



**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**OF SOUTH BURNABY, BC**

**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA**

7283 Nelson Avenue, Burnaby, BC V5J 4C2

Phone: 604-433-1515

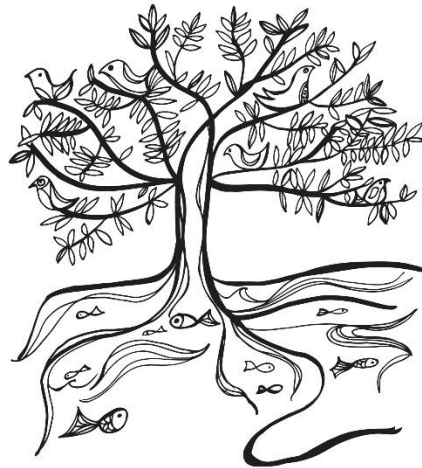
Website: [www.graceburnaby.com](http://www.graceburnaby.com)

Email and e-transfers: [office@graceburnaby.com](mailto:office@graceburnaby.com)

Pastor's email: [pastor@graceburnaby.com](mailto:pastor@graceburnaby.com)

Follow us on Twitter! [@GraceLutBurnaby](https://twitter.com/GraceLutBurnaby)

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**All Saints Sunday**

**November 3, 2024**

**ELW Holy Communion, Setting 10**

Of all three years of the lectionary cycle, this year's All Saints readings have the most tears. Isaiah and Revelation look forward to the day when God will wipe away all tears; in John's gospel, Jesus weeps along with Mary and all the gathered mourners before he demonstrates his power over death. On All Saints Day we celebrate the victory won for all the faithful dead, but we grieve for our beloved dead as well, knowing that God honors our tears. We bring our grief to the table and find there a foretaste of Isaiah's feast to come.

A warm welcome to those who are here worshipping in-person and 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.

Grace Lutheran worships, prays, and serves on the traditional and unceded lands and territories of the hən̓q̓əmiñəm̓ (Musqueam) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) peoples.

## GATHERING

### CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the name of the Lord, who has created and has dominion over the earth and everything in it, from the seas to the rivers, the mountains to the valleys, and all the creatures that dwell therein. The Lord blesses those who seek God's face with righteousness and salvation, and our heads are lifted up to the heavens as we praise this King of glory. May God enter into our lives, reveal to us the joy and peace that surpasses understanding, and redeem us all into new life seated at the eternal banquet with all the saints through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**  
**Thanks be to God.**

### REMEMBRANCE OF ALL SAINTS

But until that time, while we still journey on our pilgrimage here on earth, we remember and reflect on this yet to be realized yet eternal connection we share. This connection that is promised to us through covenant, that is shown to us through the cross, and is strengthened in us by the communion of the Spirit, informs us of who we are and whose we are as God's people.

And so as we light these candles representing those that we've loved and lost, may they serve to be the very real presence of the saints with us, among us, and worshipping alongside us, through the good news of the promise of Jesus Christ our resurrected Saviour. **Amen.**

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

### GREETING

May the endless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting love of God, and the eternal fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

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

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of all glory, as we gather here today with the saints of all times and places, may your name be honoured and praised. For you have given us a glimpse of your mercy and might and you show us the mystery of your life-giving grace and the love that even death cannot destroy, through Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega. **Amen.**

## WORD

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 25:6-9**

A reading from Isaiah.

*Isaiah sees a vision of the end of days, when God will gather all people on God's holy mountain and will prepare for them a rich feast. At this banquet God will wipe the tears from all eyes. And there will be no more sorrow, for God will destroy death itself.*

<sup>6</sup> On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples  
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,  
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.

<sup>7</sup> And he will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
the covering that is spread over all nations;

<sup>8</sup> he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,  
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,  
for the LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup> It will be said on that day,  
“See, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.  
This is the LORD for whom we have waited;  
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 24**

<sup>1</sup> The earth is the LORD’s and all that is in it,  
the world and those who dwell therein.

<sup>2</sup> **For the LORD has founded it upon the seas  
and established it upon the rivers.**

<sup>3</sup> Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD,  
and who may stand in God’s holy place?

<sup>4</sup> **Those of innocent hands and purity of heart,  
who do not swear on God’s being, nor do they pledge by what is false.**

<sup>5</sup> They shall receive blessing from the LORD  
and righteousness from the God of their salvation.

<sup>6</sup> **Such is the generation of those who seek you, O LORD,  
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.**

<sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O everlasting doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.

<sup>8</sup> **Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!**

<sup>9</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O everlasting doors,  
that the King of glory may come in.

<sup>10</sup> **Who is this King of glory?  
Truly, the LORD of hosts is the King of glory.**

**SECOND READING: Revelation 21:1-6a**

A reading from Revelation.

*Here is a vision of the new heaven and new earth in which God resides fully with God’s people so that mourning, despair, and pain have been eradicated. These renewing words from the God who spans all of time are trustworthy and true.*

<sup>1</sup> I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals.  
He will dwell with them;  
they will be his peoples,  
and God himself will be with them and be their God;

<sup>4</sup> he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,  
for the first things have passed away.”

<sup>5</sup> And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” <sup>6</sup> Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** (p. 205)

**GOSPEL: John 11:32-44**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Through the raising of Lazarus, Jesus offers the world a vision of the life to come, when death and weeping will be no more.*

<sup>32</sup> When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” <sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.

<sup>34</sup> He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” <sup>35</sup> Jesus began to weep. <sup>36</sup> So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” <sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

<sup>38</sup> Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” <sup>40</sup> Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” <sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. <sup>42</sup> I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” <sup>43</sup> When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” <sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

Almighty God, your Word opens our eyes and brings us life and love. May your Word be written upon our hearts this day, that we might always be your new creation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

I know we didn't get this quote from Jesus in today's gospel reading, but it is from this same chapter out of John, and Jesus says it like right before today's selection starts. Either case, this quote probably sounds familiar to most of us because we actually do get it when this same

exact story shows up on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent in Lectionary Year A, and also it gets used a lot at funerals.

And I guess it's supposed to be comforting in that it reminds us of how we're promised that death will be no more. It's supposed to console us as we mourn at funerals and I guess on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, Year A, teaching us that the sting of death has been taken away. It's supposed to give us hope, showing us how Jesus has ultimate power over death.

Well, except that I wonder if he actually does.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not denying who Jesus is or his place in the Trinity. I'm not saying that he's lying here and that he actually isn't the resurrection and the life. I'm not even saying that Jesus is powerless when it comes to death. But what I'm saying is that I wonder if Jesus can actually stop death from happening. I mean maybe delay it a bit, but it doesn't stop altogether.

That's obvious, I guess, as we're pretty much surrounded by death. We've all lost someone at some point in our lives. And one day, each one of us here will end up dead. The whole point of today is literally to honour those among us whom we have loved and lost, those whose presence among us is missed, those who have died.

So it is quite clear that Jesus doesn't stop death. We can see without a doubt that no one lives forever. It is irrefutable that everyone, professing faith or not, will die.

Still, we ask for life to be prolonged. We hope that death won't come for us or our loved ones for as long as possible. We wish people to live long and prosper. Even both Martha and Mary say that if Jesus didn't delay his arrival for as long as he did, then Lazarus wouldn't have died.

Again, I'm bringing in a bit of the story that is outside of today's selection, but it's interesting how different Jesus' reaction is to each sister. To Martha, Jesus says the quote I gave at the beginning of this sermon, of him being the resurrection and the life. She comments out of her faith that Jesus has the power to stop death, and Jesus hits her with more theology. More truth. More words that I guess are supposed to comfort, as they sort of explain why he didn't drop everything to cater to her and her family.

And honestly, don't we do that too? Don't we wonder where God is when bad things happen to us? Don't we think that if we pray and pray and pray then God really should give us what we're praying for? Don't we sometimes ask why these bad things happen to good people?

And then Martha's sister Mary catches wind that Jesus finally made it and she goes to greet him and says the same exact thing, that if only Jesus showed up in a timely fashion, then this tragedy wouldn't have happened. But this time, Jesus' reaction is different.

Jesus weeps.

He sees the hurt and pain around him, and he weeps. He finds himself in the middle of the sadness and sorrow, and he weeps. He sees the raw emotion, the disappointment, the grief, the sheer unadulterated brokenness of the world... and he weeps.

This doesn't go unnoticed. Some of the bystanders see the raw emotion and comment on how much Jesus loved Lazarus. Which kind of makes it all the more confusing, really. I mean if Jesus loves Lazarus so much, why didn't he come earlier? Why didn't he have more urgency in him to help? Why didn't he prevent this senselessness from even happening to begin with?

It seems like some of the other, more cynical folk who were there had these same thoughts. They ask, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Right? Exactly our thoughts, not just around this situation with Lazarus, but in our own lives.

Could not the One who promises us everything get me that promotion? Could not the Saviour who is supposed to save us take away our problems and stop what hurts us? Could not God who claims to be good actually give us good things or at very least stop the bad things from happening?

Because it isn't fair that we have to go through all the hardship that we go through, is it? It isn't right that we, considered to be righteous by the grace of God, would have to face the difficulties and inconveniences that we face, is it? It isn't exactly loving toward us to allow us to experience this sorrow, this heartache, this brokenness, is it?

...is it?

See, I wonder if those more cynical folk wondering out loud if Jesus could even stop people from dying were onto something. I wonder if their line of questioning actually sheds a bit of light on something much deeper than they probably initially intended. I wonder, basically, if John included this for a reason.

See the thing is, bad things happen. They just do. And when they do, it isn't indicative of who you are, how "good" you have been, or how much God loves you. They just happen.

So then we might think, what's the point of having faith then, if it doesn't save us from the bad stuff in life? What's the point of prayer if we don't get what we want from praying? What's the point of even believing in a God who doesn't even care enough to be there with us in our time of need?

That's the big question. That's what we sometimes wonder when things aren't going our way. That's what I think John is getting at when he includes the borderline mockery and grumbling of the people present at the tomb of Lazarus.

You see Jesus, the one who opened the eyes of the blind, isn't there to stop death. He isn't there to cater to the whims of a grieving family. He isn't even there to prove who he is. Rather, Jesus, the one who heals those in need, comes to bring exactly that, healing. He brings comfort to the sisters of Lazarus with truth and hope. He opens the eyes of all who were there, revealing to them all that even in death, there can be life.

I know this might not mean much to us since our dead always stay dead. But maybe this healing comes to us in the form of a theological truth that gives us hope. Maybe this comfort comes from knowing that we aren't alone in our grief but are surrounded by a community and a Saviour that grieves with us. Maybe our eyes too, can be opened to the life that can be found in all that happens, all that we do, and all that we are.

And as our eyes are opened, perhaps we, like Lazarus, can be unbound and freed from all that holds us back from seeing God with us. With us in the world, with us in our lives, with us even in our sorrows and pain. See it's in those low points where we could most apparently feel God sitting with us, weeping with us, and lifting us up into life.

I don't presume to fully understand how life, death, and the afterlife work or don't work, but I do know that we are here now. We see, we feel, we live, now. And in this life we have ups and downs, we have joys and sorrows, we experience gain and loss. But through it all, I know that we all share a connection to each other, not just because of our faith, but because we are born human, born in the image of God, born to be saints. And because of this, I know that as we continue through this life, as we mourn our losses, as we feel our pain and shed tears over it, we are given life, we are strengthened to rejoice in our blessings, and we can be confident in sure and certain hope of the resurrection, knowing that we are never alone but held dearly by the hands that created the universe.

On this All Saints Day, may we, in our remembrance of those that we've loved and lost, be lifted up in our faith, knowing that our eyes are opened and our bounds loosened to live, to love, and to be God's people in the world. Thanks be to God. Amen.

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

**CREED** (p. 104)

Together with the saints of the past, present, and future, 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 eternal community and worship, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with "Lord, in your unending mercy," and you all may respond with **hear our prayer**. Lord, in your unending mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord, we know that the earth and all that is in it belong to you, and you welcome us to live in your holy presence with you and all the saints forever. Humble us in our service to you and others, and may we never forget the gospel that we proclaim. We lift in prayer our neighbouring faith communities; those that use this building for worship, work, and play; our partners Anglican Church of Canada and Moravian Church in Canada; and our bishops, rostered ministers, congregations, and ministries of the ELCIC. In particular, we pray for Lutheran Church of the Cross in Victoria and their pastor Lyndon Sayers; and for all the prison chaplains across the country, their ministries, and those that they minister to. Lord, in your unending mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, your love is seen and felt in the mountains and valleys, the lands and the air, and the seas and the rivers and we praise you for all that you have made. Strengthen our stewardship of this planet that you have entrusted to us, and may we act responsibly and with care as we consider what we are leaving behind for the generations. Lord, in your unending mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, the nations of the world are yours and may the doors to our hearts be opened for you as king. We remember in prayer all areas of the world that face political turmoil and violence, and we humbly ask that your righteousness and salvation be seen and break through the evil. We pray for the continued support of those that we've sponsored to come into our country: Abraham Barhane; and Solyana Amanuel; as well as those that have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Filimon Abraha. Lord, in your unending mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, we lean on your strength and might in our weakness and we find sanctuary in you. Be with all among us who are sick, who mourn, or who feel lonely, and bring to us all the healing of your eternal love. We pray especially for Bryan and Chona; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Debbie; Beulah; Bev and family; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Bishop Kathy; Pastor Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Hwee Yang; Ephraim; Georgina; Teddy and family; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...  
Lord, in your unending mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, your love is everlasting and you lift our hearts into community with you and all the saints. In our remembrance of all that we've loved and lost, may we be encouraged in our faith and moved to always proclaim you and your gospel through our lives and relationships. Lord, in your unending mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

**Amen.**

**PEACE** (p. 106)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL**

**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 God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lifts us up in grace and shows us the love that never ends, that we be joined with the choirs of angels, the hosts of heaven, and the whole church on earth in praising your name with this unending hymn:

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

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy and almighty God, everything that has ever been created is yours: the planets and stars, the lands and seas, and all of us who live in your creation. And in this you reveal to us your righteousness and grant to us your salvation into life. You send to us your Son, Jesus, to be an example of life, service, and community.

For on the night that your Son Jesus was betrayed, he sat with his friends for a meal, where he took the bread, gave 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 that they all shared, gave thanks, and passed it around the table for them 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 bread and cup that we are given a glimpse of the glory of God's name as we live together in God's kingdom, even as we declare this mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

To you, O God, be all honour and glory for all that you do and give, through Jesus Christ, our risen Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER** (p. 112)

Gathered into community with each other and 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.

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Taste and see God's welcoming love that connects us all.  
**Thanks be to God.**

#### **COMMUNION**

**COMMUNION HYMNS:** Lamb of God (p. 208)  
Holy God, We Praise Your Name (#414)

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

O God, again you show your love to us by giving us the nourishment of your Word and truth embodied in this bread and cup. May our faith be evident in our lives that our connection to you and all the saints be always on the forefront of our very identities, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **SENDING**

#### **BLESSING**

May the Lord our God,  
the King of glory,  
the Alpha and Omega,  
the first and the last,  
the beginning and end,  
bless you with abundant grace, now and always.  
**Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN:** All Glory Be to God on High (#410)

#### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, eyes and hearts open to live and love.  
**Thanks be to God.**