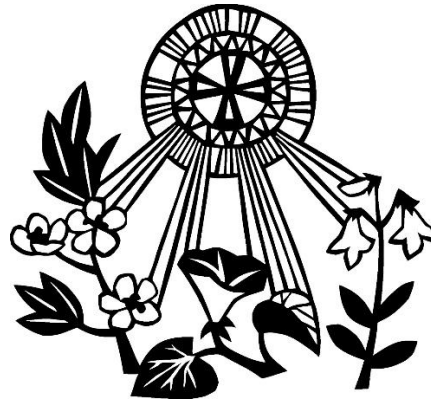




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**Sixth Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2026
Now the Feast and Celebration
Hymnal Supplement (1991)**

Jesus does not abandon his followers. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to abide with his disciples of every generation. As Pentecost draws near, we are reminded that the risen Christ dwells in us as the Spirit of truth. We receive this Spirit in baptism and pray that in our gathering around the Lord's table the Spirit will transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in worship with our prayers and praise as we are blessed to be God's people in the world. For though we face different trials and troubles throughout life and perhaps carry heavy burdens, our God invites us, welcomes us, and receives us with an unending grace and mercy into this house and community. And so we call to God with our mouths, praise with our tongues, and pray with all our hearts, for we are heard, blessed, and united by God's unending love, with Christ, in Christ, and through Christ, by the power of the Advocate Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Thanks be to God.

GREETING HYMN: Now the Green Blade Rises (#379)

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The blessed grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the abiding love of God, and the inclusive fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

NOW THE FEAST (HS p. 4)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Loving God, in you we live and move and have our being, and with your blessing we are given life in your kingdom and community, where we may see and recognize the work of Jesus in the world, follow the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit, and witness and proclaim the hope that you give, through Jesus Christ, our risen Saviour. **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Acts 17:22-31

A reading from Acts.

In Athens, Paul faces the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to Greeks who know nothing of either Jewish or Christian tradition. He proclaims that the "unknown god" whom they worship is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will judge the world with justice through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead.

²² Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely spiritual you are in every way. ²³ For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶ From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷ so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we, too, are his offspring.'

²⁹ "Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰ While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 66:8-20

⁸ Bless our God, you peoples;

let the sound of praise be heard.

⁹ **Our God has kept us among the living
and has not allowed our feet to slip.**

¹⁰ For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us just as silver is tried.

¹¹ **You brought us into the net;
you laid heavy burdens upon our backs.**

¹² You let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and water,
but you brought us out into a place of refreshment.

¹³ **I will enter your house with burnt offerings
and will pay you my vows—**

¹⁴ those that I promised with my lips
and spoke with my mouth when I was in trouble.

¹⁵ **I will offer you burnt offerings of fatlings with the smoke of rams;
I will give you oxen and goats.**

¹⁶ Come and listen, all you who believe,
and I will tell you what God has done for me.

¹⁷ **I called out to God with my mouth,
and praised the Lord with my tongue.**

¹⁸ If I had cherished evil in my heart,
the Lord would not have heard me;

¹⁹ **but in truth God has heard me
and has attended to the sound of my prayer.**

²⁰ Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer,
nor withheld unfailing love from me.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:13-22

A reading from 1 Peter.

The author of 1 Peter encourages Christians to remain faithful even in the face of defamation and persecution. In baptism we are made clean to act in accordance with what is right.

¹³ Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated,

¹⁵ but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, ¹⁶ yet do it with gentleness and respect. Maintain a good conscience so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good,

if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight lives, were saved through water. ²¹ And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (HS p. 8)

GOSPEL: John 14:15-21

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In final words to his disciples on the night of his arrest, Jesus encourages obedience to his commandments and speaks of the Spirit, who will be with them forever.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷ This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

¹⁸ "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me, and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Through your Spirit, O God, may we be advocated for, as our hearts and minds be opened to see, hear, and feel you present among us through the love of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Parenting is hard.

While I can say this first hand as a parent, I can also very confidently say this as someone who was parented. Full disclosure, I wasn't exactly an easy child. Not really a total trouble maker, per se, but also not really... not one. Like I wouldn't always be the one instigating mischief or anything, but you can bet your socks that I'd most likely go along with it... because honestly most of the time that mischief would be hilarious.

But I can admit that I actually still cringe to this day at the thought of what I put my parents through as I was growing up. I regret some of the choices I made like in some of the things that

I shouldn't have said or done but I did, or some that I should have but didn't. I still think about the levels of stress, frustration, and even torment my parents went through just from me being me. So while I said that parenting is hard, I guess I really should say that parenting me was hard.

And I guess I should say on this Mother's Day that, as it was in many families at least in what I've observed over my life, the brunt of that parenting landed on my mom. It's not that my dad didn't do his fair share, it's just that my mom did a little more than hers. And hers was a lot more nurturing, caring, and empathic than my dad and his "just yell louder" mentality. Perhaps this sounds familiar to you, not necessarily with your own mom, but that it was the maternal type care and nurture that felt more present and perhaps even preferred in your growing up, or was more formational in who you are now, or maybe just more helpful in shaping you up away from that "trouble maker" attitude. I mean, look at me now. I turned out great. So, thanks mom.

But don't get wrong, I'm not saying that we are 100% the product of how only our moms or those who played that maternal role in our lives raised us. I'm not saying that we only need the kind of care that moms seem to be better at providing and not anything of what fathers give... like the dad jokes and gag gifts and eating all the leftovers. Nor am I at all saying that one type of parent is more important or essential or even better than the other.

Rather, what I am saying is that this near-consistent role that we see mostly mothers fulfilling in our lives and in the lives of others, speaks to something that is very much a part of who we are as humans. And that is that we all... need love. We all need to feel loved. We all need to know that we are loved.

Perhaps not all in the same exact way as we all speak and hear different love languages, but I don't think there is any denying that love is just a basic need that we all share.

And this is why I appreciate so much this part of Jesus' Farewell Discourse that we started talking about last week, where Jesus is at his pastoral best. As Jesus continues to prepare his disciples for his departure, he speaks to this human need for love. I mean, maybe not in so many words, but love is definitely the theme that we get in this passage. And not just love, but nurture, care, and those other maternal attributes that we are blessed with from others in our lives.

See Jesus uses very specific language here when he talks about the likely inevitable feelings of being abandoned and alone once what he knows will happen happens. He says that he will not leave them "as orphans" according to the tense of the original Greek word here. To me, "as orphans" means having lost their parents by uncontrollable circumstance, left in a worldly system of isolation and neglect.

That doesn't sound pleasant at all. I doubt anyone would want that. We know Jesus wouldn't want that for us.

So instead, Jesus promises to his disciples and to us, "another" Advocate. Not a Advocate, or a brand new concept Advocate, or a first time ever having something like this Advocate, but *another* one, one that follows this one, one that compliments and supplements the one we already have. This tells us that Jesus isn't leaving them, but he's just bringing some back up. A

different perspective maybe. A different way of guiding and teaching. A different way for us to see love, feel love, and be loved.

Because... it's hard to parent us.

Not that we're trouble makers or anything, but we're human. We're complex. And we have varying needs that can only be met in varying ways.

Jesus knows this and provides for it. The Holy Spirit, the promised other Advocate, is aware of this and enters our lives because of it. Our mothers and those who gave us that maternal care were intuitive enough to be there for us, to nurture and support us, and to show us that love that we so very need. Whether we recognise or accept it or not.

One thing about my growing up is that I very much fell into that typical teen mentality trap that my parents knew nothing while I knew everything. They didn't know how I felt or thought, how I understood myself and the world, or even what was cool or not. But as I grew older, I saw that while they still didn't know these things, they continued to care for me. While I may not have been able to believe it, they would have sacrificed everything they had for me. While I didn't even acknowledge or maybe even reciprocate, they truly did love me. Me. Not really a trouble maker but also not really not one either. Me.

So maybe... those who give us that motherly care also fall into the promised "another advocate" category, not because they're divine or something, but because they are gifts to us that love us and genuinely want to see us thrive and grow and be able to live life to the fullest. Just as the Holy Spirit is more than this entity that does all things for all people, but gives us a sense of what is right and wrong, what is nurturing and caring, what is loving and what isn't. Just as we are taught and are brought to believe that Jesus is with us and invites us into community, welcomes us into an abundant life, and dearly loves us even when we might not see or recognise it.

And I guess maybe that is what Mother's Day is about. Not exactly to be honored as a mother, which I'm not one of course, but for all of us to remember our own mothers and those who gave us that motherly care, to appreciate the love and support that helped to shape us to be who we are, and to be empowered and strengthened to reflect it out onto others. For us to see and recognise the God of love in our lives, lifting us up as we are, and showing us that we matter. For us to acknowledge how, in spite of what life throws at us at times, that we are not left alone or abandoned, but we have been, are, and always will be identified as someone's child, dearly valued, and declared as beloved.

So parenting is hard, yes, but we have been blessed with the faith and hope to believe that our divine and everlasting parent has determined us as worthy of love, worthy of forgiveness, and worthy of the salvation that has been so graciously given. For we are not left as orphans, not even adopted into a foster home, but we are recreated, reformed, and redeemed to be God's very own children in the world.

As we near the end of this Easter season, may we always see how the resurrected Christ is with us by the power of the Spirit, caring and supporting and providing for us as advocates who will stand up for us, nurture us, and remind us that we are, always and forever, dearly loved children of God, our eternal mother and father and parent. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY Loving Spirit (#397)

CREED (HS p. 11)

Together with all those joined in God's love, 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 God's love by the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with "by your abiding mercy, O God," and you all are invited to respond with **hear our prayer**. By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Blessed God, we praise your name for all that you do and for calling us to be your people. Continue to strengthen us for your work in the world, that we can accurately reflect the love and grace that you give. By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Faithful God, you keep us among your people in community and you bless us with your grace. May our ministry to our city, country, and world reflect this truth, that all might witness and learn of your love. We lift 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 Grace Lutheran Church in Dawson Creek and the pastors and leaders that serve them; and for Deo Lutheran Church in Salmon Arm and their pastor Erik Bjorgan. By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

Welcoming God, you invite us into and bless us with your creation, and you entrust all that you have made into our care. Strengthen our stewardship of this planet, that its health and beauty be sustained for the generations and that your hand at work be seen in it all. By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer**.

God of justice and peace, we face trials and tests throughout our lives in the world, and you continue to deliver us from our burdens and lead us down paths of righteousness. May all

world leaders and politicians learn from your wisdom, that their service to the countries and nations help to lead us all into peace. 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: Maেকেle Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Meri Gabramikael. By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer.**

Healing God, we call out to you with our mouths and we praise you with our tongues for you have heard us and help us in our times of need. Be with all among us who mourn, who are ill, or who feel lonely, that your love shine in and through us all in your kingdom. We especially pray 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; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time...

By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer.**

Eternal God, you do not reject us or withhold your unfailing love from us, but you invite us in to live with you and all the saints forever. May we always remember our everlasting connection with you and each other, that our faith and appreciation of your blessings grow daily. By your abiding mercy, O God, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love, shown to 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, that we should at all times and places give thanks and praise to you, O God, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who reminds us of our connection and belonging in your kingdom with all the saints, joining us 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 (HS p. 15)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

O God you are holy and mighty, and you welcome us into your fold as your children. You lift us up out of our guilt and shame and you bless us with your unending grace and mercy. And when

the time was right you sent to us your Son Jesus to live among us as one of us, revealing to all the very nature of your love and community.

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

And then after they ate, he similarly 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."

For it is in this bread and cup that we see God's presence among us, joining us together, and increasing our trust in this basis 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 all that you have done, all that you are doing, and all that you will do for the good of the world through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (HS p. 18)

Gathered together as one 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 that God is here abiding with us.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMNS: Lamb of God (HS p. 18)

Here is Bread (#483)

What Feast of Love (#487)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy God, again you have fed and nourished us with your Word and truth, that strengthens us to follow you and your wisdom. Remind us always of the work that you set out before us, that we continue to see and recognize your hand at work in us and around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

May the God who creates, redeems, and sustains keep you steadfast in faith, the God who invites, welcomes, and joins keep you buoyant in hope, and the blessing of our God, Shepherd, Saviour, and Spirit, abide with you and keep you in abundant love. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: Go, My Children, with My Blessing (#543)

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, be eager to reflect God's love.

Thanks be to God.