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Third Sunday of Easter
April 19, 2026
Now the Feast and Celebration
Hymnal Supplement (1991)

Today's gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine is poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord's day.

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 hən̓q̓əmiñəŋ (Musqueam) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) speaking peoples.

GATHERING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather together in worship of and love for our Lord, who has heard and listened to our prayers and supplications whenever we call. For even in our grief and sorrow, God enters our lives, lifts us up, and reveals to us grace, healing, and welcome into God's eternal presence and community. So in fulfilling our call as God's people, we sing our praises in the courts of the Lord in the midst of God's promises and love, shown to us through Jesus Christ the risen Messiah and Saviour of the world. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

GREETING HYMN: Day of Arising (#374)

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The ever-present grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the ever-lasting love of God, and the ever-welcoming communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

NOW THE FEAST (HS p. 4)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you are revealed in the world through our Lord Jesus, the breaking of the bread, and through water and Word, and our hearts are opened to your presence. May our recognition and acknowledgement of your blessing strengthen our faith and service for the sake of all those in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

A reading from Acts.

Today's reading is the conclusion of Peter's sermon preached following the giving of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. The center of his preaching is the bold declaration that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord and Christ.

^{14a} Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd]: ³⁶ "Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" ³⁸ Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." ⁴⁰ And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19

- ¹ I love the LORD, who has heard my voice,
and listened to my supplication,
² **for the LORD has given ear to me
whenever I called.**
- ³ The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me;
I came to grief and sorrow.
- ⁴ **Then I called upon the name of the LORD:
“O LORD, I pray you, save my life.”**
- ¹² How shall I repay the LORD
for all the good things God has done for me?
- ¹³ **I will lift the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD.**
- ¹⁴ I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all God’s people.
- ¹⁵ **Precious in your sight, O LORD,
is the death of your servants.**
- ¹⁶ O LORD, truly I am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.
- ¹⁷ **I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call upon the name of the LORD.**
- ¹⁸ I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all God’s people,
- ¹⁹ **in the courts of the LORD’s house,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!**

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:17-23

A reading from 1 Peter.

The imagery of exile is used to help the readers of this letter understand that they are strangers in a strange land. Christians no longer belong to this age. Through the death of Christ we belong to God, so that our focus, faith, and hope are no longer on such things as silver or gold.

¹⁷ If you invoke as Father the one who judges impartially according to each person’s work, live in fear during the time of your exile. ¹⁸ You know that you were ransomed from the futile conduct inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰ He was destined before the foundation of the world but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake.

²¹ Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your trust and hope are in God.

²² Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual affection, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³ You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (HS p. 8)

GOSPEL: Luke 24:13-35

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The colorful story of Jesus' appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus answers the question of how Jesus is to be recognized among us. Here, he is revealed through the scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

¹³ Now on that same day two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, ¹⁶ but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" ¹⁹ He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place.

²² Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." ²⁵ Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

²⁸ As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" ³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

God of all, open our eyes this day to your presence among us, that our hearts might burn with more zeal for your truth, love, and community through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Have you seen God lately?

I mean, not literally seen God with your bare eyes, like just chillin' on your living room couch, or walking a dog down the street, or in some random AI-generated picture posted on social media

or something, but I mean have you seen, in the past while, evidence of God's presence in and around your life? Have you, in the not-too-distant past, felt the truth of God's promises of grace and mercy? Have you recently been moved by God's apparent love for you or those around you or even those you don't know personally?

I'm not asking you all this in a judgemental way or anything, but just to get your thinking juices flowing in how we could better recognise God working and moving and just being in and around our lives. I think about this thing we started doing here at Grace way back in 2019. If you remember, we used to start our worship services with an "open mic" type thing that we called *God moments*. We'd ask people to come up here to the front (or maybe just stay in their seats if they were shy) and share about something that happened that week where they most clearly saw God or felt God's presence or just knew that God was with them. Stories ranged from finding safety at a time when things were looking unsafe, or encountering a friendly stranger during a dark or lonely time, or someone even shared how his 10-year-old son showed great care and concern for him right after he stumbled off his bike and fell into a lake. Admittedly, that last one was pretty interesting and slightly humorous, although I won't tell you who the pastor was that shared it.

I thought this "God Moment" sharing idea was pretty good while it lasted. I remember enjoying hearing the stories that were told, as it was a good way for us here to get to know each other better. It seemed helpful to us to be reminded that God is with us just as God had promised, as we learned together how we could see God more clearly. And I could tell that this time of openness, sharing, and listening to these God Moments that were becoming more apparent and prominent in our lives put us in a better place to engage in the worship that immediately followed. So it really was good while it lasted.

But then, the pandemic happened, and we had to shift how we did church. And, in the hustle and bustle of pivoting our worship online, in the adjusting of the whole structure of our services to be more conducive to a 16:9 aspect ratio, and in the whole learning curve of figuring out new technology and new ways of doing old things, this time of sharing our God Moments was sadly dropped.

Of course, I'd blame the pandemic and the disruption it caused to our everyday lives for the loss of this practice. Of course, I'd say that it was in the consideration of the time constraints that people had that forced us to streamline and make certain cuts so that people didn't have to stare at their computer screens for too long. Of course, I would have said that it was just a logistical nightmare to get these God Moment submissions from anyone who wanted to share in time for the recording, editing, and posting of our videos that it was easier to just not.

I mean, if anyone asked why we stopped sharing our God moments, those would be the reasons that I'd give because... there's no way that we would have just... *stopped seeing God*, right?

But if there ever was a time that people actually did stop seeing God, perhaps the pandemic would have been one of them. When things were so different, so disruptive, so depressing, it is always harder to see any good news or blessing in our lives. In a period of our collective histories that was so not what we wanted, so not what we had expected or hoped for, or so not what we might think we deserved or were entitled to, I can see how God, to us, may have become unrecognisable. In difficult times like the pandemic and all that it was and wasn't for

us, it might have seemed like those God moments became real scarce real fast, and it might even feel like God had left us entirely.

And I would imagine that this is what the disciples and the followers of Jesus felt after witnessing their teacher and mentor on trial for being a fraud. I would think that their worlds would have been crushed when they saw the one that they had supposed would be their saviour hanging on a cross like a common criminal. I would assume that their faith would have been obliterated as they saw Jesus, all he was about, all that he stood for, and all that they had hoped in, ended by the powers that be by putting him to death.

How could God be seen in that? How could God even be present in any way in such pain and torture? How could they not think that God had left them when they were feeling such despair?

And so it's in this context and frame of mind that Jesus meets Cleopas and his unnamed friend on the road to Emmaus. It's in the thick of these emotions when Jesus joins them on their journey. It's in this disappointment, deflation, and desolation that they are feeling when Jesus appears.

So I can kind of understand why these disciples didn't recognise him right away, as they weren't exactly expecting him. In fact, Jesus might have been the last person that they would have thought to appear in front of them. Sure, they were told a wild tale that Jesus was back. They were given some eye witness accounts of an empty tomb. They might have even been reminded that this is what Jesus was teaching them all along.

But still, they couldn't see Jesus in this fresh-from-under-a-rock stranger that butt in their conversation and had no idea of what was going on in world news. They couldn't recognise Jesus when this stranger was mansplaining to them what the scriptures say and how all these things were to happen. They didn't realise it was Jesus right in front of them as they weren't feeling like they were empathized with, given compassion to, or even loved... not yet anyway.

So isn't it funny that it's exactly in these wrong places that we look for Jesus? Like maybe in the fear that will drive us behind closed and locked doors. Maybe in our paradigms and understandings of the world that tells us we can contain others in the tombs and boxes that we stuff them into. Or maybe even in our yearning for strength and control that makes us turn to instruments of destruction and death. We might try to find or bring out Jesus in these places and are surprised when we don't or can't.

Because... that's not where Cleopas and his buddy ended up seeing Jesus at all. That's not where Jesus' nature and character and lessons for life were revealed. That's not where they had their divine God Moment.

It wasn't in the correcting, but it was in the community. it wasn't in the fear-mongering, but it was in the fellowship. It wasn't in the breaking down of opposing opinions and thoughts and shaming others as wrong, but it was in the breaking of bread and sharing and showing love. Not in rebuke, but in reconciliation. Not in the hurt, but in the healing. Not in the genocide of difference, but in the grace of the divine.

I know, it's hard to see God in a world that is so thirsty for more power. It's difficult to live out or even remember Jesus' teachings in a world that tells us that we're judged by our wealth, how respected we are, and how many "likes" and subscribers we have. It's darn near impossible to have God moments when we're in a world that so blinds us with empty promises. But let's not forget what we learn on the road to Emmaus, where Jesus is concretely conceptualised in compassion, care, and community. Where Jesus is most manifested in the surprise meeting, the showing of mercy, and the sharing of a meal. Where Jesus is so radiantly recognised in relationship.

Friends, it's in all this where the good news of the gospel can be revealed. It's in the love and equality of all people where Jesus is present. It's in the openness and humility in accepting the value and worth of others, regardless of who they are, where they're from, or even what they believe, that we experience these God Moments.

So I ask again, have you seen God lately?

I have. In the calling by name as with Mary in the garden. In the sharing of peace as with the disciples in the upper room. And in the breaking of bread with all the saints of all times and places, that brings to us the healing and forgiveness of these resurrective God moments.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! (#377)

CREED (HS p. 11)

Together and in the presence 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 to recognise the risen Christ walking with us, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with "by your ever-present mercy, O Lord," and you are all invited to respond with **hear our prayer**. By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of community, we know that your love for us is unparalleled, and it is seen and felt through the abundant blessing you give. May your presence with us always be apparent, that we be strengthened in faith, service, and love. By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of mission, you hear us when we call out to you and you save us from our sin. Give us confidence in this good news that our proclamation and ministry be affective in building up your kingdom and community. We remember in prayer 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 leaders, congregations, and ministries of the ELCIC. In particular, we pray for St. Peter's Estonian Lutheran Church in Vancouver and their interim pastor Andres Rebane; as well as for Peace Lutheran Church in Vernon and all the pastors and leaders that serve them. By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, you have given and done good things, and provided for us this vast planet upon which we can live and call our home. Strengthen our stewardship of all that you have made, that you continue to be seen, heard, and felt in all of its beauty. By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of justice, we around the world call on your name and you fill our cups with your gracious salvation and love, even in the midst of grief and sorrow. Be with all the nations of the world as we navigate our differences in culture and religion and policy, that we might find peace in the midst of strife. 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: Maেকে Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Meri Gabramikael. By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of wholeness, we are your servants and you have declared us as precious. You are with us on our journeys and you heal us in our need. Be with those among us who are sick, who mourn, or who are lonely, and shine your love throughout your kingdom and community. Especially we pray for for Kathy and family; Bryan and Chona; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Greg and Aikiko; Bev and family; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Pastor Kristen; Pastor Carol; Laura; Kandie; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Kelly; Betty; Ngan Kew (nan CUE); Matt; Patty; Sarasawathi (SAR-ah-sa-WAH-tee); and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time... By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of eternal love, you welcome us into your presence in the courts of your house, and we rejoice with all of the saints for all that you have done and continue to do. May our thanksgiving be clear and your love proclaimed throughout our journey of life. By your ever-present mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast and eternal presence with and among us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

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, to at all times and places give thanks and praise to you, O God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who walks with us and talks with us, leading us to join all the choirs of angels, hosts of heaven, and the whole church on earth in praising your name with this unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (HS p. 15)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Holy and almighty God, we give you thanks for all that you have done, all that you are doing, and all that you will do for the good of the world. You fill our cups to overflowing with your blessing, and you lift us up into your salvific grace and peace. And when the time was right you sent to us Jesus to be among us, to journey with us throughout life and beyond, and to lead us toward your kingdom full of forgiving love and mercy.

For on the night that he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, where he took the bread, gave thanks, broke and shared it saying, "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 gave it to 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 can more clearly see you, O God, as you lead us further into community and relationship, and move us to believe more fully in this proclamation of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

So it is to you, O God, that all honour and glory belong, for in you there is love, joy, and hope, welcoming us into community and peace, through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (HS p. 18)

Journeying with each other and united by the 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 present with us through Christ.
Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS: Lamb of God (HS p. 18)
As the Grains of Wheat (#465)
Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness (#488)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, we give you thanks for again feeding us and nourishing us with all that you are and all that you do, and for lifting us up to see you in the world. Continue to be with us in our journey, that our proclamation of your love be inspired and informed by the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

May God who cannot be stopped by death bless you and keep you,
God who loves us with an unending grace shine on you and be gracious onto you,
God who walks with us and feeds us look upon you with favour and give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING SONG: Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen (#548)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, walk in the love and presence of the resurrected Christ.
Thanks be to God.