



## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**All Saints Sunday  
November 1, 2020  
ELW Holy Communion, Setting Ten**

All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. As November heralds the dying of the landscape in many northern regions, the readings and liturgy call us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptism is complete. At the Lord's table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.

A warm welcome to those who are here worshipping on-line with us today! Here at Grace Lutheran we believe God is active in your life. Even you being here now is testament of God's calling and leading in your heart, which you have faithfully heeded. So we welcome you, and pray that today you will be nurtured and that the gifts that God has graciously given you will be stirred for the sake of God's mission in the world.

## GATHERING

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

We are gathered in the name of Holy Trinity, One God, who forgives all our sin and joins us with all the saints of all times and places.

**Amen.**

And in our gathering and being surrounded by all the saints, we remember God's gift of baptism to us all. We remember its cleansing and purifying properties, washing from us all sin and uniting us together in God's kingdom. So let us dip our fingers in the water. Let's feel how it envelops our hands and clings to our skin. Watch as it glistens around us, hear its sounds, and be reminded how all people of every time and every place rely on water for nourishment, for sustenance, for life. See how we are all connected by this water, how it cleanses us all, and how it rejoins the collective without distinction just as we are.

And so we give thanks for this gift. We give thanks for the saints. We give thanks for God's love and providence given freely to us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

#### REMEMBRANCE OF ALL SAINTS DAY

And now we remember all the saints before God.

We praise and bless you, O God our Sovereign, Saviour, and Spirit, for you have welcomed us into your eternal story of faith, love, and community with you and all the saints, those whom we've loved and lost and those whom we look to as examples of faithful living. May these candles we light for them today serve as a reminder of how they remain in our hearts and continue to be present with us in our service to you and each other, in our worship, and in our lives.

Jesus Christ our Lord, our Saviour, our brother, and friend reminded us that we can take his yoke upon us and learn from him, for he is gentle and humble in heart and his yoke is easy and burden light, and we will find rest for our souls.

May we hold onto this promise from our Saviour, that these candles lit will be the very real presence of the saints with us now, in this place, worshipping your name with us through this same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN:** For All the Saints (#422)

#### GREETING

May the eternal grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the unending love of God, and the unifying fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**KYRIE** (p. 203)

**CANTICLE OF PRAISE** (p. 204)

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, our Maker and Redeemer, you bless us both in life and in death. You save us when we are overwhelmed. You comfort us in our sorrow. And even in death you overcome it and raise us to new life. Give us glad hope in your grace and mercy, as we continue to live and serve as your children with all the saints, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## WORD

### FIRST READING: Revelation 7:9-17

A reading from Revelation.

*The book of Revelation is written to seven churches in western Asia Minor during a time of great oppression. Today's reading is a response to the question asked in 6:17: "Who is able to stand?" The writer gives the faithful the assurance of God's protection and a vision of victory.*

<sup>9</sup>After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup>They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

<sup>11</sup>And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup>singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom  
and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and might  
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

<sup>13</sup>Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" <sup>14</sup>I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup>For this reason they are before the throne of God,  
and worship him day and night within his temple,  
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

<sup>16</sup>They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;  
the sun will not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat;

<sup>17</sup>for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM: Psalm 34:1-10, 22

<sup>1</sup>I will bless the LORD at all times;  
the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth.

<sup>2</sup>**I will glory in the LORD;  
let the lowly hear and rejoice.**

<sup>3</sup>Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD;  
let us exalt God's name together.

<sup>4</sup> **I sought the LORD, who answered me  
and delivered me from all my terrors.**

<sup>5</sup> Look upon the LORD and be radiant,  
and let not your faces be ashamed.

<sup>6</sup> **I called in my affliction, and the LORD heard me  
and saved me from all my troubles.**

<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear the LORD  
and delivers them.

<sup>8</sup> **Taste and see that the LORD is good;  
happy are they who take refuge in God!**

<sup>9</sup> Fear the LORD, you saints of the LORD,  
for those who fear the LORD lack nothing.

<sup>10</sup> **The lions are in want and suffer hunger,  
but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.**

<sup>22</sup> O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,  
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.

### **SECOND READING: 1 John 3:1-3**

A reading from 1 John.

*A saint is one who has been set apart by God for God's purposes. God, out of divine love, set us apart to be the children of God. Our holy hope is that we shall see God as God really is.*

<sup>1</sup> See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (p. 205)**

#### **GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*In the Beatitudes, Jesus provides a unique description of those who are blessed with God's favor. His teaching is surprising and shocking to those who seek wealth, fame, and control over others.*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup> "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

By your Spirit, O God, still our restless spirits and unstop our ears. May your Word be planted in our hearts this day, that we might have faith and believe in your promises of grace and mercy, through Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

So even I make mistakes. Even I, your pastor, or the pastor that just happens to be on your screen because you landed on this video by accident, can have blunders. Even I, this so-called expert in morality and theological awareness, can flub up time to time, just like I’m doing right now in talking about myself too much.

Seriously though, I made a mistake. Last week in my sermon I told a story about myself and the changes I wanted to make in my life during this pandemic. I used words that I shouldn’t have. I portrayed attitudes that I really don’t hold. I put down a whole demographic of people, and I didn’t even notice. It wasn’t until I preached that sermon again, albeit with a bit more edginess to it, that I was called out and my apparent lack of tact came to light. And let me tell you, that was a hard pill to swallow.

Not because I really think that I’m free of mistakes, no, I’m fully aware of how imperfect I am. But because I hurt people that I really care about and respect and I didn’t even know it. What hurt was the thought that I could be so insensitive, so crass, so blatantly oblivious to others that I could say such things and not even think twice.

If you know what I’m talking about, please know that I’m sorry. If you don’t know what I’m talking about, you may never, but know that I made a mistake that I truly regret and that I’m sorry. And even if you don’t agree with me, this is my mistake that I made that I own up to, and all I can do is say that I’m sorry and hope and pray that I learn and grow from my mistake and just not do it again.

Because that is one of the benefits of making mistakes, isn’t it? Learning? We can’t make an omelet without cracking a few eggs, so to speak. Now, I’m suggesting that we go and make all the mistakes possible in the world so we can learn to be better people, but I’m saying that when we make mistakes... and we will make mistakes whether we want to, plan to, or know that we do or not, that we can take those mistakes and learn from them, learn about other people, and even learn about ourselves. Trust me, it’s a lot better than just beating yourself up over the mistake and wallowing in guilt for a couple days. Ask me how I know.

In this incident that I’m talking about that happened earlier this week, something pretty amazing happened from it that aided in my learning. My colleagues surrounded me and pelted me with God’s promises of grace, redemption, and forgiveness. And I know, you might think

that as a pastor I should know this, and I do, but every now and then especially when I'm feeling super down, I need to be reminded as well. I need to be reminded that I'm loved by God. I need to be reminded that I am blessed by God. I need to be reminded that I am a child of God, created and formed in God's image, and held in God's arms of grace and mercy forever.

Blessed are the poor. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst. We know these beatitudes. We get them in our readings a couple times a year. But this time around, perhaps in light of this past week for me, it hits a bit different. Maybe it's because of this pandemic, or because a few of these lit candles are actually pretty recent for our community, or maybe it's just because 2020 has been kind of a big steaming pile of poo. Yeah sure, we might *know* that we're blessed, because you know, it says so in today's reading. But can we honestly say that we feel it? Can we say that we believe it? Can we say that we have accepted it as truth and integrated it in our lives?

If I'm honest, I'm going to say probably not. Not this week. Not this year. Not during the pandemic. So how can we ever have any confidence in this promise?

Well, do you think we're the only ones who had a hard time believing this? Can we be the only generation that had a difficult year? Is it even possible that no one before us didn't exactly feel blessed either?

I'm not saying that they all had it way worse than us so we should suck it up. I'm just saying that we aren't alone. We aren't setting any new precedents. We aren't blazing any trails that haven't been blazed before. Because generation after generation had their moments, they had their difficulties, they had their times of learning and teaching and they grew from them.

See, even as we can learn from our own mistakes, so can we learn from the mistakes of the past. As we reflect on our lives and how we can grow and change, so can we look at the lives of those we've loved and lost to further inform us of what is possible for the future. As we might struggle to see in what ways we are blessed, we can just look at the lives of the saints, also poor, meek, and that mourned and were hungry, and see how they were blessed in spite of their hardships.

This in itself is a blessing. That we have access to the combined wisdom of the generations, learning and growing and being informed by their lives of faith, their lives that were also riddled with mistakes, their lives full of blessing and God's grace. That is what today, All Saint's Day is about. That we not just remember those we've loved and lost by lighting a candle for them, but we also honour them and their lives with our own, the lessons they taught us with how we teach others, and give thanks for how they were blessed and continue to bless us through and with Jesus our Lord.

And so we can confidently believe in God's promises. We can take to heart God's redemptive grace and forgiving mercy. We can learn and grow with the wisdom and support of all the saints, spanning over time and space, showing us lives of faith, lives of worship, lives of God's unending blessing giving God thanksgiving and honour and power and might, forever and ever.

So on this All Saints Day, may we remember and honour the saints that have gone before us, that as they continue to live on with God the Spirit in our hearts, that we continually grow as a community and the one body of Christ. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** By All Your Saints (#421)

**CREED**

With all of God's saints, let us confess the Christian faith with the Apostle's 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**

Called to live as the saints of God, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with "God of blessing," and you are all invited to respond with **hear our prayer**. God of blessing, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, we will bless you and praise your name always, for your mercy is great and your love never ends. Remind us always of your gracious redemption that we will know of your eternal welcome into your kingdom even in our sins and failures. God of blessing, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, we glorify your name and proclaim it with rejoicing. May our ministries to our neighbourhoods be fulfilling and effective in displaying your love for all people. We remember in prayer our neighbouring faith communities; our partner Anglican Church of Canada; our bishop Greg, assistant to the bishop Kathy, and national bishop Susan; and our companion congregations of the BC Synod. In particular we pray for St. Peter's Estonian Lutheran Church in Vancouver and their pastor Algur Kaerma; for Peace Lutheran in Vernon and their pastor David Hunter; and for all our rostered leaders serving in Anglican parishes. May we all faithfully reflect your love and peace to all. God of blessing, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, we proclaim your greatness and exalt your name for your creation is wondrous and amazing. May we look to the past and see how we might properly care for this planet, that we might continue to be our home as we move into the future. God of blessing, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, you hear us when we call and you save us from trouble. As we move forward in our nation's history, may all our world leaders and politicians lean on your wisdom and grace to

guide us into peace. We also say a special prayer for Solyana Amanuel, that she make it into our country swiftly and safely. God of blessing, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, we know that you are good and we take refuge in you, for you watch over us and hold us in your arms. We pray for those among us who are sick, who mourn, or who feel lonely, that your love can shine through us all. In particular, we pray for Paula; Beulah; Bev and family; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Cindy; Linda; Henry; Chris; all those who have contracted or been affected by COVID-19; those who have lost loved ones during this pandemic; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...  
God of blessing, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, you redeem us and in your mercy you don't punish us for our sin. Instead, you welcome us into your eternal arms of love with all the saints, and you join us as the one body of Christ. May we look to the lives of the faithful to be inspired and informed in our service and ministry in our current times. God of blessing, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your promises and grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## MEAL

### PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**OFFERING HYMN:** Shall We Gather at the River (#423)

### OFFERING PRAYER

O God, we magnify and praise your name, for you have given us much and your welcome and love know no end. May you bless this food before us that it may nourish our bodies and souls, and remind us of the blessed union we share with you, each other, and all the saints, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### DIALOGUE

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.**

### PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and places give thanks and praise to you, O holy and almighty God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who blesses us and reminds us how we are all joined together, that we might along with the choirs of angels, the

hosts of heaven, the church on earth and all the saints, praise your name with this unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** (p. 207)

### **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

O Lord you bless us and we praise you always. We glorify you and rejoice as we proclaim your greatness. For you answer us in our affliction and you deliver us from our terror. You lift us from our guilt and shame and save us from our trouble. And through the ministry of your Son Jesus, whom you sent to us to be one of us, we have learned to take refuge in you in our lacking, in our suffering, and in our sin.

For on the night that he was betrayed, your Son Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, took bread, gave you thanks, broke and shared it and said, "take and eat, this is my body broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Then after they ate, he took the cup, gave thanks, and shared that 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."

It is in this promise of redemption that we can see your face in our community and in our lives, even as we declare this mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

For all honour and glory belong to you, O God, through the faith of our ancestors, all the saints, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one body of Christ with all the saints, 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 HYMN:** Lamb of God (p. 208)

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

All are welcome to taste and see that God is good.

**Thanks be to God.**

**COMMUNION**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Holy God, we give you thanks for feeding us with the heavenly food of your Word and promises, blessing us in our shortcomings and failures and reminding us that we will always be welcome in your love and kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**SENDING**

**BLESSING**

May God bless you in all that you are and all that you do,  
God hold you wherever you may feel alone or dejected,  
God reveal to you all grace and love, and grant you peace.

**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN:** Blest Are They (#728)

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, walk in faith and love as redeemed and welcome children of God.

**Thanks be to God.**