

*4th Sunday After
Pentecost
June 25, 2023*



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

727-446-5026

office@GraceCLW.com

Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

Some practical things for you to know:

Children: All children, even those who are noisy, upset, or otherwise discombobulated, are always welcome here!

Restrooms are located to the left out of the doors you entered in to the narthex or lobby; ushers can further direct you.

Holy Communion: All baptized Christians are welcome to the Lord's Table. Our ushers will guide you.

THE ORDER OF OUR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

We stand as we are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor: Merciful God,

Congregation: we confess that we have sinned. We have hurt our community. We have squandered your blessings. We have hoarded your bounty. We have spoken falsely. In the name of Jesus, forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Pastor: God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail.

Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ.

Congregation: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Gather Us In

ELW 532 vs. 1 & 2

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Congregation: And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

We sit.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 20:7-13

Page 630

Jeremiah accuses God of forcing him into a ministry that brings him only contempt and persecution. Yet Jeremiah is confident that God will be a strong protector against his enemies and commits his life into God's hands.

⁷O LORD, you have enticed me, and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me, and you have prevailed.

I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me.

⁸For whenever I speak, I must cry out, I must shout, "Violence and destruction!"

For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long.

⁹If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,"

then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones;

I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.

¹⁰For I hear many whispering: "Terror is all around!

Denounce him! Let us denounce him!" All my close friends

are watching for me to stumble. "Perhaps he can be enticed,

and we can prevail against him, and take our revenge on him."

¹¹But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble,
and they will not prevail.

They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed.

Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten.

¹²O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous, you see the heart and the mind;

let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

¹³Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD!

For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers.

The reading is concluded:

The word of the Lord. **Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Romans 6:1b-11

Page 917

In baptism we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. We have been made new in Christ through his death and resurrection to live freed from sin.

[Paul writes:] ^{1b}Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with

him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

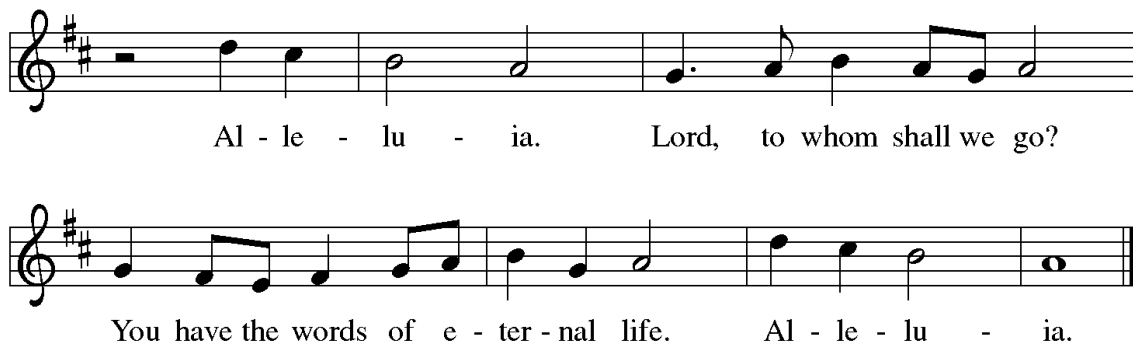
⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The reading is concluded:

The word of the Lord. **Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

We stand.

ALLELUIA VERSE



GOSPEL

Matthew 10:24-39

Page 791

Jesus warns his disciples that their ministry in his name will meet with opposition. However, he assures them that they need not fear for the truth will come to light. Life is found in Christ.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 10th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

²⁶“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³²“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

After the reading...

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

We Sit

SERMON

We Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Give to Our God Immortal Praise!

ELW 848 vs. 1-3

We Sit

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends either “Lord, in your mercy,” and we respond **“Hear our prayer.”**

OR “Hear us, O Lord” and we respond **“Your mercy is great.”**

OFFERING

We Stand

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord . **Congregation: Amen.**

DIALOGUE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

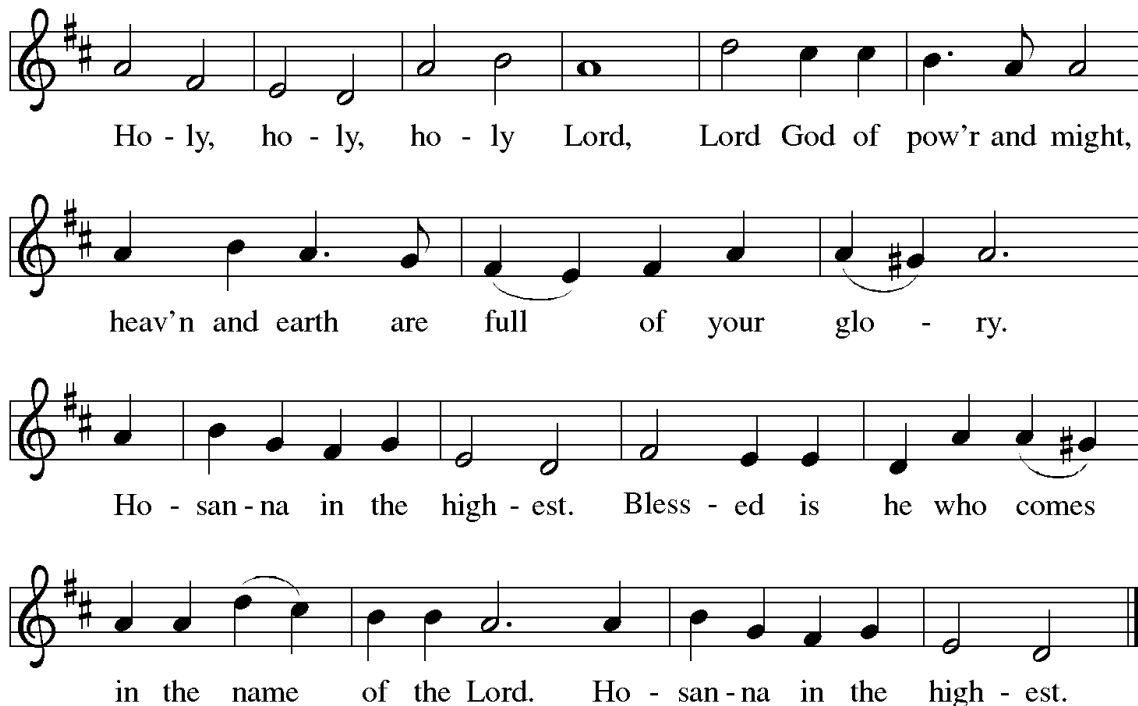
Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: 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 Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Pastor: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, 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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

We Sit

SPECIAL MUSICAL OFFERING

After all have receive Communion, we stand.

TABLE BLESSING

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Congregation: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING OF COMMUNION

Pastor: Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

BLESSING

Pastor: The God who calls across the cosmos and speaks in the smallest seed ✠ bless, keep, and sustain you now and to the end of the age. **Congregation: Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Rise Up, O Saints of God!

ELW 669 vs. 1-3

SHARING OF PEACE & DISMISSAL

Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. The peace of the Lord be with you all. **Congregation: And also with you.**

Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Share the harvest! **Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

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