



I am with you
Always

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Serving the Portland Area
With the Means of Grace
As a family of believers
For almost 110 years...

As a Church
As a School
As a Preschool
As a Mission
As a Ministry
As a Family of Ministries



A Family of Ministries For Christian
Worship, Education and Care

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Festival of Ascension Observed, May 24th, 2020

GRACE ~ *“I am not ashamed of the gospel...”*



When it comes to the truth of Scripture, there is no room for compromise. The Bible is the book we live by... for life now and for life forever. We accept the Bible as the pure Word of God. We believe that our only Savior is Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, who was crucified, died, and was buried but rose again to open the door to heaven for everyone who believes in him.

GRACE ~ *“These are written that you may believe...”*



Grace Lutheran Church has served the Portland area for over 100 years by faithfully preaching and teaching the timeless truth of God’s Word. We believe that God uses the timeless message of Word and Sacraments to bring souls into his care. This is a message that we share here and around the world through our affiliation with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

GRACE ~ *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...”*



Grace Lutheran Church exists to win souls by joyfully proclaiming the truth of God’s grace through Christ, to nurture believers in growing in faith and lives of Christian service, and to join together in worship and praise. **“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever! Amen.” II Peter 3:1**

ASCENSION

Forty days and forty nights, the rain poured down and the flood waters rose. God drowned the ancient world in a breath-taking act of liquid judgment. Forty days and forty nights, the Son of God presented himself to his disciples alive and exceedingly well after drowning sin in a flood of blood and swallowing up death in his resurrected body. Now the forty days were at an end. After promising his disciples a pouring-out of the Spirit and entrusting to them the keys to the Kingdom, Jesus—in one final, saving act of his earthly ministry—ascended into heaven. The clouds that hide Jesus from our sight cannot cast a shadow on our Ascension joy: “*God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets*” (Psalm 47).

OPENING HYMN

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

- M: Why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."
- C: We believe and are sure that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God.**
- M: God raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.
- C: At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

CONFESSION OF SIN

- M: Gracious Lord, through your Word you have revealed to us again and again the unsearchable riches of Christ, but again and again we confess that we have failed to recognize how richly we have been blessed.
- M: We confess that we have often failed to fully appreciate all you have done for us in Christ, and have failed to share the message of your love and grace with others as we should.
- M: We confess that so often we have overlooked the needs of those who live near us and have shown so little concern for those who are far away.

A moment of silence for personal confession

ABSOLUTION

M: Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

-Ephesians 2:4-9

As a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

HYMN

Above All

THE WORD

THE LESSON

Philippians 3:12 – 4:1

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus also took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it yet, but there is one thing I do: Forgetting the things that are behind and straining toward the things that are ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Therefore, let all of us who are mature continue to think this way. And if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this to you too. ¹⁶ Only let us think the same thing and^[d] walk in line with what we already have attained. ¹⁷ Brothers, join together in imitating me and in paying attention to those who are walking according to the pattern we gave you. ¹⁸ To be sure, many walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. I told you about them often, and now I am saying it while weeping. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their appetite,^[e] and their glory is in their shame. They are thinking only about earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. We are eagerly waiting for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ By the power that enables him to subject all things to himself, he will transform our humble bodies to be like his glorious body. So then, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, in this way keep standing firm in the Lord, my dear friends

THE SERMON LESSON

The Ascension of Our Lord A harmony based of the Gospels and Matthew, Mark, and Luke and the Acts of the Apostles

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Soon after the resurrection, the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

On one occasion, Jesus said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

On another occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. And he sat at the right hand of God.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

THE SERMON

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

An opportunity to give online can also be used at Paypal.me/GracePortland or by utilizing this QR code:



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- M: Confident of our Lord's return, let us approach our Father's throne of mercy on behalf of the Church and of all people.
- M: Gracious Lord God, amid shouts of joy we celebrate your Son's ascension into heaven where he is now seated in majesty at your right hand. Grant your Church steadfastness in these gray and latter days that she may hold to the truth and boldly confess the saving name of Jesus.

C: As the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh seek to silence our witness to the truth, grant us courage to believe in our hearts and confess with our lips that Jesus is Lord.

M: Even as your beloved Son intercedes on behalf of his Church, so has he commanded us, his kingdom of priests, to pray for others.

C: Hear us, O Lord, as we implore you to show mercy to those in need:

M: *prayers of intercession are offered*

C: Teach us to be thankful and content, whether we have plenty or are in need.

M: O Lord, heavenly Father, we here remember the sufferings and death of your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Praising his victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from his ascension before you, where he ever stands for us as our own high priest. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in his kingdom, which has no end.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE RECESSION OF THE PASCHAL CANDLE

The Paschal Candle is the large candle placed on a tall brass candlestick located near the baptismal font in our chancel. "Paschal" is taken from a Hebrew word meaning "Passover". For centuries the Passover pointed to with Jesus' passion as the Lamb of God and his glorious resurrection that assures us that everyone who is covered by the blood of the Lamb will be saved, and though death itself will pass over us it cannot harm us.

It was on Good Friday that Paschal Candle entered the sanctuary in the darkness of the Tenebrae reminding us that Jesus would rise again. The candle is lighted for every service during the 40-day period that follows Easter as we celebrate the resurrection, the greatest of God's miracles and mercies.

But now our Lord has ascended into heaven and disappeared from our sight. And so we snuff out the Paschal Candle, and as its smoke ascends we are reminded of Christ's ascension.

At the Festival of the Ascension the Paschal Candle is carried from the chancel and replaced with a plain white candle called "The Christ Candle" to symbolize that Jesus did not remain with his Church in bodily form but returned to his heavenly Father's right hand in glory. The recession of the Paschal Candle does not imply that Jesus is no longer present among us, for he promised, "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I among them" (Matthew 18:20). Wherever his Word and Sacraments are, Christ is truly present. The recession of the Paschal Candle and the presence of Christ Candle helps us to remember the great commission that Jesus gave to his disciples to "go and be his witness to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) yet at the same time he promised that he would "never leave them or forsake them" (Hebrews 13:5). Through the Means of Grace, the Gospel in Word and Sacrament Christ is still really present with us. We are indeed witnesses of grace.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing

A hymn of glory let us sing! New songs throughout the world shall ring:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Christ, by a road before untrod, Ascends unto the throne of God.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

"You see him now, ascending high Up to the portals of the sky."

Alleluia! Alleluia!

"Hereafter Jesus you shall see Returning in great majesty."

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!