



## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA

7283 Nelson Avenue, Burnaby, BC V5J 4C2

Phone / fax: 604-433-1515

Website: [www.graceburnaby.com](http://www.graceburnaby.com)

Email: [office@graceburnaby.com](mailto:office@graceburnaby.com)

[pastor@graceburnaby.com](mailto:pastor@graceburnaby.com)

Follow us on Twitter! @GraceLutBurnaby



**Second Sunday in Lent  
March 13, 2022  
ELW Holy Communion, Setting Three**

Though we sometimes doubt and often resist God's desire to protect and save us, our God persists. In holy baptism, God's people have been called and gathered into a God-initiated relationship that will endure. Lent provides the church with a time and a tradition in which to seek God's face again. Lent provides another occasion to behold the God of our salvation in the face of the Blessed One who "comes in the name of the Lord."

A warm welcome to those who are here worshipping with us in-person and to those on-line! 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.

Grace Lutheran worships, prays, and serves on the traditional and unceded lands and territories of the hə́nǰəmiḥə́m (Musqueam) and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) peoples.

## GATHERING

### CALL TO WORSHIP (Paraphrase of Psalm 27)

We gather in person and in spirit to worship the Lord our light and salvation, who is our stronghold for life and casts out fear, in whose house we seek to dwell in all the days of our lives. For in the day of trouble God will give us shelter, hide us in the hidden places of sanctuary, and raise us up high upon a rock. Therefore we rejoice, we sing, and we make music to the Lord.

God hears us when we call and has mercy in answering us as we seek the Lord's face. A face that isn't hidden from us or casts us away, but continues to be our helper, the God of our salvation, taking us in and teaching us the ways of righteousness and leading us on level paths.

And so we gather in the name of the Lord, we wait for God's promises and hope, and we take heart in knowing that God is with us and watches over us, now and always.

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

### GATHERING SONG: O God of Every Nation (#713)

### GREETING

The caring grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the motherly love of God, and the compassionate fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Loving God, you refuge for those who call upon your name and you save us from the depths of trouble and despair. Lead us to walk in your light, take courage in your faithfulness, and rejoice in your astounding goodness to all the world, through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

## WORD

### FIRST READING: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

A reading from Genesis.

*God promises a childless and doubting Abram that he will have a child, that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and that the land of Canaan will be their inheritance. Abram's trust in God is sealed with a covenant-making ceremony, a sign of God's promise.*

<sup>1</sup>After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." <sup>2</sup>But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup>And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." <sup>4</sup>But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." <sup>5</sup>He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." <sup>6</sup>And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup>Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." <sup>8</sup>But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" <sup>9</sup>He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." <sup>10</sup>He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying

each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. <sup>11</sup>And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup>As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

<sup>17</sup>When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. <sup>18</sup>On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **SECOND READING: Philippians 3:17-4:1**

A reading from Philippians.

*Although Paul's devotion to Christ has caused him to be persecuted, he does not regret the course he has taken. Writing from prison, he expresses confidence in a glorious future and encourages other Christians to follow in his footsteps.*

<sup>17</sup>Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup>For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. <sup>19</sup>Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup>But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup>He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. <sup>4:1</sup>Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (p. 142)**

#### **GOSPEL: Luke 13:31-35**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Neither Herod's plotting nor Jerusalem's resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.*

<sup>31</sup>At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus,] "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." <sup>32</sup>He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. <sup>33</sup>Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' <sup>34</sup>Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>35</sup>See, your house is left to

you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

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

### **SERMON**

O God, open to us your Word by your Holy Spirit, that we, like our father Abraham, might believe in your promises and truth for us and the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

What in the world is going on in the world? A couple years ago when this pandemic started, people were saying that it was it, the end times are upon us, but we endured for another two years to this dumpster fire we have going on now. So if you thought things were bad then, things are definitely worse now. Wars for little to no good reason, dissention between and within nations, random acts of violence around our city, and gas prices through the roof. But hey, at least the pandemic mandates are easing up, right?

But as you all know, it is hard to live in a time like this. It is hard to see a world that we love so much, the only one we have, to be falling apart the way it is now. It's hard to see our country so divided in ways that we never thought would happen in this so called peace loving and polite part of the planet. It's hard thinking about what kind of future we're leaving behind for our kids, what kind of climate they'll inherit from the irresponsibilities of the past and present, and how they'll even afford to live as the gap between the rich and the poor seems to grow exponentially with each passing year. It feels like in these past few years, for whatever reason the human race in general has regressed and all progress that we've made in how we live, how we care for the environment, and how we treat each other has just been thrown out the window.

And really? It's depressing just thinking about it.

So I get Jesus' lament over Jerusalem in today's gospel lesson. You can just hear the pain in his voice, how he longs for a better world for these people that he loves so much, and how rejected he must have felt when they chose to turn away instead. That is painful for anyone, really, not just the actual Son of God. It's painful to see a loved one go down such obviously wrong paths, it's painful when such avoidable evils flourish throughout people's attitudes and actions, it's painful to watch whole people groups just flush their lives away over such nonsensical greed, selfishness, and desire for power.

That is the thing, isn't it? This is what Jesus was trying to reveal to the people, this is why they were so angry, this is what ultimately got Jesus killed. This is what Jesus was hoping to protect them from, but they rejected him and rather wanted him dead. They thought that they were the only ones who mattered so their ways were the best ways. They took God's promise to them that they will be God's people to the next level and excluded those who they deemed as too different and felt justified in doing so. Their patriotism of their own nation took over their identity as God's beloved and forgiven people and turned it into a kind of supremacy instead.

And if I'm honest, this is what I'm seeing happening around the world now. I see people claiming their country before their God, their politics before human decency, their exclusivity before any kind of inclusivity whatsoever. It's like we like to draw lines between us and them

so much that we can't help but make up more lines, and these made up borders that we live behind just make it a bit easier for us. But for some that isn't enough, so new borders are created even within our country, between provinces, political parties, and even religion.

All this division, and for what? What is gained in puffing our own chests and claiming that our city that we just happen to be born or currently live in, is best? What is the point in showing off the ways that where we're from is superior to other places but ignoring all the ways that it's actually inferior? For what reason do we need to draw these lines so deep and thick that crossing them becomes this impossible ordeal so daunting that we might not even bother to try anymore?

Well, the way I see it, I think it's for protection, because somehow we think that those who aren't like us or aren't from the same place as us must be out to get us. So we need to be protected from those outsiders, those deviants, those enemies, and that protection can come from the group to which we feel most a part of, because there is safety in numbers. There is security in the affirmation that we are right and everyone else is wrong. And to keep receiving this protection from the greater sum, we have to make sure that we still belong. But of course to belong, we need to act right, talk right, and believe right or we might be identified as an outsider as well.

I think that's why it's so hard to have a rational discussion between any two people sitting at the polar ends of any kind of spectrum. When we hold so tightly onto our belief system and loyalty to our group, a difference of opinion isn't just a different opinion that doesn't really affect us at all, but it becomes a blatant attack on the group that we are loyal to, our ideals that we think define us, our very identity regardless of how misguided it might be. And when we feel attacked, those walls go up even harder and stronger, and the divide becomes deeper.

Why do you think Herod wanted to kill Jesus? He saw Jesus as a threat to his power and privilege. But Jesus' response was very telling, he says he will continue his work, he will continue healing, he will continue loving these people that Herod and the powers that be would rather leave *unloved*. Jesus won't fall into the patriotism, the false sense of security, he won't stop being Jesus. He continued moving toward Jerusalem, the place of his eventual demise, with confidence in who he is, what he's doing, and who has called him to do this work of compassion and charity.

And Jesus continues to do this in and through us. Jesus leads us to act with justice, compassion, and peace. Jesus empowers us to stand up for the lowly and to include and welcome the outcast, to love the unloved. Jesus brings us to places of truth and hope, that while things don't look like they could ever get better, we can trust that we aren't alone in them and that God holds us, loves us, and blesses us with endless grace and mercy.

This is the call that has been given to us as God's people. This is who we are as God's beloved. This is part of our DNA as God's children, created to be compassionate and hospitable, blessed to be healed and forgiven, loved to be equally part of this great and grand body of Christ that spans all time and space.

See this love that Jesus has for Jerusalem wasn't misplaced or in vain. The grace that God shows us isn't for nothing. The leading of the Spirit, taking us out into the wildernesses of our lives, the difficult hardships that we often would rather not face, the frustrations and

disillusions of the world, is to show us how we needn't rely on the world and its constructed borders and safeguards to inform us of who we are, but rather we just need to look at God and all that God is and does for us and all people to see who we are and what true love really looks like.

So yes, the world is messed up. It is hard to not be angry or sad or frustrated at the way things are going and how it isn't exactly as we think it should be. The divisions that we create between ourselves are discouraging and disheartening and so very disappointing.

But through it all, God remains our God. In all the pain and shame, God extends a hand of healing and wholeness. In all the constructed reasons to hate, God brings us in like a mother hen and covers us in love, grace, and belonging. This is the kind of God that we can be loyal to. One that doesn't expect or command us to fight and protect our ideals, but one that strengthens us to live with one another, one that shows us by example how to forgive, one that loves us endlessly no matter how we might fall.

So as we continue through this season of Lent, this season of reflection and repentance, of contemplation and confession, of healing and wholeness, may we see where our misplaced loyalties might be and aim to put them back where they belong, on our God of endless grace and love. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** Let Streams of Living Justice (#710)

#### **CREED**

Together with all those who living under the care of God our creator, 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**

Led into the care and compassion of our God, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with "Lord, in your endless mercy," and you all may respond with **hear our prayer**. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, you are our light and salvation, and in you we have nothing to fear. We know that you watch over us and protect us, but we often push you aside and follow our own paths. Renew in us our trust in your promises, that we might all learn to walk in your ways. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, we ask and seek to dwell in your house, that we might be able to gaze upon your beauty all the days of our lives. May our places of worship accurately reflect this beauty, that all might stand in awe of your love and grace. We pray especially for our neighbouring faith communities; our partner Anglican Church of Canada; our bishop Kathy and national bishop Susan; and our companion congregations of the BC Synod. In particular, we pray for Faith Lutheran Church in Powell River and their Anglican interim pastor Paula Sampson; and for Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Prince George and their pastor Fleming Blishen. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, you give us shelter and places of sanctuary in all that you have made. Remind us of the wonders of this world that you've entrusted to us, that our awe of it may never go away but inspire us to care for it properly. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, hear our voices when we call, for many in the world are suffering under oppression, hunger, and violence. Be with all areas of the world that are in turmoil, and bring peace to all lands. We pray especially for the conflict in Ukraine that it come to a conclusion soon, and we also pray for those that we've sponsored to come into our country: Solyana Amanuel; and Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, hide not your face from us and forsake us not, but take us into your salvation and wholeness. Be with all among us who are sick, who mourn, and who feel lonely, that your love and care be apparent to us all. Especially we pray for Diana; Bev and family; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Paula; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Cindy; Linda; Charlotte; William; Jenny; Chris; Mr. Cifuentes; Min; Katherine and family; Jessica; those who have been affected by COVID 19; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...  
Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, by your grace we remain strong and take heart that your promises are true and that our hope is not in vain. Continue to increase our faith and set our eyes on your ways of eternal life, love, and righteousness with you and all the saints. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your love and care, shown to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **PEACE**

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

## **MEAL**

## **DIALOGUE** (p. 144)

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.**

### **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, to at all times and places give thanks and praise to you, O God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose eyes have always been set on you and your ways of truth and life, setting an example for us in our faith and community.

For on the night that he was betrayed, our Saviour Jesus sat down for a meal with his friends, where he took some bread, and with a thankful heart he broke and shared it saying, "Take and eat, this is my body broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And then after they had eaten, he took the common cup, and continuing in his thanksgiving he gave it to his friends to drink from 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 food given to us that we have a glimpse of your love for us, even as we declare this mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

And so all honour and glory be to you, O God, for your providence and protection, and giving us the privilege of love and life, showering us with your grace through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered under God's wings of love by the Holy Spirit, 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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Taste and see God's love and care.

**Thanks be to God.**



## **COMMUNION**

**COMMUNION HYMN:** Lamb of God (p. 146)  
When Pain of the World Surrounds Us (#704)  
How Long, O God (#698)

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Holy God, you have again given us food from heaven to eat and filling us with your love and truth. Continue strengthening us for your service, that we might walk in faith proclaiming your grace and mercy to all the world, through Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

## **SENDING**

## **BLESSING**

May God our Shepherd bless you and keep you.  
God the Saviour bring you reconciliation and peace, and God the Spirit look upon you with favour and strengthen your faith and love, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**SENDING SONG:** O Christ, Our Hope (#604)

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, stand firm in the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**