right, Sanctuary Left, Balcony, and Fellowship Hall. Within each area, specific Pews/Seats will be assigned. Please sit where assigned.
 - o Assignments will consider family size, number of total worshippers, and other factors. We cannot pre-reserve any specific seat or area.
- You will receive a Worship Folder at the Usher Station for use during worship. Please take your Worship Folder home with you. Hymnals will not be present in the worship areas. The projector will display the worship PowerPoint as usual.
- Equipment used to broadcast worship via Facebook Live will be at the front of the Sanctuary pulpit side and, while minimal, may be in your path of view.
- All worshippers are asked to maintain an "indoor voice" level of speaking to minimize projection of breathed particulates. All hymns and worship songs will be played through the audio projection system, like current worship online. No organist or worship musicians will be serving.
- Restrooms will be emergency-use only. Please plan ahead to not require use of a restroom. If emergent need arises, each restroom is to be used one person at a time. Disposable gloves will be provided to wear and disinfectant wipes are provided for you to wipe down any surface you contact during use. If your young child must use the facilities, please accompany them to ensure these guidelines are followed.

What will happen after the worship service?

- The Usher will dismiss each family, one at a time, after worship. Please exit to the outside of the building via the same path you entered. Fellowship may occur outside the building and while continuously following Social Distancing of at least 6 feet.
 - o Communion will not be celebrated during the worship service. Pastor will continue to offer the Lord's Supper on select Saturdays, as separately announced. On communion Sundays, if worshippers would like to take the Lord's Supper, please indicate to the Usher at dismissal and remain in your assigned seat. After others are dismissed, one family at a time will be ushered to the Fellowship Hall for personal communion, consistent with the present Saturday process.
- No refreshments or coffee will be served.
- Members may be addressed when entering/exiting by members of the community. Please ensure Social Distancing and engage in dialogue that reflects Christ's love for you and for them. Please let the Usher know immediately if there are any safety concerns.
- The church will be cleaned and sanitized after each worship service. Please consider volunteering for this responsibility by contacting the Council or Pastor.

I understand all the processes and items above and would like to attend worship. How do I RSVP?

- Access Signup Genius via bit.ly/GraceWorship0524 and use access code 828
 - o Please complete signup not later than Friday at noon.
 - o This link will be updated weekly.
- RSVPing does not guarantee a spot will be available at the 9:30am service.
- If more worshipers RSVP than can be safely accommodated, additional services *may* be scheduled
- Please watch your email after RSVPing for:
 - o Confirmation from Pastor/Council that you are confirmed for 9:30am
 - o Request that you consider attending an alternate Worship time
 - o Such emails should arrive by 8pm on Friday before the Sunday in question.

When will there be "normal" worship again?

These are unusual and challenging ([but not unprecedented](#) 😊) times. Our prayer is that the Lord will come quickly, or otherwise resolve this pandemic so we may return to worship together either in Heaven or here on earth. There is no defined schedule to return to usual worship, nor can there be. On a week-by-week basis, the Council will prayerfully consider the situation and adjust as best to progress towards expanding worship while still protecting the health and safety of those that may attend. As He led Paul to urge the Ephesians, our loving God urges us today, *"to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called. Live with all humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in the one hope of your calling. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in us all."* (Ephesians 4:1b-5 EHV)

I have questions, feedback, and encouragement. Whom may I contact?

Please feel free to contact any Councilman or Pastor. Also, make it a point to reach out to your brothers and sisters in Christ regularly to encourage each other while we are temporarily apart. Praise be to God for providing so many means for fellowship through technology during these times!

Until we meet again (online or in person),

Larry Glasheen
360-535-3262 m

Ed Gillespie
360-619-2380 m

Juan Garcia
281-650-9245 m

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK OF ASCENSION 2020

Sunday Exodus 14:21-26

- ✚ Describe the scene before us. See previous verses.
- ✚ Describe the fantastic event which unfolded. How could God do this?
- ✚ Describe God's judgment on Pharaoh. Who deserves such judgment?
- ✚ How did God remove this judgment from us? Hebrews 1:3

Monday Exodus 14:27-28

- ✚ How complete was the annihilation of the Egyptian army?
- ✚ How complete will the judgment of all unbelievers be?
- ✚ How complete was the destruction of judgment against us on the cross?
- ✚ How does Jesus' Ascension reveal God's satisfaction with Jesus payment for our sins?

Tuesday Exodus 14:29-31

- ✚ How does the "wall of water" depict the greatness of this miracle?
- ✚ What does the word "feared" really mean in this context?
- ✚ What are our feelings when we behold the cross, the empty tomb and Christ's Ascension? John 17:11

Wednesday Revelation 19:11-13

- ✚ In the spiritual sense who alone could ride this white horse and is called faithful and true?
- ✚ Take a close look at the other descriptive words and note how they can fit only one being.
- ✚ What is the significance of the name "Word of God"? John 1:1-2, 14

Thursday Revelation 19:14-16

- ✚ Who makes up the armies of heaven? How many soldiers are in these armies?
- ✚ Who is the enemy? What chance does he have against such strength?
- ✚ What is this sharp sword which comes out of Jesus mouth? Ephesians 6:17
- ✚ Consider the name on his robe.

Friday Luke 24:44-49

- ✚ What is the meaning and significance of verse 44 for us?
- ✚ Where do we find the Gospel of forgiveness? What reveals it to us?
- ✚ For whom is the Gospel of forgiveness intended? How does it get to all nations?
- ✚ How can we be the Messiah's witnesses? Who will help us do this? John 14:25-31.

Saturday Luke 24:50-53

- ✚ Describe Jesus' Ascension? You might want to read Acts 1:6-11
- ✚ Describe the behavior of the disciples after Jesus left them?
- ✚ Think about (talk about) the meaning of the Ascension of Jesus for us? What significance does it have for us? Romans 6:5; John 14:1-5

Principal's Note



A Family of Ministries For Christian
Worship, Education and Care

End of the Year Happenings

- Monday, May 25
 - No Distance Learning
 - Memorial Day
- Friday, May 26
 - Last Day for regular distance learning
- June 1-4
 - Make up days for work
- June 2-4
 - Collecting personal items from school and bringing to school textbooks, library books, Chromebooks, etc.
- June 8
 - Report Cards to be sent out
- Dates to be determined
 - Graduation for Preschool
 - Graduation for 8th Grade



Chapel

Our chapel offering for the second half of the year will support our school in South Asia. We have received \$306.57 this semester. Thank you for these gifts.

Parents,
Don't forget to re-enroll your student for next year at Grace Lutheran School.



Log in to your parent account on [Gradelink](#) to re-enroll. The **Re-Enroll** tab will be active by default.

Enrollment forms will be pre-populated using information the school has on file for your student. Parents are asked to check the information for accuracy and make any corrections or additions.

If you have multiple students, you need to re-enroll each one separately.

You can switch between your enrolled children using the **Now Viewing** menu on the top right.

Please pay the \$100 re enrollment fee on Gradelink, also.

Hug and Tug a Plant

If you would like to help out at school, we could use some weed pulling outside the building. You may come in, but we need to keep social distancing. Mr. Leitzke is at school from Tuesday through Thursday from 8:00 to 3:00. Contact Mr. Leitzke if you want to "Hug and Tug" a plant or more.

mleitzke@grace-wels.net School: 503-777-8628 Cell: 503-449-4192

