



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

Email and e-transfers: office@graceburnaby.com

Pastor's email: pastor@graceburnaby.com

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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/GraceLutBurnaby



Second Sunday in Lent

March 16, 2025

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."

We at Grace Lutheran Church strive to reflect and proclaim the love of God shown to us by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit by providing an inclusive and supportive environment through loving care and community service.

A warm welcome to all who are worshipping with us in person or online! We appreciate your contribution to the community today: with your voice, your presence, and just the blessing that you are. May you be nurtured by God's Word, empowered by the love of Christ, and stirred by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in this service this day, for the sake of God's mission in the world.

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

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather this day to worship the Lord our light and salvation, who is our stronghold for life and casts out fear, and in whose house we seek to dwell in all the days of our lives. For in the day of trouble God will shelter us, give us sanctuary, and raise us up high upon a rock. God hears us when we call and has mercy in answering us as we seek the Lord's face. A face not hidden or casting us away, but continues to be our helper, our Saviour, and our teacher in the ways of righteousness and level paths. And so 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: Precious Lord, Take My Hand (ELW #773)

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.

KYRIE (ELW p. 138)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Loving God, you grant 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.

¹ 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." ² 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?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴ 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." ⁵ 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." ⁶ And he believed the LORD, and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

⁷ Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." ⁸ But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" ⁹ 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." ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

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

¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. ¹⁸ 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.

PSALM: Psalm 27

- ¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
- ² **When evildoers close in against me to devour my flesh,
they, my foes and my enemies, will stumble and fall.**
- ³ Though an army encamp against me, my heart will not fear.
Though war rise up against me, my trust will not be shaken.
- ⁴ **One thing I ask of the LORD; one thing I seek;
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life; to gaze upon the beauty
of the LORD and to seek God in the temple.**
- ⁵ For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,
hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary, and raise me high upon a rock.
- ⁶ **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies who surround me.
Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing; I will sing and make
music to the LORD.**
- ⁷ Hear my voice, O LORD, when I call;
have mercy on me and answer me.
- ⁸ **My heart speaks your message— “Seek my face.”
Your face, O LORD, I will seek.**
- ⁹ Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your servant in anger.
Cast me not away—you have been my helper; forsake me not, O God of my salvation.
- ¹⁰ **Though my father and my mother forsake me,
the LORD will take me in.**
- ¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD;
lead me on a level path, because of my oppressors.
- ¹² **Subject me not to the will of my foes,
for they rise up against me, false witnesses breathing violence.**
- ¹³ This I believe—that I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living!
- ¹⁴ **Wait for the LORD and be strong.
Take heart and wait for the LORD!**

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.

¹⁷ Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is the belly,

and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹ 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. ^{4:1} 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 (ELW 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.

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus], "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³² 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. ³³ 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.' ³⁴ 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! ³⁵ 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 Lord may our minds and hearts be opened by your Spirit, that we can humbly hear and heed to your true and unchanging Word, Jesus Christ, through whom we pray. **Amen.**

Did you ever have an experience with a "golden child"? I talking about those people who are favoured, extraordinarily loved, and seen as though they could do no wrong. Maybe it's a sibling or another member of your family who can get away with bloody murder while you're blamed for everything. Maybe it is a coworker or colleague who is always praised for their work and gets all the promotions and raises while you only get scraps. Or maybe it's just that member of society that is looked up to and respected by the masses when in actual fact, you know that they are completely undeserving of any of those accolades that they are being given. Those are the people that I'm talking about when I say "golden child".

And don't you hate those kinds of people? Those arrogant, egotistical, self-centred people? Those that ride the coat tails of their privilege and luck? Those that have become so used to

winning that they constantly expect it and have the audacity to call foul when it doesn't happen? Yeah, those people.

We wish they would get theirs. We wish their comeuppance will come up and smack them down a few notches. We wish they would just see the error of their ways and learn a little... *humility*.

Now you might be thinking, wow, this guy sure has a vendetta against these golden children, what bad experience has he had with them?

And you wouldn't be wrong, I have met quite a number of people like this throughout my years, and I've been annoyed at them all. But it wasn't until I found myself labelled as someone's golden child that I realised how much hate there actually is for them. Or us, as it were.

See, back when the dinosaurs still roamed the earth, I spent a lot of time in school, training to be all that you see here before you today. I know right, worth it. And to pay for that school, I got myself a temporary job in retail that turned into 12 years of mostly full time hours. During that time, I somehow caught the eye of my manager who, at a staff meeting of all places, literally pointed right at me and announced me as his favourite. And let me tell you, that day I learned the fear of death. I mean the amount of dirty looks, jeers, and mockery that came my way after being outed as the favourite was truly telling. No one likes a golden child. Especially if it isn't them.

And I didn't even really want to work there.

But that didn't stop people assuming that I was super arrogant and egotistical. It didn't stop my co-workers from jumping on any opportunity to tell my manager about my mistakes, how I've failed, and that I should be taken down a few notches. It didn't stop them from hating on me because I was given this label that I didn't ask for or even want.

Now I should say that this isn't some unresolved trauma for me or anything. I'm not telling you this for you to feel sorry for me or as a way for me to heal from the experience. And I'm certainly not trying to brag about my short stint as someone's golden child.

But I'm trying to point out this attitude that we might have with some people. Sure, maybe I was harsh in saying that we hate them, but we really do have some people that could do without, don't we? Like we might feel frustrated with all they have, we might feel cheated because they're so lucky, we might even like we've been unfairly treated because we think we deserve what they got more than they do.

And I sometimes wonder if that attitude translates into our faith. Maybe not in an intentional way, of course, but don't we sometimes look down on the Pharisees as Israel's golden people? Don't we sometimes wonder how Jesus could love Jerusalem, the city that kills prophets, so much? Aren't we sometimes baffled at how God could love *them*? "Them" of course being those who are undeserving, aren't as good as they let off, those golden children that everyone seems to love.

I mean, think about how we might have reacted to today's reading out of Luke. In this story that we get at least every three years but don't really know much about, we hear of Jesus being

warned that Herod is out to get him. But did you catch who it was that warned him? In a blink and you'll miss it moment, we hear that it was the Pharisees. Whaaaat? We might automatically wonder why they're helping Jesus out here?

Because when we hear "Pharisee," we hear they're not fair, you see. We think enemies of Jesus. We think people undeserving of God's grace. So what are they trying to prove here? Are they just brown nosing, sucking up to Jesus to get some blessing out of him? The nerve. The worst part though, is knowing Jesus he'll probably fall for it. You know, with him being so forgiving and all.

We see it with Jesus' lament right after the warning too, saying how Jerusalem is so unwilling to listen, so blinded to the truth, so unable to *not* kill prophets, we wonder why would he even bother. Why would he give so much to those who don't care? Why save them? Why bless these who don't deserve it? Save those blessings for us, am I right?

And that's the thing... what makes us think that we deserve it?

Sure, maybe we didn't kill any prophets like Jerusalem, but haven't we shunned God's word for us? Maybe we don't arrogantly throw our religious weight around like the Pharisees, but don't we sometimes put our faith before the good of others? Maybe we don't deny that Jesus is Lord like all those heathens out there, but don't we often favour other lords over to rule our lives?

We're in the season of Lent, a season of examination and reflection. Not so much of others, mind you, even though that comes much easier for us, but of ourselves. We use this time to see where we are failing, where we fall short, where we might have unresolved sin in our lives. And if we don't see them or can't find them, that doesn't mean that we're doing good, it just means we aren't looking hard enough.

As it turns out, we might be our own golden child. We might make concessions for our own attitudes. We might make excuses for our own actions. We might make justifications for the ways that we turn away from God, telling ourselves that we're ok and that it is everyone else who is wrong.

And I get it, it's really hard to see ourselves like that. It is so much easier to point outward and say that we totally know the kind of people that I'm talking about, that it's *them*. But never *us*.

But Jesus says in today's texts that isn't exactly the case. He calls out the sins of the chosen people. He points out the ways in which we justify and make excuses for our actions. He reveals to them and us just how sin has permeated throughout all of life, telling us that we're ok, fooling us into an attitude of superiority, tricking us in thinking that we can't do any wrong so we don't need God.

And so we need this season of Lent to remind us of who we are, what we're like, and how much we have fallen.

But at the same time, as we are reminded on how much we need a Saviour, we are also reminded that we get one. Jesus' lament toward Jerusalem today isn't him washing his hands of them. Jesus calling out sin isn't about casting anyone out. Jesus isn't writing any of us off, no matter how much we might deserve it.

Instead, Jesus is showing us the contrast of sin and grace, of feeling lost and being searched for and sought after, of our arrogance and the humility in realising that we have been saved by a benevolent and loving God.

See, Lent reminds us that it isn't us who saves us, but it's God. It's not our actions or decisions that determine or place in God's kingdom and family, but it's by God's gracious invitation and welcome. It's not that we can't do anything wrong, but it's God's promise and covenant to us that God instigates and fulfills that brings us into God's eternal and unending love.

So as we continue through this season of Lent, let us keep looking at ourselves and how we might be missing the mark, not to guilt or shame us as undeserving, but to remind us of just how great and welcoming God's grace for us all truly is. May we be granted the humility to see our sin, the faith to believe that God can and does forgive us, and the compassion for ourselves to accept it as truth. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY: Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand (ACS #1024)

CREED

Together with all called into the care of God, 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 to follow our own paths. Renew our trust in your promises, that we might always 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; those who 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 St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Prince Rupert and Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Richmond. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, you give us shelter and sanctuary in all that you have made. Remind us of your providence through the wonders of this world, 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 also pray for the continued support of those that we've sponsored to come into our country: Abraham Barhane; Solyana Amanuel; and Filimon Abraha; as well as for those who have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Mery Gabramikael. Lord, in your endless mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, hide not your face from us and do not forsake, 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 Bryan and Chona; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Beulah; Sybil; Bev and family; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Pastor Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Hwee Yang; Ephraim; Georgina; 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 in our faith and hope in your promises. Continue to increase our faith and set our eyes on your ways of 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 (ELW 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.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Saviour Jesus Christ;
who watches over us and protects us as your children, that we might join
with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
in praising your name with this unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (p. 144)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Oh God, you are our light and salvation, our stronghold in which we have nothing to fear. We find your beauty in the temple and we long to spend the days of our lives in the shelter and sanctuary of your holy house, where you raise us up high upon a rock. For through your Son Jesus you answer us when we called, and you show us your face of mercy through his life and ministry.

For on the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus 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, 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."

For it is in this bread and cup you take us into your hands and show us your face full of grace and mercy, even as we declare this mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Teach us your ways, O Lord, and lead us on level paths, that we might see your goodness throughout the world. For you, O God, our light and salvation, are our stronghold in which we have nothing to fear, through your Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, as one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into the love and care of 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 the welcome into God's house and community.
Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS

Lamb of God (ELW p. 146)
Be Thou My Vision (ELW #793)
Change My Heart, O God (ELW #801)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Compassionate God, we have beheld to us your goodness, your grace, and your mercy, through this bread and cup of life. Nourish us and nurture us, that we might be strengthened to go out into the world, to serve you and neighbour for the sake of the good news found in your promises through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

Now may the God of our faith bless you with promise,
the grace of the reconciliation in Christ Jesus keep you in peace,
and the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen you to love and serve, this day and always.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song (ELW #808)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, be confident in God's faithfulness.

Thanks be to God.